



Minutes

Thursday, August 22, 2024

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Virtual

Advisory Board Members Present: William Dyson (Chair), Chief Neil Dryfe, Michael Gailor, Joe Cristalli, Eyvonne Parker-Bair, Piotr Milczek, Chief Vern Riddick, Kelly Mero, Chief L.J. Fusaro, Commissioner Ronnell Higgins, Colonel Daniel Loughman, Gail Hardy, Werner Oyanadel, Cheryl Sharp, Shannon Trice, Tamara Lanier

Staff: Ken Barone, Jim Fazzalaro, Erica Escobar

I. Welcome & Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. and members introduced themselves.

II. Approval of the June 20, 2024, meeting minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from June 20, 2024. The minutes were unanimously approved by members via voice vote.

III. Subcommittee Reports

a. Data Collection, Analysis, and Quality

Ken Barone updated that the subcommittee will meet on September 10th. This fall, they will focus on developing a data integrity model policy and review existing policies for potential improvements.

b. Policy

The subcommittee will meet on September 9th. They will review last year's legislation and discuss upcoming legislative issues for the next year.

c. Community Outreach

The community outreach subcommittee has been active over the summer. The upcoming public forum will take place in Danbury on September 18th at the Danbury Public Library—this will be the first forum held in Danbury. A flyer and notice will be sent out after the meeting. Advisory

Board members are encouraged to attend. Another forum will be held in Cheshire in later this year. The subcommittee chose these locations to engage with new and smaller communities and has found partnering with public libraries effective.

IV. Old Business

a. CSP Trooper/Constable Record Reconciliation report status update

The CSP Trooper/Constable Record Reconciliation report update indicates that a supplementary report was planned to summarize findings from the reconciliation process with the state police. This involved reviewing 105 troopers with significant discrepancies to understand their causes and identify improvements.

While the reconciliation process for troopers has concluded, drafting the summary report is still in progress. The new target is to complete and share the report with the board this fall.

The constable review is nearing completion and should be finalized by the end of the month. Key findings include issues with constables using multiple badge numbers issued by different entities, which has been addressed by a state police directive to standardize badge numbers.

Overall, the process has provided valuable insights into system and training improvements.

b. Traffic Stop Data Collection System Updates Released

The Advisory Board approved several updates to the data collection system. These updates required collaboration with CJIS to revise technical documentation for police vendors, upgrade servers, and build a test system for vendors to ensure functionality before going live.

A memo detailing the changes was recently sent to all law enforcement agencies, along with the technical documentation needed for vendors. The project staff is targeting January 1, 2025, as the go live date. Key changes include:

1. Updated Data Fields:

- a. Allowing for the reporting of non-binary gender with the designation 'X'
- b. Changing the "blind enforcement" designation to "technology" to clarify its meaning.

- c. Adding new categories for search authorization (e.g., warrant, incident to arrest, Plainview) and collecting detailed information on searches of drivers and passengers.
- 2. Additional Data Fields:
 - a. Reporting the number of vehicle occupants and their zip codes (optional).
 - b. Including the ticket number to link records with the infraction system.

Ken noted that while the goal is to implement these changes by January 1, 2025, flexibility will be necessary. The timeline may shift based on vendor updates and associated costs. Efforts are being made to manage costs and encourage vendors to incorporate these updates efficiently. A small amount of federal grant money has been set aside to address potential issues with vendor costs if needed.

V. New Business

a. CTRP3 Program Evaluation (Quantitative and Qualitative)

The project staff has been working with research partners at Northeastern University to evaluate Connecticut's departmental interventions. The aim is to determine if these interventions have reduced disparities and if they have impacted roadway safety.

Their preliminary findings, published as a working paper by the National Bureau of Economic Research, show that the program has successfully reduced disparities by 24% over the past decade without compromising roadway safety.

The next phase of the evaluation involves qualitative analysis. Researchers will interview Advisory Board members, police chiefs from involved departments, and community members to gather insights on the program's impact and perception. This phase aims to be completed by the end of the year, with a final paper expected.

b. Project website updates and video production project

Ken announced that new interviews will be conducted by a videographer at UConn in Hartford on September 23rd, 24th, and 25th. Those contacted will be asked to schedule a 30-minute slot on one of these days. The goal is to create updated video content for the website and social media to better showcase Connecticut's efforts in addressing the issue.

VI. General Discussion

Werner Oyanadel raised a question about the 2022 Traffic Stop Analysis Report released in June, which noted that towns like Glastonbury and Wethersfield were stopping Hispanic drivers more frequently. He inquired about the steps the Advisory Board could take to further investigate these findings, including how to analyze the data to understand the reasons for these discrepancies and what actions could be taken to address them.

Ken stated that the report highlighted initial disparities in traffic stops involving Hispanic drivers in Glastonbury and Wethersfield. However, these towns did not meet the criteria for further analysis. The analysis included robustness checks to determine if the initial disparities were significant or due to factors outside law enforcement control.

In both cases, the sample sizes were too small for reliable results after these checks, which is why they were not selected for additional follow-up. The report noted the initial disparities but indicated that they did not persist in subsequent tests. Therefore, Glastonbury and Wethersfield did not meet the criteria for further investigation, and no additional focus was placed on their data.

Ken also suggested that with the 2023 data, they could address this potential concern by asking the research team to perform both a three-year and a five-year look back for these jurisdictions. This approach might improve sample sizes and provide more clarity, allowing for a more detailed analysis if the Advisory Board would like to pursue this further.

Chief Dryfe raised concerns that adding seven new data fields might be perceived as an attempt to find issues where none exist, despite recent positive findings showing no disparate impact. He questioned the need for data on the number of vehicle occupants without demographic information, suggesting it may not be useful. Chief Dryfe emphasized the importance of maintaining trust and transparency, ensuring that the introduction of new data fields does not suggest an effort to uncover problems where none were previously identified.

Cheryl Sharp expressed agreement with Chief Dryfe's concerns about the potential perception that adding new data fields might suggest an effort to find problems where none exist. She emphasized the need for clarity to ensure that improvements in the data do not imply that discrimination is not occurring. Cheryl Sharp suggested that while the board's work has been commendable, it's important to balance perception with information. She advocated for a thorough explanation and full discussion to ensure that all viewpoints are considered, reinforcing that the board's work should be both comprehensive and transparent.

Ken emphasized the need for improved communication with law enforcement and the importance of soliciting their feedback on decisions.

To address these concerns, biannual data training sessions will be held at the Police Academy on the second Tuesday of February and August. These sessions will focus on data training, discuss emerging issues, and gather feedback on current practices, including use of force. Ken hopes this increased engagement will enhance communication and responsiveness.

There was no further discussion and the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.