



**Dallas County Criminal Justice Advisory Board  
General Membership Minutes for Monday, March 28, 2022  
Via Microsoft TEAMS**

**Welcome & Introductions**, Commissioner Dr. Garcia, called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM. All in attendance recorded via Microsoft TEAMS.

**Membership & Infrastructure:**

There were no changes to membership or infrastructure at this time.

**Meeting Minutes:**

The minutes from the CJAB General Membership meeting held on December 13, 2021, were made a part of the packet. There was a motion made to accept the minutes as printed.

**Presentations:**

**Data Driven Prosecution**– Pam Metzger

Commissioner Dr. Garcia introduced the presenter, Pam Metzger, and read her bio.

Pam Metzger began the presentation by giving a brief description of the Deason Center Expertise. She explains the three main areas of expertise: right to counsel, STAR (small tribal and rural) Justice and prosecutorial discretion. She continues to clarify that all three areas have common ground, have a data focused evidence-based approach that is transparent and are involved in a feedback loop. Ms. Metzger stated that their interest is in understanding what is happening and in measuring and evaluating what the changes mean. She continues to explain, the observed information is then utilized to set benchmarks and move forward with improvements. Emphasizing on the priority to build transparent criminal legal systems.

Ms. Metzger continued and reported two core areas. The first being the Dallas Project. It studies what the Dallas DAs Office is actively doing, specifically looking at Judge Cruzeot's policies on marijuana enforcement and prosecution. In addition to how they affect things like racial equity in the criminal legal system. This was an agreement with the Deason Center, to share the DA's data for analyzation that in return allows the DA's office to make data informed decisions. They can use Deason Center's analysis to guide their policies, practices and other work.

Ms. Metzger reported the Deason Center has also studied screening and charging in mid-sized jurisdictions. Their goal is to look for best practices available. They have also evaluated turnaround time, specifically how long it takes to get from the submission of a case by police to actual indictment. Custodial status of people during that time interval has also been observed. In conjunction with racial ethnic and/or gender disparities, all with the intent of helping the offices. She expressed their mission and goal to understand data acquired from the DA's office is so that they can make data informed decisions and share that data with other stakeholders.

Ms. Metzger reported on the Measures for Justice Dashboard used in Yolo County, California. She explained, Yolo County has been able to build a dashboard that reflects how many cases are being prosecuted and/or rejected. The dashboard also displays how many cases have been diverted before charges. The data is being used for two purposes; to inform the prosecutor's office on where resources need to be allocated and to inform anyone online. The dashboard is currently a work in progress, but nonetheless, offers a rich level of transparency. She further expresses that although the transparency in the data is positive, there are limitations to what it cannot do. She further detailed it by sharing how on one hand, the data tells us how long things are taking but it limits us by its inability to explain why it's taking so long. The data also fails to answer whether the time spent is good or bad.

Ms. Metzger stated that there are lots of benefits to systemic transparency. A positive takeaway being the ability to show taxpayers how funds are being allocated. The community can see prosecutorial priorities in the example of prosecution, this could also be true for any other stakeholder organizations. Transparency makes for data driven choices, in other words, if people in the criminal legal system can look and see what's going on upstream of them or downstream. It allows them to make rational decisions about how to allocate their scarce resources. They know what conversations to be having, for example about the likely implications of certain policies. As a result, the transparency in data isn't just a set of numbers dumped on somebody's desk but instead it's numbers with context that serve a purpose beyond just showing the public.

Ms. Metzger closed by emphasizing on the importance of making sure that the broader system is well informed and capable of making data informed decisions about their own practices. She then proceeded to open the floor for questions.

### **Committee Project Updates:**

#### **Criminal Justice Administration & Jail Population Management Update:**

LaShonda Jefferson gave the update. The Jail Population committee meeting was held on March 11, 2022; excerpts from that packet can be found on pages 15 through 22 of the CJAB packet. The jail population for today is 5,627. The Criminal Justice Department continues to collaborate with stakeholders to manage our jail population. The February 2022 average jail population was 5,648 and our yearly average so far is 5,595.

**Fair Defense Committee:**

Lynn Richardson gave the update on their initiatives. Funding was received through the American Rescue Plan Act to hire additional staff, i.e., attorney, investigators, paralegals, and support staff, to work on the backlog of cases that were caused due to COVID. This committee is meeting with judges to find out their policies and procedures to coordinate these efforts. It was reported that getting space for the backlog courts is one of the challenges. Mr. Gordon Hikel shared that the District Attorney's office is going to vacate space to make room for the backlog operation.

**Justice of the Peace:**

Judge Steve Seider gave the update. Judge Seider reported on the progress of the court management system and issues that have surfaced with the data conversion. Judge Seider stated they are actively working on cases that have been filed and using personnel from the court to complete these tasks.

**Law Enforcement/Jurisprudence:**

Ellyce Lindberg gave the update. The Law Enforcement/Jurisprudence subcommittee did not meet during the first quarter. One of the important things coming up is the implementation of HB766 in which the Sheriff's Department is currently working on in order to create a new process to address HB766.

**Pretrial:**

Jeff Segura gave the update. The Pretrial subcommittee has a meeting scheduled for March 29, 2022. Pretrial Services has filled their three new positions, a trainer and two ELM tech. More information to be shared on next CJAB meeting.

**Reentry:**

Christina Crain gave the update. Dr. Crain reported the annual Texas Re-Entry Symposium for 2022 will be held September the 27<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Crain also reported the creation of an employment council. This council is composed of employers that are background friendly and hire those with criminal backgrounds. Dr. Crain stated they are working hard to provide some tools to employers and looking into ways to help them legislatively.

**Research:**

Dr. Jennifer Gonzalez was not able to attend today's meeting. An update was not provided.

**Program Update:****Local Data Advisory Board:**

Ellyce Lindberg gave the update. The LDAB continues to meet biweekly. They are currently working with a lot of different stakeholders, looking at different cases to find out what the issue is, and why the arrest hasn't been closed. They are currently at 86.47% and need 1,254 dispositions to get to 90%. The deadline for 90% compliance is August 1st, 2022.

**House Bill 766:**

Ellyce Lindberg gave the update. The House Bill 766 became effective in January of 2022 and it involves notification to happen when information comes in on violent offenses or family violence offenses. It puts a duty upon the magistrate to communicate with the sheriff to get certain information in the database system. Chief Bryan Sylvester reported having email conversations with all the Chiefs in Dallas County, about the importance of this law and how they can assist with ensuring they provide appropriate information. Judge Autry reported magistrates are complying with House Bill 766 and emphasized the importance of collecting as much information as possible.

**Public Comments:**

None

**Announcements:**

The next CJAB meeting will be held on June 27, 2022, at 2:30pm.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded and approved at 3:40PM.