

Sanford Kransoff New Orleans Criminal Justice Council Minutes for Meeting of October 13, 2021

Roll Call

Derwyn Bunton, Chief Public Defender – Absent
Lakeasha Cooley, OJJ Regional Manager – Absent
Chief Judge Ranord Darensburg, Orleans Parish Juvenile Court – Designee Present
Kenneth Dorsey, Citizen Representative-at-Large – Present
Judge Sean Early, Municipal and Traffic Court – Absent
Superintendent Shaun Ferguson, NOPD – Present
Thelma French, Total Community Action – Present
Donna Glapion, City Councilmember-At-Large – Present
Jennifer Greer, District Administrator Probation and Parole – Absent
Chief Judge Karen Herman, Criminal District Court – Designee Present
Ernest Johnson, Citizen Representative-at-Large – Present
Sunni LeBeouf, City Attorney – Absent
Gilbert Montano, Central Administrative Office – Designee Present
Helena Moreno, City Councilmember-at-Large - Designee Present
Arthur Morrell, Clerk of Court – Designee Present
Cyndi Nguyen, City Councilmember District E – Absent
Tenisha Stevens, Mayor's Office – Present
Melanie Talia, NOPJF – Present
Charles West, Citizen Representative-at-Large – Present
Jason Williams, District Attorney – Present
Emily Wolff, Office of Youth and Families – Absent

I. Opening Remarks

Commissioner Stevens welcomed the members and thanked them for attending the meeting rescheduled as a consequence of Hurricane Ida.

II. Adoption of Minutes

Commissioner Stevens invited the members to offer any corrections to the minutes for the previous meeting of September 18th.

Seeing there were no corrections Commissioner Stevens invited a motion to adopt the minutes. So moved by Thelma French and adopted by voice vote.

III. Hurricane Ida Recovery and COVID-19 Updates

Commissioner Stevens invited the criminal justice agencies to brief the council on their hurricane recovery activities and any outstanding needs.

Chief Ferguson reported the successful completion of NOPD's operation Golden Eagle undertaken in partnership with Louisiana State Police. NOPD identified reductions in violent crime during the operation

as well as the removal of more than 80 firearms. NOPD has shifted to efforts to consolidate and sustain these gains.

Anne McKinley reported the Sheriff's office buildings had sustained some storm damage, which was still being assessed. The jail population was temporarily and successfully evacuated to Angola ahead of the storm. The Sheriff's department did not lose power and operated continued operations throughout the event and assisted NOPD in patrols.

Chief Judge Karen Herman reported the Criminal District Court building sustained storm damage including one of the site's historic chandeliers and significant water intrusion in 2nd floor jury rooms. Jury trials are planned to resume October 18th there has been a robust response to call for jurors. A hybrid distance/in-person model will be employed with public access to trials via Zoom.

Michael Hunter reported the Clerk of Court building sustained some water damage and was closed from 9/7-9/19. The Clerk's office has returned to normal operations.

Commissioner Stevens reported that Municipal and Traffic Court will be operating as soon as October 18th from the Veterans Hospital building.

IV. Grant Allocations

Commissioner Stevens briefed the council on allocations of FY 2019 and FY 2020 VOCA residuals. VOCA residual funds do not require a vote of the council for allocation past the initial consideration of proposals but can be distributed at the discretion of the Mayor.

For FY 19 the district of New Orleans was allocated \$3.8M in VOCA funding. Of that sum \$90,718 remain as residuals. The administration has decided to allocate \$20K to Criminal District Court as an extension of FY 19 funding for the court's Domestic Violence Monitoring Court program. The Musicians Clinic will be awarded \$50K following the approval of their NOI by LCLE in December. VOCA FY 19 grantees with new projects will be considered for additional grants from the remaining \$20,718.

The VOCA FY 2020 residuals in the amount of \$478,934 are being held in reserve against probable cuts in FY 2022 VOCA funding.

Commissioner Stevens directed the council members to consider the applications submitted for the FY 2020 Byrne JAG funds in the amount of \$237,122. The four NOIs that were received totaled \$454,332 in requests, leaving a gap of \$217,210. Proposals were submitted by Juvenile Court, District Attorney, Criminal Court and NOPD. These members must abstain from discussion and voting beyond answering questions about their proposal. Commissioner Stevens required the representative from each agency to present their proposal in 3 minutes.

Brianna Rock presented Juvenile Court's application for continued funding for the court's MELOW program, which provides peer group support and positive character-building activities for system-involved boys. Increases in funding are slated to provide work program stipends of \$400 a month for four months (the average time of participation in the program). These stipends will help youth overcome systemic barriers that block access to employment and pro-social youth activities (e.g. transport costs, work attire). Stipends would be conditional on youth's good standing and regular attendance in MELOW.

Commissioner Stevens invited questions from the council members.

Thelma French asked what analytics or follow up outcomes are available for assessing the success of the program, which had not been included in the application. Ms. Rock agreed to provide these analytics.

District Attorney Williams briefly expressed the importance of diversion and trauma-informed approaches to juvenile justice and gave the floor to Tennee Felix, chief attorney for the Juvenile Division to present the NOI.

Ms. Felix presented the DA's application to expand its juvenile diversion program by hiring three additional diversion councilors, which they projected would allow the DA's office to divert as many as 320 children per year based on current arrest patterns rates.

Commissioner Stevens invited questions for Ms. Felix. Jon Wisbey of the CAO's office asked for clarification about the rationale for employing four councilors rather than three.

The idea case load according to leading peer programs case load for a councilor should be about 40. DA Williams added that performance measures were being developed by in-house data analysts to better measure the performance of diversion and other programs.

Commissioner Stevens asked Joseph Haines to present Criminal District Court's NOI.

Joseph Haines presented Criminal District Court's request for funding to hire a Domestic Violence Intake Screener to join the Domestic Violence Monitoring program, and related office materials to support them. This staffer would identify acute needs for individuals ordered to participate in the monitoring program to improve case management and reduce recidivism.

Commissioner Stevens invited questions for Mr. Haines. Hearing none she invited the representative from NOPD to present their NOI.

Captain Nicholas Gernon presented an application to fund additional police overtime in the 7th and 9th districts with two objectives. First to increase the number of search warrants related to gun crimes a strategy described as "hotspot policing with targeted individuals," and second to provide comprehensive follow-up with neighbors through the Community Liaison Office, to both solicit information and to build a more positive feedback loop with communities.

Commissioner Stevens invited questions for Captain Gernon. Hearing none she asked the council to deliberate and prepare a motion for allocation. OCJC's recommendation was that all four agencies should receive partial funding but asked the council to determine the final proportioning in an omnibus motion.

Jon Wisbey suggested the proposals be considered starting with those with the fewest discrete funding components and moving on to the more complex where scaling could be considered to arrive at practical partial funding solutions. Mr. Wisbey observed that since the CDC proposal was for a single staffing position and necessary equipment it was necessary to fund the position in full or not at all if the Council wanted to make effective use of the available funds.

Charles West asked Juvenile Court whether the Program Coordinator was currently on staff and how they were funded. Brianna Rock responded that the Program Coordinator is presently funded by a previous Byrne/JAG grant.

Ernest Johnson asked if the Grant Supervisor could review the staff recommendation that guarantees some money to all applicant agencies.

Jenny Abler reviewed the dual-option staff recommendations. Both options prescribe full funding at \$54,838 for Criminal District Court and partial funding at \$59,322 for the District Attorney to hire one additional diversion counselor. Under Option A Juvenile Court would receive \$64,000 to funding for the work stipends, while under Option B it would receive \$46,413 to fund the Program Coordinator position. Funding for NOPD overtime scales accordingly depending on how much money is allocated to Juvenile Court with \$58,962 under Option A and \$76,549 under Option B.

Mr. Johnson endorsed making the allocation according to staff recommendation with funding for stipends allocated to Juvenile Court.

Charles West proposed to fund two councilors for the District Attorney at \$125,310 while removing money for supplies, provide full funding for the Criminal District Court and to fund the Juvenile Court work stipends. This resulted in an overage of about \$7,026 which was moderated by a reduction in the work stipends to \$56,974.

After some further discussion by the council members a motion confirming the availability of additional funds through the mid-year budgeting process to provide additional funding for NOPD overtime and the DA's "aggressive pursuit" of additional philanthropic dollars to fill any gaps in a second counselor's salary as well as in pursuit of a third counselor. Final allocations \$118,284 for the District Attorney for partial funding for two diversion counselors, full funding (\$54,838) for Criminal District Court, and fully funded work stipends (\$64,000) for Juvenile Court. A motion was sought to approve this allocation. So moved by Thelma French and seconded by Kenneth Dorsey. The motion was passed by roll call vote as follows:

Kenneth Dorsey- Yes

Ferguson- Abstain

Thelma French- Yes

Donna Glapion- Yes

Anne McKinley- Yes

Judge Karen Herman- Abstain

Ernest Johnson- Yes

Sayde Finke on behalf of Helena Moreno- Yes

Michael Hunter on behalf of Arthur Morrell – Yes

Melanie Talia- Yes

Charles West – Yes

V. Membership and Structure

At the SKNOCJC's last meeting OCJC was directed to consider possible changes to the membership of the Council. Adrienne Tobler presented the staff proposal to be considered by the council at the November meeting. The total members would be raised to twenty-five with additional Mayor-appointed members to represent justice-involved communities with specific focuses on returning citizens, mental

health services, victims and survivors of crime, youth advocacy, minorities and the New Orleans Business Council. A new subcommittee for Grants Allocation would be formed to build in greater councilmember participation in the grant process. Moving to quarterly meetings of the whole council would support an enlarged role for the subcommittees.

Ms. French asked how the adoption of the Ethnic and Racial Disparities working group recommendations would be reflected in the organization of the Council. Ms. Tobler agreed that the Ethnic and Racial Disparities working group could and probably should be made a standing subcommittee in the council's bylaws.

District Attorney Williams recommended that deepening school representation should be considered. Commissioner Stevens agreed but observed that the inclusion of the Office of Youth and Families was meant to serve that purpose.

VI. Closing remarks and Adjournment

Commissioner Stevens thanked the members for their time and sought a motion to adjourn the meeting. So moved by Karen Herman and seconded by District Attorney Jason Williams.