



**Dallas County Criminal Justice Advisory Board  
General Membership Minutes for Monday, September 15, 2014**

**Welcome & Introductions**, Commissioner Dr. Elba Garcia called the meeting to order at 2:33 PM, and customary introductions were made by all in attendance.

**Membership & Infrastructure:**

Commissioner Dr. Garcia announced that on August 7, 2014 Dr. Michael Noyes resigned from his position as director of Dallas County's Community Supervision and Corrections Department (CSCD). As a result of Dr. Noyes' resignation, the CJAB Vice-Chair seat is also vacant. Commissioner Dr. Garcia informed the board that if there are any suggestions and/or nominations for the CJAB Vice-Chair seat, to send them directly to her attention, or through Mr. Steele.

Duane Steele acknowledged the members who would not be in attendance on this date. Mr. Steele also reported that the scheduled presenter, Ms. Patricia Anthony, Correctional Programs Officer with the Bureau of Prisons, would not be in attendance due to a tragic accident that took the life of one of their officers. Ms. Anthony will plan to conduct her presentation at the December meeting.

**Meeting Minutes:**

The minutes from the CJAB General Membership meeting held on June 16, 2014 were made a part of the packet. There was a motion made to accept the minutes as printed. The motion was seconded and approved.

**Committee Project Updates:**

**Bail Bond:**

Ron Stretcher, Dallas County's Criminal Justice Director provided the update directing the member's attention to page eight (8) of the packet. The Bond Forfeiture Judgment Report reflected judgment totals from January 2014 through July 2014. The total judgments ordered by the courts for the aforementioned period was \$1,326,613.35. Mr. Stretcher stated that amount reflects over 1500 cases and is on target to meet the projected judgment amount of \$2 million. He also extended kudos to the District Attorney's Bond Forfeiture Unit for the hard work that is being done to manage this important area within the criminal justice system.

**Fair Defense Committee:**

Duane Steele reported in Lynn Richardson's absence. The committee met on August 11, 2014 and the minutes from that meeting were made a part of the packet on page nine (9). Ryan Brown, Dallas County's Budget Officer was asked to attend the meeting so the committee could present a proposed recommendation for staff resources to maintain tracking and triaging of the election of council (EOC) forms. The committee explained that after the 30 day sampling of the forms was completed, there was no one to continue the daily managing of the EOCs or anyone to triage the stack of EOCs that had no court assignment. The committee's recommendation was for at least two (2) temporary support staff to perform this task. Steele indicated that during the discussion, Ms. Patricia Johnson, County Criminal Court Manager, suggested that as opposed to two (2) temps, that the County Criminal Court floater could be utilized to process the current EOCs being received and the temp could work on the residual stack. Judge Tina Yoo also offered the option of sending the misdemeanor EOCs that were not in the system to the presiding Judge, (her court) for attorney assignment. She suggested that the same process be done for the felony cases. Mr. Brown agreed to recommend to Commissioners Court that it would be beneficial to hire a temporary staff to assist in the processing of the EOCs and approval of more time for the court floater to also assist in this effort. Since the meeting, the court floater has been working extra time to help manage the EOC's received daily and has been able to also work on the "stack". Judge Yoo has begun receiving the EOCs without court assignments, but has discovered that some of the original challenges still exist. The committee continues to work with Dallas County IT, Magistrates Office, and the Sheriff's Data Management Unit (DMU) to develop more permanent resolution to this issue. Mr. Stretcher inquired about the status of a grant application to the Indigent Defense Commission that was submitted by the courts that could be used to support the cost of these staff resources. Mr. Brown responded stating that at this time the results of the grant application had not been received.

**Law Enforcement:**

Ron Stretcher reported in Chief Jimmy Spivey's absence. He stated that during the last LEA meeting held on August 21, 2014, that it was discussed that the County has agreed to resume financial responsibility for the inter-city prisoner transportation. He stated that an MOU is being prepared to outline the parameters of the agreement to resume this cost. One of the agreed provisions will be that the LEAs will allow the County to perform automatic closures on open arrest cases that have not been filed with the DA's Office within a (to be determined) prescribed timeframe. Commissioner Dr. Garcia thanked everyone that has been working hard to bring this agreement to fruition. Chief Jason Hartgraves with the Sheriff's Department stated that the transports are going well and the necessary adjustments will be made to accommodate the addition of the agencies that were not participating in the previous MOU.

Mr. Stretcher added that there was an update given in the meeting regarding DCIM rollouts dates. There was also a presentation given by Ms. Marie Krebs

with the Center for Spiritual Development regarding the prescription drug take-back initiative. Mr. Stretcher stated that Ms. Krebs was given direction as to who she needed to contact for guidance and to come back with a proposal. He explained that the initiative is designed to help get prescription drugs off the street that may be left in medicine cabinets and accessible to young children. Another item of discussion was with regard to adults arrested with juvenile warrants only. He thanked those working closely with the Juvenile and Sheriff's Department to develop a procedure to address this issue.

Finally, there was discussion regarding bringing back Cite and Release to Dallas County. Mr. Stretcher explained that the law was passed in 2007 that allowed law enforcement officers the discretion to issue citations for certain low level Class A & B offenses, as opposed to making an arrest. He stated that Dallas County initially tried this when the 2007 legislature passed this law however there were some procedural challenges and the "No Show" rate of individuals cited was very high. The current pilot is being initiated by Dallas Police Department and will initially only target Class B marijuana cases. Representatives from various departments are working together to develop procedures that will allow this pilot to be a success. Mr. Stretcher indicated that beginning on page forty four (44) of the packet, there can be found additional information regarding House Bill 2391 and cases that are coming into the jail now that would be eligible under the law for Cite and Release. Mr. Stretcher stressed that the intent of the law was not to reduce jail population, it was designed to give law enforcement this discretion which would allow them to remain on the beat and not tied up in bookin. Etho Pugh is taking the lead on this project and it is anticipated that the pilot will go live after the first of the new year.

#### **Public Policy:**

Council Member Medrano reported that the committee has not met since the last meeting on April 29, 2014. However, during that meeting, the committee agreed to adjourn until early to mid-October to allow both the City and County legislative bodies an opportunity to meet and develop their own agendas. The committee will convene in October. Council Member Medrano strongly encouraged that any desired agenda items the board would like CJAB to support, be submitted. There was a proposal form provided, to be forwarded directly to Council Member Medrano's attention or to that of Duane Steele.

#### **Jail Population Update:**

Etho Pugh reported on the Jail Population meeting held on September 12, 2014 and excerpts from that meeting can be found on pages 17 through 24 of the packet. The current jail population for this date is 6,228. Maintaining a daily census under 6,000 is still the desired goal, and Mr. Pugh indicated that he anticipates meeting that goal within the month. Mr. Pugh continued with a brief overview of the information contained in the documents attached.

**Justice of the Peace:**

Judge Steve Seider reported that the Justices of the Peace (JP) and Dallas Area Young Lawyers along with the Stew Pot will hold the community court event on Saturday October 4, 2014. They should know about a week before the event the anticipated turnout. In times past, there have been between eighty (80) and two hundred (200) cases heard. This initiative is designed to allow the population of homeless Class C citation holders an opportunity to get their tickets heard and resolved in a convenient location. In most cases the tickets are resolved through community service restitution.

The JP courts will begin hearing cases of habitual toll road violators whose cases were criminal and now are administrative violation. These violators have over one hundred (100) offenses that classify them as habitual. Judge Seider stated that the NTTA has indicated that there are currently over eighty thousand (80,000) habitual violators that will be filed on. He believes that the first of these types of cases will be heard within the next thirty (30) to sixty (60) days. He added that the idea behind the change in status of these cases is, that it is unconstitutional to criminalize a debt, and now that the tolls are sent as bills, failure to pay is a debt. Judge Seider reported that the upcoming legislative session might include changes with regard to Truancy cases. These cases may also be treated administratively as opposed to criminally.

The JP courts still have not received a new court management system and are now out of compliance with the Office of Court Administration and will be applying for an additional waiver. He also stated that there are some serious concerns about the number of active Class C warrants on the mainframe (Forvus) system and their validity. He has started issuing warrants with a hundred and twenty (120) day deadline, then recalling them if they have not been executed. Dallas County IT is reviewing the concerns, but is unlikely to make any changes to an aged system. The new adult case management system (ACMS) is being designed to address the aforementioned procedural issues and is under development.

**Jurisprudence:**

Ellyce Lindberg reported that the committee met on September 4, 2014. The minutes from that meeting were made a part of the packet beginning on page twenty five (25). The first item of discussion was implementing a procedure for the Defense Bar to purchase IDs from the County and bypass the rigorous security check points in the Frank Crowley Court House. Members from Dallas County Defense Lawyers Association (DCDLA) presented a resolution signed by the District Court judges in support of their proposal for these IDs. The members of DCDLA are petitioning the County Criminal Court Judges with a similar resolution and will return that to the Jurisprudence committee for CJAB approval. There was much discussion regarding the security issues surrounding this proposal, but they will be further discussed within the subcommittee prior to presentation to CJAB and ultimately have to be approved by Commissioners Court. There was also discussion regarding adding a printing function to the

copier in the defense attorney work area in Frank Crowley, that would allow attorneys to print from Onbase. Another discussion was about expanding the video plea pilot to the defense bar in addition to the Public Defender's Office.

### **Juvenile Justice:**

Dr. Terry Smith requested that Duane Steele report for the committee in light of her having laryngitis. Mr. Steele reported that the committee met on August 20, 2014. The committee discussed any outstanding issues from their previous meeting. The only issue that was still unresolved was the creation of a standardized court order releasing a juvenile warrant and indicating a bond amount for those cases where an adult is being held in the County jail on a juvenile warrant. Lynn Richardson, Chief Public Defender is working on having it completed and approved by the Juvenile District Judges. The committee also acknowledged Leah Probst with the Juvenile Department for being certified as a Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) auditor for the Federal Government. This certification will allow her to perform an audit of any Juvenile facility in the United States and be paid for her services.

The committee also discussed the proposed bill for the 84<sup>th</sup> Legislature raising the age of juveniles remaining in the juvenile justice system from seventeen (17) to eighteen (18) years of age. As mentioned before, Dr. Smith will also be advocating having the age of culpability raised from ten (10) to thirteen (13) years of age. A concern that was considered was the impact of passing this law on the juvenile system. According to a recent study, forty-three hundred (4300) young adults seventeen (17) years of age were processed through the Dallas County jail in 2013. Most of the offenses for this population seemed to be low level drug charges. Dr. Smith expressed some genuine concern that if the law passes and the juvenile department begins to see an untraditional increase in intakes that the County be sensitive to the resources that need to follow the youth. Dr. Smith did interject that for this bill to be truly considered there will be a number of other legislative pieces that will have to be adjusted to make the law effective. Sheriff Valdez stated that the passing of this bill will help with the County jails' PREA issues. She agreed that there should be a resource shift according to the impact. Sheriff Valdez shared that she recently wrote an article, "The Baby Tank" regarding the jail's PREA issues which was sent to the Senate Criminal Justice Committee. Commissioner Dr. Garcia asked that the article be distributed to CJAB and the Sheriff agreed to send it through Mr. Steele.

### **Reentry:**

Christina Crain directed the board's attention to page thirty eight (38) of the packet to an article about a Tarrant County reentry coalition that has a very informative resource website available to the formerly incarcerated and their families. She stated that CJAB's Reentry committee is also working with Corner Stone Assistance Network in Fort Worth to piggy-back on the efforts already in place to develop a reentry website for Dallas County. Unlocking DOORS has also opened an office in Tarrant County to begin replicating the services they provide in Dallas. Ms. Crain reported that this morning she attended a briefing

with the City of Dallas Housing Committee to discuss what Unlocking DOORS is doing and a Second Chance Act grant that they have applied for and how that may positively impact housing opportunities for the formerly incarcerated. DOORS prerelease assessment pilot in Gatesville women's prison is going well and they are looking to expand to a unit in Huntsville. Commissioner Dr. Garcia asked how many inmates Unlocking DOORS is impacting. Ms. Crain stated that to date Unlocking DOORS has connected and followed approximately one hundred sixty-five (165) ex-offenders that have not reoffended. Unlocking DOORS is also working with a couple of the specialty courts in Dallas to help bridge gaps. There is also an initiative to begin working with some of the youthful offenders.

**Research:**

Ron Stretcher reported in Dr. Robert Morris absence. He stated that UTD has completed the first draft of the pretrial study and it should be out in a few weeks. There is also a multi-county recidivism study being done by the Council of State Governments which Mr. Steele is taking the lead on. It is currently in the contract phase and should be briefed to Commissioners Court within a few weeks. Dr. Jennifer Reingle has joined the committee and is working with Dr. Morris as she moves towards getting the grant funding for the cell phone pilot to help the homeless population. UTD also has an ongoing project with Judge Burns to research the impact extended wait times in jail for treatment have on outcomes, and one with Adult Probation on overall outcomes for the STAC court.

**Crisis Services Project (SIP):**

Duane Steele reported that he has been working with Trevella King with the City of Dallas to begin reviewing processes at the City Detention Center (CDC) to determine if that location is a viable entry point for the SIP program. He is also working on the contract with the City of Dallas to incorporate two (2) case managers in the CDC to engage inmates to determine their readiness to change and willingness to participate in the program. Parkland Hospital has also begun to have meetings to discuss and develop their entry point. Meetings are being scheduled with Homeward Bound, Turtle Creek Manor, and other service and housing providers to shore up available resources to ensure that once a potential participant is identified as appropriate for the SIP program that there are sufficient services in place to see them through the SIP Pathway. The project is working along the same timeline as the Cottages to ensure that the permanent supportive housing piece is in place, which is approximately six months out.

**Speaker:**

Yvette Gbalazeh, an advocate for legalization of cannabis in Texas, registered to speak regarding Dallas County adhering to the Cite and Release law passed in 2007. Ms. Gbalazeh briefly spoke about how a possession charge early in her life had an effect on her due to the time she spent in custody. She strongly suggested that Dallas County follow the law as it was intended when it was written and thanked the board for the opportunity to speak.

**Announcements:**

The next CJAB meeting will be December 15, 2014.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded and approved at 3:20 PM.