



**Dallas County Criminal Justice Advisory Board  
General Membership Minutes for Monday, January 28, 2013**

**Welcome & Introductions,** Commissioner Garcia called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM. The Commissioner asked that everyone in attendance introduce themselves.

**Membership & Infrastructure:**

Dr. Michael Noyes explained that when CJAB was established on March 24, 2009 in Dallas County the meetings were bifurcated between General Membership and Executive Committee. He stated that over the past couple years, the need for an Executive Committee meeting has lessened. He recommended that the membership consider eliminating the Executive Committee meetings and making all of the meetings open to the General Membership. Commissioner Garcia asked if there were any objections to Dr. Noyes' suggestion. Hearing none, she requested that someone move to eliminate the Executive Committee meetings and proceed with all of the quarterly meetings being General Membership meetings.

A motion was made to eliminate the Executive Committee meetings and proceed with all meetings being for the General Membership. The motion was seconded and approved.

**Meeting Minutes:**

The minutes from the CJAB General Membership meeting held on November 11, 2012 were made a part of the packet. There was a motion made to accept the minutes as printed. The motion was seconded and approved.

**Presentation - Dallas County Release Mechanisms Study:**

Robert G. Morris, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Criminology, Director of the Center for Crime and Justice Studies at the University of Texas at Dallas presented a research report on Pretrial Release Mechanisms in Dallas County, Texas. Dr. Morris began by thanking everyone who was instrumental in helping to gather the information for this report. He stated that the guiding force behind this research was the enormous cost associated with housing inmates in the County Jail. The annual cost of bed days is close to \$100 million. He stated that when individuals are released on pretrial, a number fail to appear for their court hearing. Dr. Morris presented a power point presentation which offered an overview of the study. The presentation covered the following areas:

1. **Rational for the Study** – The cost of housing inmates to the system, the number of inmates released prior to trial, rate of appearance in court, relationship between a defendant success and the release mechanisms, and the cost of failure to appear (FTA) and recidivism.
2. **Primary Goal of the Study** – Establish variations between FTA rates and release mechanisms, recidivism and pretrial misconduct, cost associated with FTA, and adjust for comparability issues.
3. **Data and Sample** – The analysis was limited to all defendants jailed during 2008 for an offense they had not been previously arrested or jailed for. The sample was n = 22,019 (6,395 felonies; 14,008 misdemeanors).
4. **Treatment Variables** – Various bond types (e.g., attorney, cash, commercial, and pretrial bonds).
5. **Outcome Variables** – FTA's can stimulate a formal negative change in the bond status such as bond forfeiture or insufficient bond. (There are some variations between courts as to how a FTA is addressed). Recidivism or pretrial misconduct is a new criminal offense that results in a book-in within 9/12 months after release.
6. **Defendant Proportions by Release and Case Type** – Comparing All Defendants verses Misdemeanor and Felony case types, commercial bonds make up the largest portion of bond releases. In the All Defendant category, pretrial services make up 11% of the total bond releases with attorney bonds only consisting of 3%.
7. **Raw FTA Rate by Release and Case Type** - Looking at misdemeanor, felony, and all defendants' case types, pretrial services show a FTA rate of 40%, 26%, and 37% respectively (see slide #9 of presentation for more details regarding other case types).
8. **Useful, but not comparable** – Raw FTA/Recidivism rates are NOT COMPARABLE across release mechanism types.
  - a. No equal probability of selection
  - b. Criminal charge/history may impact available release mechanisms
  - c. Cherry picking to varying degrees
9. **How can these rates be compared** – Conduct an experiment where release types are “treatments”. Statistically match similarly situated defendants in a multi treatment framework.
10. **General Findings on FTA and Recidivism** – Pretrial services showed higher FTA results over the other mechanisms. Recidivism findings were slim and inconsistent.

11. **Raw FTA Cost** – Pretrial Services FTA rate cost overall \$657,000 over the other mechanism during this period. Commercial releases showed a lower overall FTA cost.

12. **Study Limitations -**

- a. Findings limited to Dallas County for 2008 initial book-ins
- b. Does not account for release on recognizance cases
- c. Limited data points
- d. Stratified only by felony/misdemeanor cases
- e. Recidivism/pretrial misconduct measurement problems
- f. FTA measure for Pretrial Services limited to “insufficient bonds”

Dr. Morris concluded by stating that there could be potential for cost savings based on the findings from the study. There is also opportunity for Dallas County to become a national exemplar for court appearance. The study provides a good baseline, but validation is needed. There is also need to:

- Broaden and standardize data collection efforts to explain more variation in the outcomes
- Discuss potential study implications with other county officials
- Capitalize on input from pretrial release community (public and private sectors)

The County’s success lies within a more informed framework and targeted balancing of release mechanisms and the defendants they serve.

Ron Stretcher commented that this report has been a very educational and helps to shed some light on the need to explore opportunities to improve processes in Pretrial Services.

**Committee Project Updates:**

**Bail Bond Committee:**

Ron Stretcher directed everyone’s attention to page 56 of the packet to focus the District Attorney’s Office Bond Forfeiture Unit report. He reported that the original goal of this unit was to generate about \$2 million a year in judgment totals. Currently they are on target to identify approximately \$2.1 million a year. Of course it will be the responsibility of the District and County Clerk’s office to collect. Dallas County District Clerk Gary Fitzsimmons expressed kudos to Mr. David Finney and the Bond Forfeiture Unit for helping his department improve their processes in regard to bond collections.

**ACMS Update:**

Ron Stretcher reported that the project is progressing well and he anticipates the first release of the software for the Prosecution Module to be installed and in use by the end of February 2013. The Court's project has just "Kicked-Off" and the planning for implementation is underway. Additional updates will be presented as they become available.

**Reentry Symposium:**

In Kristina Crain's absence, Dr. Michael Noyes reported that the preparation for the Reentry Symposium has begun. The Symposium is being presented by DOORS and the City of Dallas, and is scheduled for **Monday February 25, 2013 at 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, at the Sheraton Dallas, 400 North Olive Street, Dallas, TX 75201**. The cost of registration is \$45 for the full day and \$30 for lunch only. Speakers include Ed Latessa, PH.D, Sunny Schwartz, and Richard Stroker. He encouraged everyone who can to please attend. Registration flyers were made available to the committee.

**Serial Inebriate Program (SIP):**

Mr. Stretcher reported that the pilot program has sent four participants to Turtle Creek Manor. The participants have been working the program but once advanced to housing, some have relapsed. This has caused some issues with the apartment complexes providing the housing. They have not been very tolerant of these clients that have relapsed. He stated that he has begun having conversations with MDHA and the Housing Authority to start working on alternatives to this housing situation. Judge Tina Yoo explained that her court has been participating in this pilot program and has already been impacted by Turtle Creek Manor's refusal to admit or readmit clients into their program because of this issue.

**Jurisprudence Ad-Hoc Committee:**

In Ellyce Lindberg's absence, Ron Stretcher reported that the Ad-Hoc Committee has been meeting. He stated that they have been exploring some of issues regarding the Class A, B, & C warrants and will update the membership of their findings in the March CJAB meeting.

**Jail Population Update:**

Etho Pugh, Dallas County's Jail Population Coordinator, reported that the current jail population is 6,092 which is down 27 from the same time last year. He stated that some of the contributing factors have been the creation of State Jail Felony Unit and the collaboration with Parole. Mr. Pugh reviewed the various statistical summaries provided in the packet beginning on page 61 through page 70. Mr. Stretcher acknowledged that Mr. Pugh has been doing a very good job and has even become the go-to person for troubleshooting issues with inmates that seem to be hung up in the system.

**Fair Defense Committee:**

Dr. Noyes reported that the committee is scheduled to meet this month to begin drafting recommendations to present to CJAB in regard to developing uniform procedures to ensure compliance with Senate Bill 7.

**Announcements:**

Sheriff Lupe Valdez reported that her office recently sent out an announcement to Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA's) in regard to the Blackhawk Gun Holster. She stated that the holster is defective and the company was aware of it yet still had the holster on the market. Duane Steele will resend the Safety Notice regarding this defect.

Please routinely visit the CJAB Webpage for a schedule of events, agendas, and minutes to the meetings @ <http://www.dallascounty.org/departments/cjab>.

The next CJAB meeting will be March 18, 2013.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded and passed at 3:22 PM.