



Criminal Justice Advisory Committee Minutes Tuesday, January 28, 2025

Members Present: Dawn Baxton, Ben Haas, Mike Sistrom, Tonia Rogers-Dixon, Dr. Rodney Jenkins, Duane Brinson, Quanesha Archer, David Crispell, Dorothy Hairston Mitchell, Eric Johnson, Jesse Battle, Lao Rubert, Thomas Cote, Angeloe Burch

Guests: Irene Lawrence

Staff: Roshanna Parker, Robin Heath, Marc Strange, Renee Shaw, Ontario Joyner, Janice Williams

Excused Absences: Nikki Harris, Michael O'Foghludha

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Dawn Baxton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:05pm, welcomed all attendees and asked all in attendance to introduce themselves.

2. **CJAC 2025 Slate of Officers Election:** Roshanna Parker – Director, Justice Services Department

Ms. Parker thanked Dawn Baxton for serving as Chair, Mr. Ben Haas for serving as Vice Chair, and Dr. Angeloe Burch for serving as Secretary in 2024 and for their continued support in all of the committee's endeavors.

In light of Mr. Ben Haas stepping down as Vice Chair, he went on to state that he has served as part of CJAC Leadership since 2019; has held all three (3) seats at one time or another and was happy to serve. Since serving for the past six (6) years, he has decided to step down to allow others to bring new energy and a fresh perspective to the committee's service in Durham.

Ms. Parker explained that each year in January, this committee is tasked to re-elect officers to fill the seats of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Ms. Parker then introduced the Slate of Officers and opened the floor up for additional nominations. Hearing none, Dr. Rodney Jenkins moved the Slate to be closed; Judge Hairston Mitchell seconded. Ms. Parker closed the Slate. A virtual vote was taken and noted as follows:

Chair	Dawn Baxton	Ayes = 10	No = 0
Vice Chair	Mike Sistrom	Ayes = 14	No = 0
Secretary	Dr. Angeloe Burch	Ayes = 15	No = 0

The Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary seats were filled by unanimous vote.

3. **Approval of November 2024 Minutes**

Chair Baxton called for a motion to approve the November 19, 2024, minutes. Hearing no corrections, Dr. Rodney Jenkins moved to approve the minutes as presented; the motion was seconded. The motion to approve the November 19, 2024, CJAC minutes was unanimously carried.

4. **State Office of Violence Prevention:** presented by Mr. Mike Sistrom, Coordinator of the Durham County Jail Ministry

Mr. Sistrom opened with encouraging the committee to write the governor and/or Durham's legislative delegation to continue support the State Office of Violence Prevention. (**Note:** Letter submission details are outlined in an email that contains contact links; the email was forwarded to all CJAC Members on 1/28/25).

Mr. Sistrom went on to report that Governor Cooper started this endeavor by executive order in 2023 and brought in various stakeholders to come up with a strategic plan for this vision of preventing and responding to gun violence in local communities. This strategic plan follows the U.S Justice Department guidelines and it is community and agency based. While the office takes on a public health approach, it also involves law enforcement and the legal system in a coordinated effort in the prevention, response and care for victims of gun violence. This office will run out of funds in March 2025 unless the incoming governor, Josh Stein, prioritizes the initial executive order set forth by former Governor Cooper.

Dr. Rodney Jenkins stated that he was unaware that there was an expiration for the funding for this office. In working with Sierra, the Interim Director of the State Office of Violence Prevention, there are a lot of things on the docket in terms of violence prevention as it relates to public health. One event being a conference on March 27th in coordination with RTI and the Office of Injury and Violence Prevention. Dr. Jenkins went on record asking Chair Baxton for CJAC as a whole, to compose a letter to keep this office open and made a motion to compose this letter in support of maintaining the North Carolina Office of Violence Prevention. The motion was seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Sistrom and Chair Baxton will work together to comprise the letter of support. Mr. Sistrom will start with submitting a draft to Chair Baxton.

5. **Recap of CJAC 2024:** presented by Ms. Roshanna Parker - Director, Justice Services Department

Ms. Parker reflected on CJAC's accomplishments in 2024 by recalling the following presentations and discussion items that was suggested in fiscal year '23 – '24:

- The Familiar Faces Initiative continues to be spearheaded by Commissioner Wendy Jacobs, Brian Smith and Ms. Parker. This pilot initiative continues to gain momentum in the Durham community for individuals who need services are connected with receiving those services.
- E-Courts System presentation: CJAC discussed in depth the roll-out of the E-Courts System, its challenges and advantages,
- North Carolina Administrative Office of the Court presentation: Alexia Stith presented information on Treatment Courts in NC and the expansion of these courts across the state by securing federal grants,
- TROSA Presentation: Members from CJAC and JSD had the opportunity to tour TROSA to see how a collaborative effort can be had in providing services/assistance to justice involved individuals. Members of TROSA were then invited to present details of the services provided by their organization.

- Family Treatment Court Presentation: CJAC is continuing to support the development of a Durham Family Treatment Court. A proactive, collaborative effort is currently underway to develop a proposal that will be submitted to the federal government for funding for a Family Treatment Court in Durham.
- A Homeless Presentation given by Collin Davis provided profound insight to the challenges facing homelessness in Durham.

A question was asked what the ballpark figure for the funding of a Family Treatment Court was, to which Ms. Parker responded, approximately \$320,000 in total.

6. **Next Steps for CJAC 2025:**

Chair Baxton opened the floor up for suggestions/ideas that CJAC should address/support in addition to Family Treatment Courts for 2025.

Mr. Sistrom stated that he would like to further discuss pragmatic approaches on how to help people spend less time in Durham County Jail who really don't belong there.

Lao Rubert voiced her support for the previous suggestion and stated that continued work and support on Mobile Crisis should be looked at for 2025.

Judge Dorothy Hairston Mitchell voiced her support for the previous suggestions and would like to promote better strategies in Durham Public Schools as it relates to having more social workers and school juvenile justice programming available in lieu of fast-tracking students to the juvenile delinquency court.

Chair Baxton acknowledged all of the suggestions.

7. **Local Re-entry Council Update:** presented by Ontario Joyner, LRC Council Coordinator

Mr. Joyner reported:

- LRC is preparing a calendar of events for Second-Chance Month in April
- Clients Served:
 - received 62 referrals
 - completed 45 intakes
 - Four (4) clients enrolled in the on-site employment class
 - 13 clients gained employment with an average salary of \$15.15/hr.
 - Four (4) clients are enrolled in the Durham Tech GED program; Four (4) clients enrolled in the Forklift Class at Durham Tech; Two (2) clients will participate in a construction apprenticeship course
 - Seven (7) clients are signed up for the Kramden Institute which starts in March 2025
 - Five (5) clients were assisted with long-term housing assistance
 - Partnered with the Religious Coalition for a Non-Violent Durham and GRACED Outreach and delivered 20 food boxes to clients which included frozen meats
- LRC Changes for 2025:

- Walk-in days will be one (1) day a week on Wednesdays from 9am – 2pm (instead of the two (2) days previously set in 2024)
 - Submission of referral forms is strongly recommended

Mr. Haas stated that the delivery of the food boxes was in addition to what the Durham Food Pantry provides for Reentry and highly commended LRC's meticulous efforts in not letting people slip through the cracks.

Ms. Irene Lawrence stated that there are now 31 LRC sites in 49 counties.

Ms. Parker stated that the Local Reentry Council reports are presented at CJAC because this initiative was started within the parameters of CJAC in 2017 and has grown with the support of the BOCC.

8. Brief Member Updates:

Mr. Dave Crispell announced that The Jubilee Home will have a Story-Telling event next Tuesday, February 4th at the Carolina Theater.

Mr. Eric Johnson stated that NC applied for an 1115 Reentry Waiver, which the State will be awarded. It will start in January of 2026. People who are in Reentry can have their Medicaid reinstated 90 days before leaving prison as opposed to waiting (the way it is now) and have access to medication.

Dr. Angeloe Burch announced that he now has space available to rent for meetings etc. at Zappa.

9. Next meeting dates:

- **March 25th, 2025**
- **May 27th, 2025**

Chair Baxton entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion was moved and the meeting was adjourned.