



**Dallas County Criminal Justice Advisory Board
General Membership Minutes for Monday, June 24, 2024**

Welcome & Introductions: Commissioner Dr. Elba Garcia called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM. All in attendance made customary introductions.

Membership & Infrastructure:

Ellyce Lindberg presented the nomination of Dr. Michael Noyes, emphasizing his extensive career in criminal justice and his doctorate in philosophy and criminology. Jeff Segura proposed the motion to approve Dr. Noyes as chair of the Research Committee, which was seconded by Christina Crain. The motion was approved unanimously.

Meeting Minutes:

The minutes from the CJAB General Membership meeting held on March 25, 2024, were made a part of the packet. A motion was made to approve minutes by Duane Steele; the motion was seconded by LaShonda Jefferson. The approval of the meeting minutes was unanimous.

Presentations:

Factors that Influence Urban Recruits' Persistence to Pursue Police Careers in a Negative Occupational Climate

Commissioner Gracia introduced Dr. Roberto Gallardo, who holds a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of California at Riverside, with expertise in criminology, race and class, and political economy. Dr. Gallardo's research focuses on policing in major cities and has been recognized through grants and publications in journals such as the Criminal Justice Review and Race and Justice. He is currently an assistant professor and program coordinator at the University of North Texas at Dallas and teaches courses at the Dallas Police Department.

The presentation discussed a study conducted by Dr. Aaron Bartula, Dr. Eric Coleman, Sean Hubbard, Dr. Roberto Gallardo and Dr. Paul Reynolds from the Criminal Justice and Sociology Department at UNT Dallas. The study aimed to investigate how the negative occupational climate in policing affects urban recruits' decisions to pursue a career in law enforcement.

The researchers focused on recruits from a major police department in Texas, examining how current negative perceptions of policing, influenced by recent high-profile incidents and demonstrations, impact recruits' motivations and fears.

Key research questions included: How do current motivations for police work compare with traditional motivations in a negative occupational climate? How do specific fears (e.g., injury, death, losing status, prosecution) affect recruits' motivations?

The study involved a cross-sectional survey of 171 recruits early in their training. Findings revealed that traditional motivations, such as helping people and career stability, remained strong. However, racial and ethnic differences emerged, with Black and Hispanic recruits placing higher importance on pay and promotional opportunities.

Most recruits believed that the current negativity surrounding policing would not last and did not see a need for police reform. They also expressed strong belief in the resilience of policing as an institution and a high level of public support for their career choice. This suggests that personal motivations may outweigh concerns about the negative social climate.

The second research question of the study examined the role of fear as a deterrent in pursuing a career in policing. Using a five-point Likert scale, the researchers assessed fears related to injury, prosecution, and harm to reputation. They found that Hispanic recruits reported higher levels of fear across all measures compared to other racial and ethnic groups. Specifically, Hispanics had the highest fear of job-related injury and damage to their reputation, while White recruits reported the lowest levels of fear. Black recruits generally had the lowest fear regarding death and damage to reputation.

The study highlighted that despite these fears, recruits from all groups, including those with higher levels of fear, still chose to pursue careers in policing. The researchers believe that the high levels of fear among Hispanic recruits might be influenced by concerns about support from the department and the relative importance of pay and promotion opportunities. The study acknowledged limitations such as its focus on recruits already in the academy and suggested that future research could include individuals considering a career in policing to provide further insights.

Dr. Gallardo opened the floor for questions. The discussion explored the cultural and generational factors influencing the decision to pursue a career in policing among Latinos. It was noted that Latinos often have a negative perception of police, which could contribute to a sense of losing reputation within their communities by becoming officers. This negative perception might be exacerbated by cultural background, with first-generation immigrants possibly experiencing different views compared to second or third-generation individuals.

The conversation also touched on the motivations of Latino recruits, highlighting that despite their fears, many are driven by a desire to help their community and ensure equal treatment. This intrinsic motivation may outweigh their concerns about reputation or job-related risks. Additionally, it was observed that there has been a recent increase in recruits from out of state, although this trend was not formally analyzed. Future research might include a comparative study in Mexico to explore how different political and social climates influence perceptions and fears related to policing.

Dallas County Opioid Abatement (Texas) Settlement Allocations Fund & Project Status

Commissioner Garcia presented Alejandra Garcia a Policy Analyst in the Office of Special Projects under Commissioners Court Administration at Dallas County.

Alejandra Garcia presented on how Dallas County is utilizing funds from the Texas Opioid Abatement settlements to combat the opioid epidemic. The funds, resulting from multiple settlements with pharmaceutical companies, are allocated to various entities including hospital districts and municipalities. The Texas Opioid Abatement Fund Council oversees the distribution and management of these funds, which are intended for treatment, prevention, and other strategies to address opioid issues.

Dallas County has received nearly \$16.5 million from these funds, distributed through both litigation and state allocations. The funds are used for specific programs, including treatment services, prevention efforts, and infrastructure improvements. Key initiatives include expanding court-related programming, enhancing medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for inmates transitioning to the community, increasing peer support and residential treatment services, and developing workforce education for opioid use disorder.

Alejandra Garcia detailed how Dallas County's strategic plan includes creating a specialty recovery docket to target first-time felony offenders with substance use disorders and expanding MAT transition services through a new contract with Parkland Health. The county has budgeted \$4.5 million to ensure sustainability and is cautious about managing the funds due to uncertain future allocations.

The Dallas County initiative to address opioid use disorder and substance use disorder includes several key projects. The primary effort is the Toxicology and Drug Analysis Data Testing, Interpretation, and Evaluation Expansion Program, which aims to address the lack of testing equipment and personnel in the HHS and SWIFT offices. This program is focused on improving the testing capabilities for drug samples and hiring specialized staff such as biostatisticians and toxicology chemists. The goal is to enhance data accuracy and support community and commissioner awareness about the opioid crisis in Dallas County.

Additionally, the Dallas County Opioid Use Disorder and Substance Use Disorder Workforce Development and Education Program is being developed in collaboration with the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Office, Sheriff's Office, Fire, and Marshal Services. This initiative is designed to provide comprehensive opioid education and training for county employees and first responders. The training will include understanding opioid use disorder, overdose symptoms, and the administration of Naloxone. The program aims to improve preparedness and response to opioid-related crises within the county.

The Opioid Use Disorder Substance Use Disorder Provider Capacity Expansion Program involves an RFP offering up to \$500,000 in grants to local non-profit organizations. This funding is intended to enhance the capacity of existing treatment services or to build infrastructure within their facilities. The RFP seeks to address gaps in service and support organizations in expanding their capabilities to meet the growing demand for treatment.

Lastly, there is an ongoing discussion regarding state funds distributed for opioid-related initiatives. The state has allocated significant funds, but there is concern over the distribution model, which currently supports only one recipient for statewide distribution. Efforts are being made to advocate for broader distribution to better support local needs across numerous counties.

These projects collectively aim to improve the response to opioid use disorder and enhance the capacity of local services in Dallas County, while also navigating challenges related to state funding and distribution.

CJAB Update: Results of New DA Mental Health Positions-

Commissioner Garcia presented Lee Pierson and Kendall McKimney.

Lee Pierson addressed the membership to provide an update on the progress of the mental health division's newly established positions. In December 2022, Lee and Kendall had presented a request for additional staffing to enhance the division's capabilities. Their request was approved, resulting in the addition of four new attorney positions and three clerk positions. The process of filling these roles was intensive, taking most of the following year, with the final attorney joining in late November 2023.

During the presentation, Mr. Pierson expressed gratitude for the ongoing support and sought continued backing for these ARPA-funded positions. Mr. Pierson also acknowledged the valuable contributions of partners such as Vicki Rice and her team, underscoring the collaborative efforts that have driven these positive outcomes.

Mr. Pierson emphasized the significant achievements made possible through these new roles and outlined the division's recent successes. Notably, the division's efforts have resulted in a reduction of 91,285 jail days for defendants,

equating to a financial saving of approximately \$7.77 million for the county. Despite the annual cost of these positions totaling \$914,000, the county has realized a net savings of \$6.85 million in the first year of operation, even while the division was only partially staffed.

Mr. Pierson detailed improvements in operational efficiency, particularly in the intake process. Previously, the average time to process new referrals was 49 days. With the addition of new staff, this timeframe decreased to 18 days and has now been reduced further to just 4 days. This improvement was tracked through data analysis spanning from 2022 to 2024, which demonstrated significant progress in handling referrals and reducing wait times.

Additionally, the division requested and received an attorney and a legal assistant to manage caseloads, which were substantial at the time. Current caseloads have been reduced to an average of 217 cases per attorney. The enhanced efficiency in intake and case management has led to a streamlined process, contributing to reduced jail time and overall improved service delivery.

Mrs. McKimmey outlined the progress and strategies adopted to address the challenges of managing competency cases within the judicial system. The presentation highlighted the request for additional resources, including two new attorneys and two legal assistants, to bolster the handling of both felony and misdemeanor competency cases, which require distinct approaches and teams.

To enhance efficiency, a proactive strategy has been implemented for felony competency cases. An attorney has been designated to review the hospital wait list daily, scrutinizing each case to determine whether there is a compelling interest to prosecute. This review includes evaluating probable cause affidavits, criminal histories, and engagement with services. If a case does not warrant restoration for trial, alternative solutions are explored, including collaboration with public defenders to develop exit plans. This approach aims to reduce the wait time and associated costs, as individuals found incompetent may otherwise remain in jail for extended periods, leading to significant financial implications for Dallas County.

For misdemeanor competency cases, a different method is employed. Cases are reviewed weekly under a single judge, allowing for quicker assessments and decisions. This expedited process is facilitated by a dedicated team comprising a public defender and a district attorney, working collaboratively to monitor client progress and devise exit plans. Given the shorter timeframes for misdemeanor cases, the focus is on efficiently managing these cases to prevent unnecessary delays.

The presentation also noted a substantial decrease in the competency wait list, from approximately 400 individuals in 2022 to around 250. This reduction is attributed to the addition of dedicated staff and proactive measures. Despite these improvements, the wait list remains dynamic, with new cases continuously

emerging. Therefore, ongoing efforts are necessary to maintain and further reduce the wait list.

Financially, the efforts have led to significant savings. By proactively addressing cases and improving case management, the system has saved considerable amounts in jail costs. For instance, the cost of managing cases has significantly decreased from \$4.2 million in 2022 to an anticipated \$383,000 for the current year. The overall savings, including both misdemeanor and felony competency cases, are projected to reach \$7.6 million for 2024.

The discussion concluded with acknowledgment of the dedicated work of the competency teams and a commitment to continue improving the system. The collaborative efforts between various stakeholders, including the DA's office and public defenders, are crucial in addressing behavioral health issues effectively and reducing the burden on the criminal justice system. The presentation highlighted the importance of ongoing support and collaboration in maintaining and furthering positive developments. The successful reduction of the wait list and associated costs demonstrates the effectiveness of increased staffing and proactive case management.

Committee Project Updates:

Criminal Justice Administration & Jail Population Management Update:

LaShonda Jefferson provided the update. Ms. Jefferson reported that the June 2024 Jail Population Committee meeting was held on June 14th, with excerpts from the packet can be found on pages 41 through 48. The May 2024 average population was 6,440, with the current population at 6,535, representing 92% of total reduced capacity. So far in June, 3,467 individuals have been booked, with 3,348 released, leading to a negative variance of 119. The Criminal Justice Jail Population Management Team continues to proactively address case delays and ensure individuals are not held unnecessarily, which has resulted in significant time reductions and cost savings. So far in 2024, 12,632 individuals have been researched, with a 66-day reduction in jail time for 2,130 people, saving the county approximately \$12 million. Two temporary positions have been approved to help manage the manual Jail Population workload. IT challenges are also being addressed to restore functionality of the DEWR report.

Fair Defense:

Ms. Himes provided an update on behalf of Mr. Blocker, noting several key points for the committee. They are finalizing plans with the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association for the annual indigent defense seminar in Dallas, scheduled for February, which will attract public defenders from across the region. Mr. Blocker attended a meeting of chief public defenders ahead of the Rusty Duncan Criminal Defense Seminar in San Antonio. Additionally, Jordan Pollock, an Immigration Specialist at the Dallas County Public Defender's Office, spoke on the intersection of criminal charges and immigration. The office is also

collaborating with the District Clerk's and the City of Dallas to place computers in community courts to boost participation in the upcoming Expunction Expo. The application process for the expo begins on July 8th, with a limit of 500 applications. Lastly, Ms. Jefferson was commended for her efforts in managing jail lists and addressing inmate release issues.

Justice of the Peace:

There was no update to report; Judge Valencia Nash was not in attendance.

Law Enforcement/Jurisprudence:

Ellyce Lindberg provided the update, indicating that there has not been a formal meeting. This marks the conclusion of the updates for this subcommittee.

Pretrial:

Duane Steele from Pretrial Services reported that they are currently monitoring approximately 2,386 individuals. This includes 1,390 in the alcohol monitoring unit, 552 in electronic monitoring, 283 in the Smart Justice Unit (which handles individuals with mental health issues), and 161 in the general pretrial committee unit. Steele also mentioned ongoing collaboration with Marsha and other criminal justice stakeholders, noting their comprehensive efforts to manage various department activities.

Reentry:

Christina Crain reported that the Dallas County Commissioners' Court declared April as National Second Chance Month, encouraging residents to support individuals seeking redemption. Several organizations were recognized for their reentry efforts, including the Dallas County 4C Reentry, Core Community Partnership Council, TCJ Parole Division, Unlocking Doors, Miles of Freedom, and Anthem Strong Families. Mrs. Crain also announced a collaboration with UT Southwestern, Parkland and Homeward Bound to develop partnered solutions for individuals transitioning out of Dallas County Jail, with discussions already underway.

Program Update:

Ellyce Lindberg recapped on the effort to close out open arrests with a 90% closure rate over a five-year period. This involves both addressing open arrests and ensuring timely reporting when a case is disposed. The 90% rate is crucial because grant funding from the Office of the Governor is contingent on meeting this goal. Last week, Dallas County achieved the 90% target, which was a major team effort across all Dallas County departments, including law enforcement partners. Ms. Lindberg acknowledged the significant contributions from various stakeholders and celebrates this major accomplishment for the county.

Public Comments:

None.

Announcements:

Dr. Noyes announced that the University of North Texas at Dallas is launching the country's first mental health policy concentration graduate degree program. Starting this fall, the program will focus on the intersection of mental health and criminal justice, covering areas like policing, courts, and corrections. It is designed for practitioners interested in understanding mental health's impact on the system and shaping policy changes. The program will accept students from across Texas and the U.S., with Dr. Noyes inviting experts to contribute to the curriculum.

Mr. Steele announced that the week of July 15th is Pre-Trials, Parole, and Probation Recognition Week. The week will include employee recognition events, culminating in a luncheon on Wednesday, July 17th, at 11 a.m., with training starting at 8:30 a.m. Tickets for the luncheon are \$12. A training session on fentanyl will be held, with attendees receiving Narcan.

Lastly, the next CJAB meeting will be held on September 23, 2024, at 2:30 PM.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM.