

Our mission is to: prevent youth legal system involvement, shield youth from the adverse impact of a criminal record, eliminate racial and ethnic disparities, and reduce the risk of reentering the system.

**Council for Equitable Youth Justice
Meeting Approved Minutes (Hybrid)
Dec 18, 2025, 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

Public Location: Waterbury State Office Building, 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT

Attendees: Karen Vastine, Jessica Barquist, Donn Hutchins, Amy Davenport, Zoe Souder, Julia Brand, Sparks, Laurey Burris, Stu Berry, Linda Johnson, Mike Loner, Katherine O'Day, Matt Wolf, Kate Hayes, Peter Brown, Mercedes King

Absent: Paul Groce and Hudson Ranney

Partners: Sheri Lynn (Dept for Children and Families); Hunter Hurst (National Center for Juvenile Justice)

Public: Nate Hines and Kellie Coakley

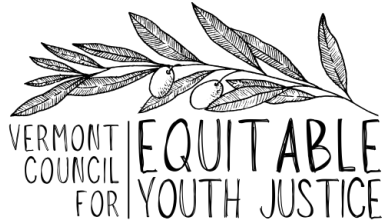
The meeting was called to order by Karen 10:34 with a quorum present.

Federal, State, and Local Updates

1. **CEYJ 2026 Meetings:** Recognized the value of in-person. In person meetings scheduled for March 19 at Montpelier-Pavillion BGS - MTPL 109 State 4th Floor Conf Rm 410, a retreat in July or August, and November 19 in Randolph Town Office.
2. **Succession Planning:** Donn, Mike, and Karen are discussing leadership rotation and term limits. The Governance Committee will work on this.
3. **Council Membership:** Matt Wolf will not reapply for his council position in February 2026 but will continue with the Youth Services Committee.
4. **Professional Update:** Peter has a nursing assistant license.
5. **Family Engagement:** The third cohort for case planning is scheduled for October, with applications for March and April upcoming. A 6-minute AI link is to be shared with Karen and the council.

Council Business

1. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes from November 20 were approved.
2. **FFY 24 Budget:** The committees will discuss repurpose funds and provide input in January. Committees will receive guidelines regarding the funding for each committee.
3. **Juvenile Justice Conference:** The motion passes to approve sending two members to attend the National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges



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[Juvenile Justice Conference](#) in March 15 – 18, 2024. Karen and Laurey volunteered.

Project Update

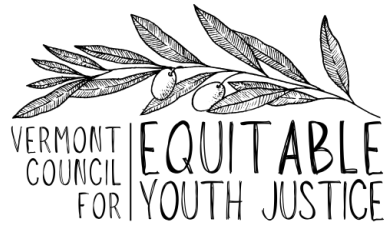
1. **High-End System of Care/NCJJ:** Project to gather feedback from stakeholders and youth to build recommendations to ensure Vermont's high-needs youth detention center provides safe, effective care.
 - a. Hunter has completed some interviews with council members and Dept for Children and Family.
 - b. DCF and Elevate Youth will coordinate with NCJJ to arrange three youth listening sessions which will need Institutional Review Board (IRP) to ensure ethical protocols with youth.
 - c. Suggestions for family involvement: Preventing Child Abuse Vermont, Easter Seals, and VT Family Network.
 - d. Stu, Linda, Laurey, and Sparks volunteered to help connect with youth and adults with lived experience.
2. **CEYJ Impact Brief:** The impact brief was well received. Discussed adding reference to OJJDP and removing names of contractors.

Committee Reports

1. **ERD:** Exploring nontraditional data collection methods and community engagement with youth groups and police. Committee needs to discuss the recruitment of 3 members of the global majority to the ERD committee (statewide or targeted).
2. **Governance:** Will begin developing a succession plan and rolling out a recruitment process, asking council members for candidates and using recruitment resources (e.g., talking points).
3. **Youth Services:** Council members can complete a bio form, which is a resource for new members. Some committee members are reviewing youth voice proposals.
4. **System Improvement:** Discussing Vermont's probation system and diversion practices, with possible proposal for legislative changes. Reviewing the 3 proposals from the retreat. Considering a data proposal for the council (proposal for funding) to identify an organization to create a program to run the data.

Public Comments

- **Kellie Coakley:** Discussed youth gun violence and proposed a program involving theatre and skits to address the issue. Suggested collaboration with Gun Sense and other organizations.



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The meeting adjourned at 12:20.