



Connecticut Racial Profiling Prohibition Project

Thursday, March 22, 2012

10am – 12pm

Central Connecticut State University
Student Center, Bellin Gallery

Meeting Minutes

Present: William Dyson, John DeCarlo, Andrew Clark, Ken Barone, Glenn Cassis, Under Secretary Mike Lawlor, Chief Douglas Fuchs, Commissioner Bradford, Michael Gailor, Werner Oyanadel, Robert Brothers, Tamara Lanier, Sean Thakkar, Mui Mui Hin-McCormick, Thomas Maziarz, Stephen Cox, Gabriel Cano, Aaron Swanson, Joseph Cristalli, Art Kurezcka, Jim Fazzalaro, Cheryl Sharp, Rep. Gary Holder-Winfield, Deborah Sullivan, Steven Kliger, Julie Schnobrich-Davis

Absent: James Forman

The meeting was called to order at 10:06am

1. Welcome on behalf of Co-Chairs William Dyson and John DeCarlo

During the introductions, Mr. Dyson and Mr. DeCarlo spoke about the nature of the project and their role as co-chairs. Mr. Dyson is former longtime state legislator and current holder of the Governor William A. O'Neill Endowed Chair in Public Policy and Practical Politics at Central Connecticut State University. Mr. DeCarlo is former Chief of police in Branford and current Associate Professor of criminal justice and forensic science at the University of New Haven. Mr. DeCarlo mentioned that it should be the goal of this advisory board to base all assumptions on science and partner academia with practitioners in the field.

The co-chairs invited all members of the advisory board to make recommendations to extend an invitation to other interested parties, it was stressed that this is an inclusive process. It was mentioned that there should be a representative from the Judicial Branch.

2. Introductions of Advisory Board Members

3. Introduction of current project team staff

The Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy (IMRP) currently staffs the Racial Profiling Prohibition Project. The project staff includes:

Andrew Clark, Director, IMRP

Jim Fazzalaro, Retired Office of Legislative Research researcher

Art Kureczka, Retired Wethersfield Police Officer and Professor of Criminal Justice

Ken Barone, Policy Specialist, IMRP

Jason DePatie, Policy Specialist, IMRP

4. Alvin W. Penn Act Overview- Jim Fazzalaro

Mr. Fazzalaro presented an overview of the Alvin W. Penn Act and current raised legislation before the General Assembly to make changes to the law.

Discussion ensued following the presentation about the scope of the law being limited to only traffic stops. The NAACP raised concerns about other racial profiling taking place and the misrepresentation of a person race by officers on occasion.

Rep. Holder-Winfield clarified that the current law deals with the perception the officer had of the person being stopped. He also commented that the changes in the law moved oversight to OPM.

It was stressed by co-chair DeCarlo that the programs that will be developed to curb racial profiling and collect data should be education and data driven. Big ideas, including the effects of socio-economic status should be discussed. Chief Fuchs agreed that this should be a data driven process informed by practitioners and academia.

A general discussion about data, methodology and the scope of the project took place. All members agreed that data collection would be important and should be discussed at upcoming meetings.

5. Project Overview

- NHTSA grant

Mr. Clark gave a project update regarding the current status of the federal racial profiling grant. The IMRP has been working with the CT Department of Transportation to secure a two-year \$1.2 million grant to address racial profiling in Connecticut. The grant is offered through the National Highway Transit Safety Administration (NHTSA). It is a research and planning grant that focuses on traffic stop information. Mr. Clark shared the original IMRP proposal with the board for more detailed information.

Mr. Maziarz from DOT mentioned that his agency was happy to be working with CCSU and outlined the scope of the project below:

1. Review existing law, reporting forms and current best practices
2. Research and data analysis
3. Develop and administer training
4. Public involvement in the process.

NHTSA representative to the board, Mr. Cano mentioned that there is a way to access more funds if Connecticut collected traffic stop data on the driver and all passengers in the vehicle. Mr. Cano expressed his desire for this group to research other states such as Massachusetts so that Connecticut does not reinvent the wheel.

A discussion took place about adding the passengers to the data collection through statute or general procedure. There were concerns about making the law too narrow, but all of this will be decided at future meetings.

6. General Discussion

The co-chairs asked Mr. Thakkar from CJIS if he would present to the group about the CJIS system at a future meeting. Mr. Thakkar will present at a future meeting and stated that the use of technology will not be difficult with the development of the CJIS system.

A discussion took place about adding race to the DMV driver's license. Under Secretary Lawlor mentioned that DMV use to have that information on a person's license, but the law removed it. The DMV also entered into a contract with a private contractor and the state currently does not own the rights to the DMV photo bank.

Board members were invited to the following upcoming events:

- a. March 27, 2012- Tolerance Center law enforcement training program
- b. March 28, 2012- Racial Profiling Informational Session

7. Next Steps

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 5, 2012 at 10:00am at CCSU.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15pm.