



Criminal Justice Advisory Committee Minutes **Tuesday, January 31, 2023**

Members Present: Kelly Inman, Alan Pitstick, Eric Johnson, Dawn Baxton, Robbie Breitweiser, Ben Haas, Michael O’Foghluha, Dr. Angeloe Burch, Syretta Hill, Mayor Elaine O’Neal, Rod Jenkins, Miran Bhima, Nida Allam, Patrice Andrews, Walter Tate, Tom Cote

Staff: Gudrun Parmer, Roshanna Parker, Marc Strange, Kelley Waggy, Katie Conyers

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Ben Haas called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. Ben asked that all in attendance take a moment to introduce themselves.

2023 Membership and Officers

Gudrun shared that Lao Rubert submitted her paperwork to reapply for the Nonprofit organization position. Ben Haas made the motion to reappoint Lao. Gudrun seconded the motion and the Committee agreed unanimously.

Gudrun shared that the CJAC charter states that the Committee is to elect new officers at the first meeting of the new calendar year. Currently the positions to be voted on are as follows, Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. We have received nominations for Chair, Ben Haas, and Vice Chair, Dawn Baxton, both individuals have agreed to serve should they be elected. Ben shared that Dr. Burch volunteered via chat to serve as Secretary, Ben officially nominated Dr. Burch. The Committee accepted the slate as presented unanimously.

Ben shared that there are currently 5 unfilled positions on the Committee and that active solicitation to fill these has been ongoing. Ben asked that should the board know anyone that could fill these vacancies, that they reach out so that they can be directed to fill out applications and take the appropriate steps to be formally appointed.

Review and Approve January Minutes

Chair Ben Haas asked those in attendance to review the minutes, and a unanimous vote approved the minutes. Ben made the motion to approve, and it was seconded by Eric Johnson. Motion carried unanimously.

Renaming the Criminal Justice Resource Center

Roshanna Parker shared that the Criminal Justice Resource Center is interested in changing their name to better reflect services offered by the facility. Additionally, the current terminology is considered polarizing, and the desire is to be more inclusive starting with a name change.

Commissioner Allam shared her excitement in the choice to potentially change the name of the CJRC facility and shared her desire to also consider changing the name of the CJAC board to reflect a more modern and inclusive ideology.

Mayor O’Neal also championed this desire along with the entirety of the Committee. The following name suggestions were made:

Justice Services Department, Justice Resource Center, Community Resources Department and Community Justice Resource Center. Ben Haas made the motion for the Committee to vote in support of the pursuit of a new name for the Criminal Justice Resource Center. The board was unanimous in their support.

Durham Jail Population

Ben Haas shared community concern regarding jail population and individuals spending extensive time in isolation due to ongoing COVID response.

Dawn Baxton shared that the Public Defender's Office and District Attorney's office has several county funded positions charged with assisting in jail population control. They are currently holding low bond meetings; low bond persons have been identified to be considered for release from custody. This can only happen when all parties agree and unfortunately this is not always the case.

Tom Cote shared that questions about the extensive use of isolation need to be directed to the Sheriff. DCDC is still dealing with fluctuating COVID numbers, and many quarantines are coming from new incoming detainees.

Gudrun Parmer shared that there are several systems in place in an effort to minimize jail population issues. Pretrial services review every case that comes into the facility and provides assessments as well as bond reviews, which can be submitted for all detainees.

Ben Haas asked how the number of detainees (365) has evolved over the last 5 years. Tom Cote explained that prior to 2018 they were averaging around 600 detainees at any given time. System changes throughout Durham have decreased the population significantly since then. The detention center also houses federal detainees, and this can cause constant population changes. Gudrun shared that there was a brief period, at the beginning of COVID, that the detention numbers dropped below 200. Ben Haas took a moment to thank the committee for their candor in discussing this topic.

Familiar Faces Initiative

Gudrun Parmer shared information regarding the early work being done with this initiative. Wendy Jacobs, together with, community paramedics, the City's community safety department, social services and CJRC, are looking into best practices in this field. Commissioner Jacobs and Gudrun traveled to Texas in early January to observe the work that has been done in Bexar County. The Texas Southwest Regional Advisory Council ~~that~~ has looked at individuals who move through not only the justice system but also EMS and Health systems. This council reviewed data from their medical systems and found a large overlap in individuals served. They have implemented 24/7 services at all levels allowing faster and more comprehensive care. Gudrun shared that the most exciting portion of this trip was visiting Haven for Hope, a campus that moves people from homelessness to permanent housing. There is a no barrier courtyard, that provides individuals a safe sanctuary and food. These individuals do not have to utilize services but services from all avenues are offered for those who are interested. Gudrun shared that this has sparked conversations among many groups in Durham interested in changing the current cycle of homelessness and incarceration. Commissioner Allam asked that those interested and willing support this initiative.

Local Reentry Council Update

Roshanna Parker shared that the LRC has been in existence for 5 years and wanted to reintroduce themselves to the community. The LRC hosted a community Networking event on 01/18/2023

from 3-6 pm and there were 35 organizations in attendance along with funding agencies. There will be a North Carolina Reentry Conference held in Charlotte, North Carolina April 3-5. Registration will open soon and will be shared with this council as soon as it is received. The LRC is working to develop a schedule for Client Resource Fairs. The hope is to have a recurring time to provide clients a space to meet with all partners. The LRC submitted an ARPA application and was rewarded \$644,000.00 for expansion of housing for justice involved individuals. This funding will also allow for the hiring of a housing case manager to help individuals move through all portions of the housing system. The LRC had 33 referrals and 26 intakes in January. The next Local Reentry Council meeting will be held on March 15, 3pm.

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Meeting dates for 2023

March 28

May 30

July 25

September 26

November 28