

Minutes of the Racial Disparities Panel in Criminal and Juvenile Justice

May 22, 2018

Panelists (and alternates) present: Jessica Brown, Geoffrey Jones, Shela Linton, Etan Nasreddin-Longo, Don Stevens, David Scherr, Rebecca Turner, Brian Grearson, Nancy Waples, Lisa Menard, Monica Weeber, Karen Vastine, James Whitcomb.

- I. Introductory remarks from the Attorney General Designee: The Attorney General strongly supports the work of the panel. He hopes the panel continues its work with respect, patience, and good will for all members, and ensures all panel member voices are taken into consideration.
- II. Election of the chair: Discussion regarding process for selection, as well as time requirements for the chair—a considerable time commitment. Panel members also express the need for more formal style for running meetings.

Motion: Etan nominates himself to serve. Geoffrey Jones seconds. With no other nominees Etan assumes chair by acclamation.

- III. Discussion ensues about whether to have a vice chair. Some favor following the letter of Act 54 and leaving out a vice chair, others favor having a vice chair as a way to share the labor and ensure continuity in absence of the chair

Motion: Don Stevens moves that the panel have no vice chair. Geoffrey Jones seconds. No further discussion. The motion passes.

- IV. Extensive discussion about how the panel should move forward. Some discussion of bringing back the high impact, high discretion decision points analysis—that may not have fit in well with the mandated report.

The panel has considerable interest in bringing in experts to talk about these issues. Use national and international expertise and avail ourselves of resources from other funding sources. There is broad agreement on the need for education for the panel (inward facing education).

In addition to inward facing education (for the panel), panelists also want to focus on outward facing education as an essential piece of our work.

Some panelists want a renewed focused effort on doing a new report, as mandated by the statute.

There is some challenge to the idea of who gets to be an expert. Who qualifies as an expert? Individuals with lived experience may also be experts.

Motion: Rebecca Turner moves that the next task of the panel should be to produce the report as mandated by 3 V.S.A. § 168(f)(6). Judge Grearson seconds.

Discussion: Some emphasize that the panel needs to include outward-facing education priorities as part of the report. There is agreement that education can fit in with section (6)(A). Also that the high-impact, high discretion analysis could fit in with that as well.

The motion passes.

- V. Discussion ensues regarding tasks panelists will complete before the next meeting. Broad agreement on reading the relevant, previously produced reports.
- VI. The panel adjourns.