

**Dutchess County**  
**Criminal Justice Council**  
Meeting Minutes  
January 10, 2023

Present: Mary Ellen Still, Chair, Director of Probation  
William O'Neil, County Executive's Office  
Rachel Kashimer, County Executive's Office  
Dr. Gary Christensen, CJC Consultant  
Jon Heller, D.C Probation, Special Populations Chair  
William Grady, Dutchess County District Attorney  
Tom Angell, Public Defender, Re-Entry Co-Chair  
Eric Knapp, Public Defender  
Matthew Weishaupt, Dutchess County District Attorney  
Hon. Susan Sullivan-Bisceglia, Town of LaGrange Court; Centralized Arraignment Comm. Chair  
Pastor John Perez, Citizen Appointment, Faith Temple Church  
John T. Gildard, Citizen Appointment  
Kelly Bunt, KB Forensics, Victims Committee  
Livia Santiago-Rosado, MD, FACEP, Commissioner of Behavioral & Comm. Health  
Jean-Marie Niebuhr, Deputy Commissioner, DBCH  
Sandy Carroll, Probation, Juvenile Justice Co-Chair  
Zoe Berko, DBCH, Juvenile Justice Co-Chair  
Hon. Frank Mora, Poughkeepsie City Court  
Hon. Edward McLoughlin, Dutchess County Court  
Hon. Gerald Hayes, Citizen Appt  
Bridget Goddard, DCFS  
John Penney, Community Engagement Director City of Poughkeepsie  
Cherrell Evans-Tillery, Women's Committee Co-Chair, Project M.O.R.E.  
Alisyn Gaffney, D.C Probation, Justice-Involved Women's Co-Chair  
Shirley Adams, Catharine St. Center, CIC Chair  
Anthony Pica, Deputy Superintendent D.C. Jail  
Shawn Castano, Dept. of Emergency Response, Police Reform & Reinvention Chair  
Michele Romano, Coordinator

Guests: Tom Morris, Dutchess County Probation  
Paul Spagnoli, Dutchess County Probation  
Megan Chetner, Dutchess County Probation  
Molly Shanley, Professor Emerita of Political Science Vassar College  
Ken Roman, Chief Investigator DC District Attorney Office

1. **Introduction of new member Shawn Castano and Megan Chetner** – Mary Ellen welcomed Shawn Castano to the CJC. Shawn is the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Emergency Response and the new Police Reform and Reinvention Chair. Mary Ellen also welcomed Megan Chetner, the new Probation Research Assistant.
2. **Approval of November 22, 2022 Minutes**-The minutes of November 22, 2022 were approved on a motion by Tom Angell, seconded by Pastor John Perez.

3. **Jail/ATI/Safe Act Report -Therese Lee, Mary Ellen Still, Jean-Marie Niebuhr –**  
The December Jail/ATI/Safe Act reports were sent electronically. There were no questions.

4. **Planning and Research Update—Gary Christensen**

Gary presented a PowerPoint retrospective analysis of 2022. The presentation included our jail population composition by crime type and jurisdiction both monthly and yearly. Gary found that one of the intended impacts of bail reform had been the successful reduction in jail admissions with more serious and violent offenses represented in the jail rather than lower level misdemeanors. The presentation is attached. A subcommittee of QA will be formed to further explore Proxy ratings and the use of screening and assessment instruments. The committee will be made up of QA members and additional CJC members. There were no questions.

5. **Committee Reports:**

**Quality Assurance—Gary Christensen, Tom Angell, Bill Grady —** Gary presented a PowerPoint and gave a detailed summary of Quality Assurance’s 2022 efforts that will carry over in 2023. Gary reported that weekly evaluations of the jail population continued. They provided data to the statewide study (conducted by the CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance) to evaluate the effects of bail reform. They also provided a report to the County Executive and the Criminal Justice Council on the local impact of bail reform through analyses of C/O Poughkeepsie PD, T/O Poughkeepsie PD, Hyde Park PD, and the Dutchess County Sheriff’s Office arrest data from January 2017-March 2022. Gary evaluated post bail reform arrest data (provided by the four agencies above) to identify arrest trends, victimization, and arrests resulting in DCJ incarceration stratified by jurisdiction, race, gender, and ethnicity. They participated in ongoing RESTART analyses to evaluate the impact of evidence-based program reforms while also considering and documenting the many pandemic related changes/challenges. They will monitor the predictive value of the Proxy; continue evaluation of the impact of bail reform on the existing jail population and overall public safety. They will assist in the ongoing development of initiatives to mitigate the impact of bail reform for higher risk defendants who remain in the community prior to sentence. They will also assist DBCH in completing a comprehensive study of the DCJ MAT initiative to ensure efficient delivery of services from jail to the community and evaluate the overall impact on overdose deaths, recidivism, and long-term public safety. They will continue to assist RESTART Quality Assurance amidst transition to the new Justice and Transitions Center. There were no questions.

**RTA Update—Hon. Joseph Egitto**

Judge Egitto was unable to attend the meeting.

**Centralized Arraignment—Hon. Susan Sullivan-Bisceglia**

Judge Sullivan-Bisceglia reported that the Centralized Arraignment Committee’s main focus for 2022 and continuing into 2023 is establishing a location for Centralized Arraignment. This would provide one centralized location for after hour criminal arraignments instead of after hour arraignments being provided by Town, Village and City judges who are on call 24 hours per day 7 days per week. In a centralized arraignment part, judges would be assigned pursuant to a schedule set in advance. This would provide arraignments for criminal defendants where all parties, including judge, district attorney, public defender, defense counsel, probation and other services would be available. It would be efficient while continuing to ensure counsel at arraignment. Once the location is

established, the next step is a written plan. Once approved, Centralized Arraignment would operate under an administrative order of the New York State Office of Court Administration.

**Diversion— Steve Miccio**

Steve was unavailable to attend the meeting.

**Victims—Kelly Bunt**

Kelly reported that the Victims Committee meeting was held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December. They are working on starting focus groups for crime victims. Their main objective is to find those who have been greatly affected and see whether there were gaps in the system. Prior to the COVID-19 interruption, they had drafted a letter and created a screening tool. The committee has reviewed and updated both to make them current. They will be meeting and sending out the letters on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January.

Kelly summarized the Victims Committee's activities for 2022 and their plans for 2023. She reported that the committee conducted a survey to assess the impact of COVID-19 on the provision of services. They partnered with Marist College Department of Social Work, specifically Dr. Daria Hanssen, to develop and disseminate the survey. The survey was delivered by two pathways, one for victim service providers and one for the service recipients. Both macro-level initiatives such as potential federal funding and micro-level initiatives to assist providers in our county were discussed. In addition to the positive impact locally, the committee offered to share the results of the survey with the Pandemic Practices Working Group, a group established by the NYS Commission to Reimagine the Future of NY Courts to advise on responses in a post-pandemic world. In 2022, DCFS was able to commit to providing reimbursement to victim services contract agencies who purchased mobile hotspots for their clients. The committee collaborated with SART to organize a community education initiative on trauma, implicit bias, and trauma responses in victims of crime, in particular victims of sexual assault (SA) and domestic violence (DV). SART and the Victims Committee organized a multidisciplinary panel of presenters consisting of professionals involved in Dutchess County's coordinated response to SA and DV. The first community presentation was scheduled for September in Amenia. As it had to be postponed, the committee will decide on alternative strategies to increasing community participation. Additionally, the committee assisted the CJC Quality Assurance Committee in its task of assessing how bail reform has impacted victimization. The committee resumed running focus groups with victims/survivors of all types of crimes. This project was placed on hold in 2020 due to COVID. The goal of this project is to hear directly from victims/survivors about their experiences while interfacing with the criminal justice system, i.e., in what ways did participants feel supported/unsupported by the system, and how can the system improve its response to victims/survivors. This will be the focus for 2023. There were no questions.

**Re-Entry—Tom Angell**

Tom introduced Eric Knapp, Bureau Chief with the Public Defender's Office. Tom reported that the committee met on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December. They had a presentation by ConConnect, Tom described the different products and services ConConnect technology offers to increase productivity for correctional facilities and for inmates to stay connected with their loved ones through phone calls, messages, visits as well as support to obtain education and employment after prison. Their next meeting will be

held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February. They will have a presentation on RECHARGE.

Tom gave a review of the 2022 Re-Entry Committee and their plans for 2023. In 2022 assessment services were provided to a total of 230 individuals. During 2022, 172 participants completed the anger management program, 90 participants completed the Ready, Set, Work vocation program, and 134 participants found employment. 14 participants enrolled in the Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) program with seven graduating. This is in addition to the multitude of additional services provided by Exodus daily--individual advocacy, counseling, case management services, and community building exercises. The Re-Entry Center is located at 97-99 Cannon Street in the City of Poughkeepsie. The primary source of referrals is the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. In addition, referrals have come from Dutchess County Probation, Dutchess County Public Defender, and other partnering community agencies. The focus of their intervention is to connect the participant with programs which will reduce criminogenic factors and thus the risk to reoffend. In most cases, the COMPAS risk and need assessment instrument is used to determine the domains that need to be addressed for each client. In turn, Exodus Transitional Program coordinates monthly case management meetings with parole and various community and local governmental agencies to design specific programming for each identified need that the client has. Exodus continues to meet the performance goals of its various contracts. In addition, the Task Force met on a bi-monthly basis to address systemic barriers that individuals returning to the community from correctional facilities face. These meetings have been well attended with average attendance of 20 or more people present in a hybrid (in-person and virtual) environment. Representatives from the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, social service agencies, faith-based communities, mental hygiene, substance abuse agencies, domestic violence agencies, concerned citizens and many others have attended on a regular basis. They had presentations from ConConnect, Hudson River Housing, Department of Behavioral and Community Health, Family Services, Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, and Vassar College. They continue to collaborate with Community Housing Initiatives for re-entry housing and with Vassar College for joint college credit classes for Vassar students and re-entry participants. The committee is also pleased to report that Exodus was awarded a contract to provide re-entry housing for five parolees at their facility at 97-99 Cannon Street. For the first time the service provision will take place in the same facility as the housing. There has been a sea change in parole practice in 2022 with the adoption by the New York State Legislature of "Less is More." The number of individuals being released on parole has plummeted, the number of parolees being violated and returned to jail has decreased and the number of individuals on active parole supervision in Dutchess County has been reduced dramatically. Their principal goal for 2023 will be to monitor the changes that occurred in 2022 and to make sure that they are being properly implemented. The Task Force remains committed to using evidence-based practices to assist those who have been incarcerated to successfully reintegrate into their home communities and equally importantly to lower the recidivism rate among parolees. We plan to continue these important and necessary efforts in 2023. There were no questions.

#### **CIC—Shirley Adams**

Shirley reported that the committee is working on hosting a virtual presentation on opioids. Shirley gave a brief analysis of the Community Involvement Committee's activities for 2022 and their plan of action for 2023. They benefitted from what they learned in 2021 and continued to present their public forums virtually to appeal to a much larger and more

diverse audience. This format is also equally appealing for consumers willing to share their life experiences, barriers, and successes. They had a Public Forum titled “Law Enforcement: A Challenging Response to Our Mental Health Crisis,” which featured the City of Poughkeepsie Police and Mental Health America’s Behavioral Evaluation Action Team (BEAT). Presenters included Chief Thomas Pape, Lt. Damon Brodhead, Behavioral Specialist Linwood Burke and Executive Director of Mental Health America-Dutchess County, Andrew O’Grady. Our special guest, John Timm, is a graduate of Spackenkill High School, a mental health consumer and advocate, [www.nomansitsalone.com](http://www.nomansitsalone.com). The program benefitted from the support of Mary Ellen Still, DC Director, Probation and Community Corrections and Chair of the CJC along with Deputy Commissioner of DC Behavioral and Community Health, Jean-Marie Niebuhr. The presentation highlighted the different interventions utilized by the BEAT personnel to engage individuals in our community exhibiting mental health challenges. Our second forum included more than eighty (80) participants, with students from Dutchess Community College’s Government Studies Program and viewers from outside of Dutchess County and NYS. Upon request, recordings of CIC program forums are available for viewing. The committee’s participants are involved in a wide range of activities helping to facilitate and disseminate information about the DC Criminal Justice System to individuals throughout the county. They will continue a close association with the Comprehensive Opioid Stimulant Substance Abuse Program (COSSAP) including its subcommittees the Harm Reduction & Community Empowerment & Resilience Committee and the Opioid Task Force (OTF). In 2023, they will be hosting a public (virtual) forum that will include the impact of the increase in opioid deaths due to overdoses in Dutchess County and the Mid-Hudson Region, featuring a local consumer who will share their experience and struggles with drugs. DC officials will provide information about local resources available for the prevention and treatment of opioid abuse. They will continue to identify and present topics of concern while exploring ways to engage more Dutchess County residents in discussions and activities as it relates to the DC Criminal Justice System. There was further discussion on the platform and the release of the public forums for future consumer viewing.

### **Justice-Involved Women — Alisyn Gaffney and Cherrell Evans-Tillery**

Cherrell reported that the committee met on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December. They discussed the logistics of the community fridge for individuals experiencing food insecurity. They also discussed hosting a community event at Adriance Library on March 24<sup>th</sup> tentatively. They talked about creating a suggestion form for women currently in the jail to ascertain what they believe is needed to be successful once they are released. They are collaborating with Project M.O.R.E. to construct a bulletin board for the committee to use in displaying resource guides and disseminating pertinent information to justice-involved individuals. Their next meeting will be held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January.

Cherrell gave a brief summary of 2022, and the committee’s focus for 2023. In 2022 the Justice-Involved Women’s Committee worked with a local non-profit, Hope on a Mission, to distribute food to the homeless population and others in need. Once a month, volunteers from the committee and probation staff cook and provide food at a designated location in the city of Poughkeepsie. Committee members also took the opportunity to distribute the resource guide to participants. Their focus for 2023 is to host events around the county to inform the community about resources that are available. Another goal for 2023 is to find a location for a community refrigerator and food pantry. Project M.O.R.E. has agreed to construct a bulletin board to use in displaying resource guides and pertinent information. Finally, the committee will collaborate with the jail’s RESTART program to enhance communication and share information. There were no questions.

### **Special Populations—Jon Heller**

Jon reported that the committee met on the 19th of December in-person. RESTART Quality Assurance is focused on preparing for training and staffing at the JTC. As of the 19th of December, the RESTART program had 29 men; 10 of whom are on MAT and five women with three on MAT. It was suggested that a subcommittee be formed to explore potential sex offender programming at the jail. Kelly gave a sex offender treatment update and found a slight drop off in referrals. The Incarcerated People with Special Needs Committee continues to be productive. Mental Health Community Challenges reported that DBCH is applying for a new license to provide integrated outpatient services to address co-occurring disorders. Jean-Marie also reported that her staff did a deep dive into the overdose data. They found that during COVID-19, telehealth treatment predominated resulting in a sharp decline of in-person treatment. Additionally, there was a huge increase in Benzodiazepine prescriptions. There is a research team focusing on recidivism, overdose, and process data for MAT recipients at the jail. DBCH and Gary will work together on this process. Overall, the jail is very advanced in providing MAT compared to other jurisdictions. Kevin briefly outlined a training plan for staff at the JTC. Their next meeting will be held on the 30th of January.

Jon gave a detailed summary of 2022 and their plans for 2023. The committee continued to provide support for RESTART, the Stabilization Center, and to work on appropriate planning for special needs individuals who are incarcerated. In 2022, more attention was focused on planning for the new facility. Special Populations meets monthly with our consultant Kevin Warwick. RESTART completed Helping Men and Helping Women Recover and Parenting facilitator training. They prioritized targeting RESTART for clients serving 60 days or more. They utilized RESTART case flow weekly meetings to support and enhance community releases for MAT, mental health, and other services. They enhanced the use of Interactive Journaling and developed a program plan for the new facility. They provided training for corrections staff on evidence-based practices. They began meeting to finalize a data collection process for MAT. They continued to support Project MORE on the development of a women's residential program which opened in the spring of 2022. All key staff were provided an overview of the facility. A Mental Health Challenges Committee was formed to explore local options for CJ system clients with severe and persistent mental health issues. Trauma training for all correctional staff was completed. Technology was integrated into the JTC to allow for remote groups within the facility. Members of the committee assisted in planning the Infirmary and other RESTART space with the jail transition team and also assisted with the revision of the RESTART unit to accommodate 30 men and 20 in pre-RESTART. They coordinated meetings with jail transition and behavioral health to discuss utilization of infirmary beds for special needs inmates. In 2023, the JTC is scheduled to open. The focus of the committee will be to provide support and training for this transition. Special Populations, along with consultant Kevin Warwick, will develop and provide a 3-hour training module for all corrections staff along with an 8-hour training module for corrections officers who will be assigned to the RESTART unit posts. Committee members will participate in coordinated training with the JTC Transition Team for RESTART civilian staff to assist in relocation to the facility. There was further discussion regarding the training.

### **Juvenile Justice—Zoe Berko and Sandy Carroll**

Sandy reported that effective December 2022 the lower age for charging juvenile delinquency under the Family Court Act was changed from 7 to 12 years of age, with an

exception for alleged homicide offenses. DCFS will offer differential response programs for eligible children and their families for this age group. She explained that prior to this legislative change, children 7 through 11 years of age could potentially be petitioned to Family Court as a Juvenile Delinquent. DCFS has been working diligently for the past six months on the differential response program. DCFS and Probation sent out a referral form along with a brochure and memo outlining the program to all law enforcement agencies as well as community agencies. Sandy has taken on the role of Co-Chair for the Regional Youth Justice Team/Partnership for Youth Justice, and they are working on the issue of lack of secure bedspace for youth. There were concerns about recent rates of juvenile gun possession cases in Dutchess County in 2021 and the Youth Police Initiative program was created. YPI's goal is to break down stereotypes and develop dialogue about issues that are faced in the community. Efforts to enhance officers' community policing skills, strengthen officers' knowledge of the community they serve and build long-term positive relationships between local police and at-risk youth are further objectives. The YPI program has achieved great success and has been used by law enforcement agencies nationwide since 2003. The program has proven itself to be a successful violence reduction strategy in communities. Sandy also reported on trauma screening and RFK grant updates. Based on his credentials with justice-involved adolescents & trauma-informed practices, Dr. Keith Cruise was chosen for the trauma training. Probation has trained their staff and appointed coaches. Sandy announced that Juvenile Justice is excited to have Megan Chetner, the Research Assistant from Probation to help with their data analysis. Zoe has also been conducting a series of lunch & learn trainings for juvenile probation officers. The training included Impact of Systemic Racism on Adolescent Mental Health & on Juvenile Justice Involvement. Zoe reported that the youth with problematic sexual behavior subcommittee will be reviewing the current clinical treatment options for youth and their families who are receiving services needed to reduce the risk of recidivism and to support healthy psychological development. They will continue to meet quarterly, and their next meeting will be held on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January.

Zoe gave a brief summary of the Juvenile Justice Committee's activities for 2022 and their goals for 2023. In 2022, the Juvenile Justice Committee was previously chaired by Karen DeSimone who retired from DC Probation. Both Sandy Carroll and Dr. Zoe Berko were appointed as the new co-chairs in June 2022. Prior to March of 2022, they met virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They discussed such topics as Raise the Age and Juvenile Delinquency Reforms in New York State, Mid-Hudson Regional Youth Justice Team, Partnership for Youth Justice, Path to Promise, ongoing implementation of trauma-informed services, Racial-Ethnic Disparities (RED), and Youth with Problematic Sexual Behaviors as well as trainings and various events. There was also a resumption of the Functional Family Therapy program at DC Probation with the hiring of DCBH and Astor staff for these clinical roles. Their goals for 2023 include the development of a local service matrix for youth to guide intervention planning, generating a database of community treatment providers with expertise in trauma-specific and/or trauma informed treatment and diversification of committee membership with involvement from youth and families with lived experience of the juvenile justice system. Additionally, the JCC will launch a series of documentaries such as Paper Tigers and Resilience for members and other interested parties. There were no questions.

### **Police Reform & Reinvention— Shawn Castano**

Mary Ellen introduced and welcomed Shawn to the Council and thanked him for accepting the chairmanship. Shawn gave a brief self-description and thanked Mary Ellen for welcoming him to the Council. Shawn reported that with guidance from Ken Roman, the

prior Police Reform & Reinvention Committee Chair, one of the main achievements for 2022 was the completion of the body-worn cameras project. Currently, in addition to the Sheriff's Office, there are seven participating agencies: the City and Town of Poughkeepsie Police, Town of East Fishkill Police, Town of Hyde Park Police, Town of Pine Plains Police, Village of Fishkill Police and Village of Wappingers Falls Police. There are 207 body-worn cameras in use resulting from legislative and County Executive approval of \$600,000 in funding. The City of Beacon Police, Village of Red Hook Police, Village of Rhinebeck Police and Village of Millerton Police will continue to keep their current body-worn camera vendors. The Town of Fishkill Police are in the process of choosing a vendor. Shawn is working closely with Planning Commissioner Eoin Wrafter and his staff to develop a 5-year contract with Axon for each participating agency. The agencies have until the 1<sup>st</sup> of May to submit their paperwork. Shawn thanked Ken Roman and Rachel Kashimer for being instrumental in the role they played in making this project successful. As the committee moves forward in 2023, he will provide updates on the progress of the various projects.

6. **Old Business**— Tom commented on the accomplishments of the committees during the past year.
7. **New Business**— None
8. **Announcements**— Congratulations to County Executive William F.X. O'Neil
9. **Adjourn** – Motion to adjourn was made by Tom Angell, seconded by Jean-Marie.

**Next Meeting- March 14, 2023 at 8:00 a.m. The meeting will be in-person at 230 North Road's Training Room.**