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MEETING MINUTES
RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Date: February 9, 2021

Time: 11:00AM-1:00PM

Virtual Location: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only) [857-327-9245](tel:857-327-9245) Phone Conference ID: 340-146-417#

Agenda Items:

1. Call to Order

The meeting is called to order by Chairman Andrew Peck at 11:05am.

		<u>Video/Call</u>	<u>Absent</u>
1	Chair-Andrew Peck	X	
2	Scott Taberner	X	
3	Rep. Sean Garballey	X	
4	Sen. James Eldridge		X
5	Becky Michaels	X	
6	Allison S. Cartwright	X	
7	John Millett	X	
8	Ret. Chief Fred Ryan	X	
9	Stephanie McCarthy (*)	X	
10	Mary Quinn	X	
11	Judge Rosemary Minehan	X	
12	Kara Hayes	X	
13	Carolyn Boyes-Watson	X	
14	Erin Freeborn	X	
15	Cheis Garrus		X
16	Susan Jeghelian	X	
17	Strong Oak Lefebvre	X	

(*) Designee for Diane Coffey

EOPSS Staff: Anjeza Xhemollari, Arielle Mullaney and EOPSS intern Katie Queally

Others in attendance:

Over 10+ members of the public attend the open meeting.

2. Welcome

Chairman Andrew Peck welcomes all committee members and attendance is taken. Chairman Peck starts the meeting by sending condolences to Susan and her loss.

3. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 12, 2021

Roll call is taken to approve the meeting minutes. All present members vote in favor to accept the amended meeting minutes. Motion passes unanimously.

4. Committee Members: 2021 Vision of RJAC

Chairman Andrew Peck: I thought we had a very good discussion and vision for how to move forward. I have certainly connected with a lot of people on this committee. I have learned a lot in the last few months, and I will share my vision on what I have learned. I hope other people can share their vision and thoughts as well. I am looking at how we can effectuate some change in the system. I will love to create that inventory and the questionnaire. I would love to be able to at least create some kind of pendulum and then work on the layers of the programs and how they fit into the programs, how people can access them, and the planning subcommittee. Becky has volunteered to spearhead that committee, but how can we also be parallel to that, so we do not slow all our work down. I also want to figure out what we can do with the inventory. Delegate some tasks to folks so we can really move forward. Those are some of my thoughts. I will pass on to other members of the committee.

Kara Hayes: Susan, it is good to have you back. I am thinking of you a lot. As a survivor of violence that works with people, it brings me back to the three pillars of restorative justice. We start where the harm happens, and we involve all stakeholders and members of the committee. I want to push forward this work in good ways. As a survivor and advocate, I think MOVA could play a huge role. How do we help victims understand what options they have available? I would like to see us help see who our colleagues are around the state and who is also doing work that would allow them to partner with the court process or work with the court process adjacent. My work at the DA's office not as much in court but to help people in the area to understand restorative justice and other practices. If we could find ways to work together as a group and build our collective approach, we would have something to offer people beyond the end of year report.

Strong Oak: I would like to add to what Kara just said. I was thinking about several things. Indigenous people, people that do harm, are capable of healing, and people that do harm can be very impactful for working with other people who have done harm. I think that involving these people is very important—the great law of peace. Indigenous people believe that people can be healed. I would like to get even more training on that and think about involving more people who have come back to the community and become even more meaningful members.

Becky Michaels: I wanted to follow up on what Strong Oak was saying. I have been planning for the subcommittee. One of the first things I wanted to work on was whose voices are not on the table and how we can involve more people. If the legislation prevents more people from coming in, we need to get creative and figure out how we can bring in more people. The subcommittee will work on how to get those voices heard and at the table, especially to do any more planning.

Susan Jeghelian: I 100% agree with what Kara, Strong Oak, and Becky in what they said. I think we need to get a broader set of stakeholders involved. I think we also need to reach out and invite people to be a part of this work that we are doing.

Carolyn Boyes-Watson: I really appreciate this conversation. I am sorry I missed the last meeting. I think that this is what Susan and I meant when we wrote our original memo. Beyond the statutory mandate, what is it that our mission really is? I feel that we are on the right path at this moment. We can perhaps expansively use the inventory and then figure out what we really need to know to serve the restorative justice community, what is something we can really do. How can we really help? I think we can invite people to the committee, but we

must learn who is out there. So, we can use the inventory to learn who is out there in a more expansive way. But then we can also start to figure out what are the ways that we can help people and make a change. I love this brainstorming moment, and we can make useful ways to all be together in these meetings. The simple piece of a circle process so everyone can be heard. I feel this is a new start. I also think we can set up our goals and timelines for this year. I think that will be a very fruitful way forward.

Strong Oak asked to do a circle process around this issue.

Carolyn is going down the list and offering everyone who wants to speak, and if someone does not want to speak, we can pass it off. But it will give everyone an invitation to speak to whatever question we are trying to pose. Then it will be a simple way to hear everyone's voices.

Francisco (public member): I am glad to be here, and I am looking forward to being included in this program and its success. I pass it to the next person.

Stephanie McCarthy (designee): I am taking place for Diane right now. Diane is certainly more of an expert on this subject, but I have learned so much sitting on this committee. I would be more than happy to connect people to Diane and Liam. We just announced a strategic plan that very much fits within the plans and thoughts of this committee. I think setting out clear goals and working within those parameters is so helpful. If we can set up some clear guidelines that will help, make a lot of our jobs easier and help with the committee's future.

Chandra Banks (public member): I would co-sign whatever Strong Oaks thoughts are on how to move forward.

Scott Taberner: I appreciate the opportunity to be with such a great group. I think what has been discussed in the last 10 minutes is really the direction we have been moving in the previous few meetings. I like the idea of specific goals we will work towards. How can we incorporate restorative justice practices more expansively, particularly in DYS? I do think one of the missing components is the DYS.

Judge Rosemary Minehan: I read a lot of the work that so many people have been doing, and coming from the courts, I always feel like I am so far downstream. They are so far upstream that I was thinking about the nuts and bolts of what everyone was saying today, and I am thinking about logistics, and I am thinking about how we begin such an inventory. It is daunting. How do we do that? Do we send something to very educational institutions? Coming from the court system, my other thought is this requires a lot of thinking about how it would be implemented in criminal justice because we are pretty far upstream, so restorative justice is much more upstream than what happens at a trial. It is not set up to be a circle; the courts are not set up that way. When those conversations happen, they are very structured and limited. It can get very complicated, lots of family in the room, and everyone wants to talk. I would like to mention that I would be happy to partner with more knowledgeable people to get direction and try to get my head around how we count these programs and categorize them.

John Millet: I come from the court system too. I was wondering where restorative justice would fit in the probation service. I think this is a place that restorative justice could be beneficial. We could incorporate something like that in the letter we send out to the victims. We could see if they are interested in restorative justice.

Georgia (public member): I am very appreciative of the chance just to listen. I think everyone has made some valid and important points. I agree with the letter that was sent to EOPSS and grateful to have the chance to listen.

Brenda Nolan (public member): I am appreciative of everything that has been said so far. I am wondering about community education. Many people do not understand what restorative justice is, and I think it is very important to have community support. To look at the programs that exist and what they are doing, I think it is

important to make a plan and reach out to some of those programs to know other people who are also doing restorative justice and practices somehow. In my community, we are reaching out, and it is a very slow process. We are trying to bring that switch in thinking to our community. If the committee could be involved in that, that would be wonderful.

JoAnn (public member): This is a great conversation. And I agree that in the last few months, this group has really turned a corner. I think it is really important to bring new voices into this. One area I think is very important is to have returning citizens that have been incarcerated and bring their voices to the table. I work mostly with the alternatives to violence project, and I think many guys would be excellent to help run programs. Important to have those voices as well. Thank you to Kara for first mentioning the expansion of voices.

Maria DAddieco (public member): I very much agree with a lot of what has already been said. The real importance of paying attention to who is not at this table and making very specific efforts to bring those voices who are not at the table to bring them and have their voices heard. The other thing I would note is that restorative work at its best moves slow and I feel a real sense of urgency and I think in the next few years, we have an opportunity to make big changes and impact how the justice system works. We are doing some planning to ramp up and expand as much as possible. I would love to see the committee here get a sense of urgency and to make a lasting change is possible, and I do think it starts here and is possible.

Chairman Peck indicated that if we go through the entire list, we will not have enough time to go on to other agenda items. He asked if members of the committee wanted to speak and use public comment for public members.

Mary Quinn: I agree with everything everyone has said. When we talk about widening the circle in the heart of restorative justice, there is a woman who has been incarcerated eight different times. Since that time, she has been a champion for women that have been sexually exploited.

Chairman Peck: LIFT, for those interested, she does amazing work. We are working with them to create some capacity in the community that we can release some females with them to home confinement. I think Nikki is exactly who we are trying to achieve in this group. We should bring Nikki into this group. This is incredibly transformative work.

Erin Freeborn: I do want to underscore a few things people have said. I want to highlight what Maria said about a sense of urgency. And what Judge Minehan said about there are so many things to plan and possibilities, but we need to focus on certain things, and I want us to think about the sense of urgency because the potential for change and impact is huge right now. And think about the first step we can take and not get so bogged down with so many possibilities. Think about what we can achieve and what first step we can change to really make some progress and see some change.

5. RJAC Questionnaire

Chairman Peck: I do not know how many people have had the opportunity to see the questionnaire. Maybe we can discuss the questionnaire and bring that to shape—a discussion on how to distribute and what to do with the data we collect.

Kara Hayes: For the collective, I think, in thinking about what this inventory is, I think that the inventory is trying to get a sense of what programs are out in the world and get a sense of which programs have an infinity or interest in working with restorative justice, what is actually out there in practice.

** RJAC Questionnaire is on display**

Carolyn Boyes-Watson: I would propose thinking about this as a rolling process. Starting with a survey like this and asking for contact information, a bare-bones survey which is fine. But then I think we should do follow-ups with this once we figure out what we really want to know from folks.

Kara Hayes: I agree with that, and this is just to get us started.

Carolyn Boyes-Watson: I am happy to work on a subcommittee to flush out some of these points more. And then can keep coming back to the larger group—the start of an ongoing process.

Kara Hayes: I agree with that, Carolyn. Thinking about the process, this is an ongoing process. It is an evolving conversation.

Erin Freeborn: I think some of the work of unpacking the next steps should be done in a subcommittee. I do think that a very brief initial survey is valuable for reporting back because if we are really at the initial stage of asking people to be in conversation with us, keeping it very simple is probably the best way to go. Highly encourage us to keep our first inquiry quite simply.

Chairman Peck: In terms of the survey, I want to make sure everyone gets the opportunity to see it and share their feelings on it before we share and send it out. How much time do we need to share feedback on it and then send it out? Any thoughts on that from the committee. To provide some background on the questionnaire and what we are trying to accomplish with the questionnaire. I think that information would have to go along with the survey as well. I think we would create “buckets” that go to different areas. (example: folks in the educational system, police chiefs, prole system, community groups that run adjacent to the system, etc.)

Carolyn Boyes-Watson: I think we should also build it where the people can also give us other programs. Build in a referral of different groups and programs that are involved in restorative justice.

Anjeza Xhemollari- Subcommittee members for the questionnaire are:

- i. Judge Rosemary Minehan
- ii. Kara Hayes
- iii. Strong Oak
- iv. Carolyn Boyes-Watson

6. RJAC Planning Subcommittee

Chairman Peck: Becky, you offered to chair this committee. Becky confirms this. Do you have a vision for what you want to accomplish?

Becky Michaels: I think we want to start by figuring out how to get other voices heard. We need to figure out legislation on who we can bring into the committee. If we cannot add people to the committee, we need to figure out another way to bring in more voices. I am interested in having people be part of the deciding group and the planning group and incorporating more voices here on a more permanent voice. From there, I am thinking about what, besides the survey can this committee do. What are we as an advisory committee, what role can we play? There are so many ways we can make ourselves bigger and more vocal, and now is such an important time to be doing that. We still need to follow the legislative mandate. We have the survey piece of what we are mandated to do, but what other roles can we play.

Strong Oak- I would like to be on that committee. Also, when we look at this and look at the composition of our committee. There are only six community members on the committee, and I am wondering about having six fully present and contributing members of the committee (right now, we only really have five people consistently). I am also wondering about the language of the legislation. Is that something we can look at? How we can really expand the voices here. Another thought I had was that I am wondering if the vetting process

itself would keep out people that are reentering civilian life if that vetting process itself would preclude that. I remember it being pretty extensive.

Kara Hayes: I recognize that Chase, although he has not been here recently, is the only Black male on this committee, and I am mindful of that. I recognize that he has not been here for many of our meetings this year; we should also be careful moving forward with removing anyone from this committee. I appreciate you, Strong Oak, for bringing up the complexities of this work.

Strong Oak: I think there can be other black men at the table. I think people have tried to reach out, but I am not sure. But I do know that six people of the public at the table is not enough. If people have a voice at the table, they should be present at the table.

Kara Hayes: I think we should proceed to move forward mindfully.

Strong Oak: For all of us, how many meetings can we miss. I think there needs to be some consistency. Who is here and who isn't here. I miss people who aren't here. It is part of the bonding process. What is consistent attendance here?

Kara Hayes: I know Peck has met with Black men, and we are moving in the direction of representing those that are underrepresented.

Andrew Peck: I am going to work on getting those individuals involved in these meetings. In terms of adding people to the committee, I would imagine that would be legislative fixes needed. We can look into that. I am not sure what the vetting process is; I can look into that as well. But at the very least, I think we can engage those that are not represented here through our work. That is certainly possible. I think that would be fantastic. A couple of things that we can look at in the next month.

Becky Michaels: I think the planning subcommittee should meet within the next month to make a plan and discuss our options and how to move forward. We need to figure out how we can bring communities into these conversations.

Anjeza Xhemollari- Planning subcommittee members are:

- i. Becky Michaels (chair)
- ii. Strong Oak
- iii. Erin Freeborn
- iv. Mary Quinn (added a week later)

Erin Freeborn: Can I make a request for the subcommittee. Is it possible for the general council to do some research on the legislative requirements to understand who can join this committee?

Becky Michaels: Can the general counsel attend our first subcommittee meeting to look at the legislative fixes.

Chairman Peck- Spencer Lord is no longer with us anymore, but we have Arielle, and she would be happy to look into this for you. I also wanted to introduce Ariella; I apologize for not introducing her earlier.

Arielle Mullaney: I would be happy to look into this for you. And I am excited to be here.

7. Public Comment (10 minutes)

Brenda Nolan: Thank you for bringing up the legislation. I am very grateful for the conversation around including more voices. I am curious to see if the public could have any of the survey questions to look at and whether the public can participate in the subcommittee.

Anjeza Xhemollari: The public can attend the subcommittee meetings, and the agenda will be posted online.

Bonds: I am a retired teacher and former participant in the restorative justice practices. I did some restorative justice training at Suffolk University. I agree with Strong Oak, and voices need to be heard instead of names listed. Being Black and making sure that you have representation should not be an excuse to keep a seat vacant. I think that if this gentleman cannot attend, for whatever reason that may be, that seat should be filled. A voice that is not heard is a silent voice.

Kathy Reboul: I did want to say that I have been to Norfolk myself, and I am pleased the committee is considering having someone involved that has previously been incarcerated.

Jill Fagerberg: I appreciate what many people have discussed today. I think inclusivity is very important, and the need to change the legislation's language is very important.

8. Open Session for Topics not Reasonably Anticipated within 48 Hours of the Meeting

Chairman Peck: I would like to address something and bring it to the committee's attention. I was looking over the annual report and was prepared to sign it, but I noticed one thing at the very end. At the Impact of COVID-19, I am not sure how accurate it is that Governor Baker ordered all Executive branch employees to only focus on the virus. Chairman Peck has a new version.

** new version on display**

Kara Hayes and Strong Oak both approve of the new updated version. Allison Cartwright (chair of the annual report subcommittee) e-mails her approval.

Roll call is taken to approve the updated 2020 annual report. All present members vote in favor to accept the amended version. Motion passes unanimously.

9. Adjourn

Meeting adjourns at 12:54pm