

INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR JUVENILES

Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Justice Meeting Minutes

December 14, 2021

3:00 p.m. ET

Via Zoom



Voting Members in Attendance:

1. Sherry Jones (MD), Commissioner, Co-Chair
2. Becki Moore (MA), Designee, Co-Chair
3. Francis "Mike" Casey (DE), Commissioner
4. Agnes Denson (FL), Commissioner
5. Cathy Gordon (MT), Commissioner
6. Jessica Wald (ND), Designee
7. JoAnn Niksa (RI), Designee
8. Felicia Dauway (SC), Designee

Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

1. Tracy Howard (FL)
2. April Simmons (IN)
3. Mason Harrington (SC)
4. Raymundo Gallardo (UT)

Members Not in Attendance:

1. Lisa Bjergaard (ND), Commissioner
2. Jennifer LeBaron (NJ), Commissioner
3. Edwin Lee, Jr. (NJ), Designee
4. Jessica Nash (RI), Commissioner
5. Eavey-Monique James (USVI), Commissioner

National Office Staff & Legal Counsel in Attendance:

1. MaryLee Underwood, Executive Director
2. Amanee Cabbagestalk, Training and Administrative Specialist
3. Emma Goode, Logistics and Administrative Specialist
4. Jenny Adkins, Policies and Operations Specialist
5. Joe Johnson, Project Manager

Call to Order

Co-Chair Moore (MA) called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. ET.

Roll Call

Director Underwood called the roll and a quorum was established.

Agenda

- C. Gordon (MT) made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.**
S. Jones (MD) seconded. The agenda was approved by acclamation.

Minutes

C. Gordon (MT) made a motion to approve the July 27, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. S. Jones (MD) seconded. The motion carried.

Discussion

Establishing Meeting Norms (by Co-Chair Becki Moore)

- Co-Chair Moore (MA) shared a list of group meeting norms for members to consider as the 2nd year of the Ad Hoc Committee for Racial Justice begins.
- Co-Chair Moore (MA) reviewed each of the twelve (12) norms listed below and expanded on expectations for each.
 1. One person speaking at a time
 2. Embrace the power of active listening
 3. Recognize the difference between intent and impact
 4. Expect and accept a lack of closure
 5. Be willing to be uncomfortable
 6. Keep it here.
 7. Make “I” statements
 8. Ouch
 9. We don’t have to agree
 10. Demonstrate cultural humility – Hold yourself and others accountable
 11. Commit to having conversations that matter by speaking up
 12. Step-up, step-back
- The norms will be included on the next meeting agenda for further discussion of adoption.

Self-Introductions (by Co-Chair Sherry Jones)

- Co-Chair Jones (MD) led a round robin of members’ self-introductions and each member addressed the question: “*What motivated you to join the ICJ Ad Hoc Committee for Racial Justice this year?*”
- In summary, members highlighted a need for change in the area of racial equity and indicated they hoped to gain information that can be useful to their states. They joined the Ad Hoc Committee to be a part of the solution; to learn how they can impact change; and hear what other states are doing to implement successful strategies. R. Gallardo (UT) summed up the comments of many by saying that he wishes to learn how to hold himself “accountable and have a positive influence.”

Review 2021 ABM Feedback (by Co-Chair Sherry Jones)

- Co-Chair Jones (MD) shared data from the 2021 Annual Business Meeting (ABM) feedback survey, which was completed by 43 out of 168 registered to attend the ABM. Over half of the respondents rated the meeting as “excellent” and 80 percent rated as “above average” or “excellent.” All sessions were rated on a 1-3 scale, with weighted averages ranging from 2.5 – 2.91. While there was a narrow margin of difference, the top three were:
 - Rule Proposal Training
 - Involvement of Justice Involved Youth
 - UNITY 2021: Make Data Work for You

- The Racial Justice Ad Hoc Committee reviewed and discussed the 14 comments about the “Finding a Way: Racial Equity through Procedural Justice” session, which 67 percent rated as “very beneficial,” and “Youth Involvement,”. There were several positive comments regarding the impact of hearing the youth tell his story. Another positive comment was sharing the process and connection between the work of the Ad Hoc Committee and what was voted on. Committee members also discussed the following comment: “ICJ is an administrative unit. While everyone’s views are important, we have no impact on racial equity and should remain focus on what this compact is created for not areas outside of that. We do not decide who is on probation or not or who is detained or not.” Committee members indicated they believe ICJ staff can have a significant impact on racial equity, and briefly discussed strategies for doing so. S. Jones (MD) noted the role ICJ staff have in processing reports, and the importance of requiring the submission of sufficient information to support recommendations for failed supervision to ensure that the same standards are applied regardless of race. B. Moore (MA) noted that training regarding language used in reports could be very beneficial, and could directly impact cases.

Priorities for the Year *(by Co-Chair Becki Moore)*

Priorities in 2021

- Co-Chair Moore (MA) revisited the three priorities and accomplishments for the Ad Hoc Committee from last year as the committee looks to set priorities for 2022.
 1. By March 31, the Ad Hoc Committee will make recommendations to the ICJ Executive Committee regarding language and/or concepts related to racial justice/equity/inclusion for integration into the ICJ Mission/Vision/Results Statements.
 2. By May 31, the Ad Hoc Committee will make recommendations to the ICJ Executive Committee regarding revision of ICJ’s election process.
 3. By August 31, the Ad Hoc Committee will make additional recommendations to the ICJ Executive Committee regarding how the Commission can increase racial equity and inclusion.

ABM Suggestions for Priorities in 2022

- Co-Chair Moore (MA) provided an overview of the suggestions from the 2021 ABM survey for consideration as the members determine the 2022 priorities. Suggestions from the 2021 survey were as follows:
 - Develop best practices for structured responses
 - Continue to encourage diversity in leadership
 - Making sure we are capturing the right data
 - Training tools for states
 - Keep looking at the numbers and disparity among certain groups
 - Train the trainers in their own state
 - Percentage of changes in delinquent behavior
 - Review policies, protocols, by-laws to look for any areas to improve
 - Implicit bias:
 - In a manner that includes every race, no exclusions
 - What, if any, of our rules have implicit bias?
 - Implicit bias amongst counterparts/coworkers

- Is there implicit bias in home evaluations, request for revocation, or other processes?
- Data collection response
- Changes to mandatory acceptance rule
- Use of GAL and reps for returns
- Economic injustice and how it pertains to racial inequality
- Racial justice with youth who are sex trafficked
- How to approach situation where money or resources aren't the issue but getting those in power/positions to understand there IS a problem
- Number of youths of color held in detention under the Compact vs their peers for the same offenses
- How to incorporate ICJ data with other stakeholders to affect change
- Respect amongst each other, difference in approach & thinking cultural diversity
- Schedule ice breakers and training groups during ABM to include racial equity education and sharing of experiences and influences – We often self-segregate during the yearly meeting and this has bothered me.

Discussion of Priorities for FY 2022

- Co-Chair Moore (MA) opened the floor for ideas from members as to what they would like to explore or accomplish this year as the Ad Hoc Committee.
- Co-Chair Moore (MA) kicked off the discussion by commenting about the importance of education and developing training to meet people where they are.
- M. Harrington (SC) agreed to the importance of education and understanding conflict. She suggested to embrace conflict as a process of learning and growing.
- F. Dauway (SC) commented about the survey responses regarding not having control over who is placed on probation. She recalled the impact of a past ABM training with case scenarios and suggested training on the role ICJ personnel play in their state which would demonstrate the opportunity for impact.
- J. Wald (ND) agreed with focusing on training and education, and referenced the comment that included "...we have no impact on racial equity We do not decide who is on probation or not or who is detained or not." She suggested that a goal could be to dispel the idea that Compact staff have no impact.
- J. Niksa (RI) commented that perhaps addressing that survey comment could be an overarching goal and guide to specific priorities for the year.
- S. Jones (MD) suggested taking a closer look at how we handle human trafficking cases, and noted that she has noticed a difference in responses when the victim is a person of color. She highlighted the importance of secure housing and treatment to ensure safe returns rather than ending up back in the hands of the perpetrators.
- Co-Chair Moore (MA) thanked everyone for their input. The Ad Hoc Committee will continue the discussion at the next meeting to narrow the spectrum of ideas and develop priorities for 2022.

Nomination and Election Process Feedback

- Due to time, the nomination and election survey feedback will be discussed in the next meeting.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjourn

Co-Chair Moore (MA) adjourned by acclamation without objection at 4:01 p.m. ET.