

Minutes of the Racial Disparities Panel in Criminal and Juvenile Justice

February 13, 2018

Attendance. Panel: Geoffrey Jones, Mark Hughes, Bruce Wilson, Christine Longmore, Monica Weeber, Lisa Menard, Ken Schatz, Rebecca Turner, Judge Waples, Gary Scott. Public: Katrina Battle, Frederick Randall II, John Brooks, Jameson Davis, Anna Stevens, Chloe White, Ruben Jennings.

I. Meeting begins with a viewing of videos on systemic racism.

- Mark: Statistics on racial disparities. 2.3 million incarcerated. 800,000 in local jails. Many held pretrial.
- Mark: talks about upcoming effort to amend Vermont Constitution to get rid of the reference to slavery.

II. Committee Report Outs:

- Data Committee:

Jameson: we discussed data collection extensively. Didn't harp on police data. Tried to expand data collection discussion to other entities that have an impact on these issues. Think about how to go beyond the data, and what to do with it.

Mark: the police in VT, led by VSP, are the best model we have for data collection. We need others to do better.

- Complaint Process Committee:

Christine: we feel we have a good plan to use CJs as the primary venue for the public complaint process. Also using the HRC as a centralized venue.

Mark: one of the challenges on implicit bias is that everyone has it. White people have trouble talking about these issues.

Ken: every actor in state government needs to have some ability to deal with these problems and deal with complaints. There should be a centralized clearinghouse. It's also important that someone should take the lead on this and make sure everyone is using best practices.

If we have consistency in complaints process we can also have better data gathering. The complaint data should be published.

- Racial Profiling:

Bruce Wilson: 30 states have already adopted laws on racial profiling. The committee has looked to some of these laws as a model.

Chloe White: Gives a quick summary of the current state of racial profiling laws. A review shows that no state met NAACP's definition of an effective racial profiling law. NAACP has a model profiling law available for public review.

Rebecca Turner: question—is one of the possible remedies for a finding of racial profiling that evidence obtained as a result would be suppressed?

No clear answer from group.

Chloe: the investigating body for racial profiling complaints varies by state.

Mark: there are a lot of possible ways to enforce, including criminal charge.

Katrina: there are a lot of ways to talk about racial profiling but we really need a specific definition.

III. Draft Report:

Mark presents his draft report, compiled by Mark and Christine. Goes through it briefly with the group.

Group takes time to review draft report.

Christine adjourns meeting.