



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 Draft Minutes**

August 4, 2026, 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Public Location: Silver Lake, 20 State Park Beach Rd, Barnard, VT

09:55 Karen calls the meeting to order

Attendees: Karen Vastine, Sparks, Kate Hayes, Linda Johson, Mike Loner, Julia Brand, Donn Hutchins, and Stu Berry

Guests: Lindsey Weiss (public member), Sheri Lynn (Dept for Children and Families), Hunter Hurst (National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, National Center for Juvenile Justice)

1. Annual meeting to elect officers postponed (no quorum)

2. Council Structure

- Recruitment and retention recognized need for outreach and advertise about Council
 - Members encouraged to add to the google recruitment sheet and reach out directly to potential member; resources available like talking points
 - Reminder looking for law enforcement, prosecutor and corrections reps
 - There are orientation materials (handbook) for new members.
 - Governance committee will be working on a check list (timeline) and asked for volunteers to be new council member mentors/buddies
 - **Action Step:**
 - Members are encouraged to outreach and share names with Mike.
 - Kate will follow up with Paul about prosecutors.
 - Julia will follow up with UVM Crime Sociology Dept.
 - Executive Committee Monthly check in on status of recruitment efforts
- According to the Council and Committee members' survey results (7 council members who responded) there was an interest in holding Council meeting on Thursday late afternoon
 - **Action Step:** Karen and Sheri will follow up with specific time of day to pinpoint whether to change the current meeting schedule
- ERD Committee has experienced not having a quorum to meet. On recommendation is for the ERD committee to focus on advisory role, which it has in the past. ERD committee could review their charter to address roles and other concerns.



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- Governance committee also seen a drop off on attendance which may be due to members participating in more than one committee.

3. High End System of Care – Background (Hunter Hurst, NCJJ)

- Reviewed levels in the system of care with support from DCF
- Vermont is more integrated than other states
- Difference from other states is the Raise the Age which factors in 18-year-olds
- Youthful offender program helps given Vermont's strict transfer policy
- 50% of kids are out of state in the system
- Council agreed they do not want kids sent out of state
- Asked about recidivism (Hunter will follow up): There is reduction in caseload for probation and sometimes youth re-offend at a lesser offense than the prior offense.
- Courts and schools are disconnected, and schools could help with mental health and wrap around services
- Five points of a system to consider are: intensive wrap around, what happens when kids get kicked out of the home, kinship structure, transitions and step downs, and what supervision model use.

4. High End System of Care- Identify three goals/priorities the council thinks are important to factor in the program

- Discussed ethnic and racial disparities, Raise the Age, kids remain in Vermont, optimal size, and inclusion of youth and family voice as principles of the Council's three HESOC priorities:
 - Access to family/chosen family,
 - Early intervention/prevention,
 - Individualize case planning that is trauma informed

Meeting adjourned 3:30 PM

Executive Committee: Chairs or co-chairs from each committee available

Motion passed to terminate the Hartford Community Restorative Justice Center (HCRC) agreement with DCF effective immediately and proceed with issuing an RFP to identify an organization to administer the program for one year.