

**County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers Association of PA**  
**General Business Meeting**  
**Friday, June 23, 2023**  
**Graduate Hotel, State College and Zoom**

**Chief POs in attendance in person:** Gale Kendall (Adams), Chris Franceschi (Armstrong-proxy), Dan Heydt (Berks), Amanda Moore (Blair), Andrew Hathorn (Cameron), Ryan Smeltzer (Centre), Chris Pawlowski (Chester), Mike Blum (Clarion), Trevor Oates (Crawford), Chad Libby (Dauphin), Jen Quagliani (Elk), Chris Kessler (Erie), James Caccimelio (Fayette), Doug Wilburne (Franklin), Len Hahn (Huntingdon), James Decker (Indiana-proxy), Tracy Gordon (Jefferson), Michelle Beaver (Juniata), Nick Wolfkiel (Mifflin), Bernie Sikora (Monroe), Kathy Subbio (Montgomery), Tim Heitzman (Northumberland), Roger Miller (Perry), Jeffrey Angradi (Pike) and April Billet (York)

**Chief POs in attendance via Zoom:** Matthew Kimmel (Carbon), Shawn Burkhart (Clearfield), Don Coleman (Columbia & Montour), Darby Christlieb (Cumberland), Christine Katch (Delaware-proxy), Dan Miller (Fulton), Craig Wise (Greene), Meghan Osborne (Lackawanna-proxy), Mark Wilson (Lancaster), James Jendrysik (Lawrence), Audrey Fortna (Lebanon), Mark Surovy (Lehigh), Dave Goodwin (Lycoming), Frank Toto (Northampton-proxy), Anthony Aner (Philadelphia), Brian Abel (Potter), CJ Begansky (Schuylkill), Colin Devanney (Snyder), Dave Roman (Somerset), Krystle Kowalczyk (Sullivan & Wyoming), Julie Bullard (Venango), Jim Chapman (Wayne) and Eric Leydig (Westmoreland)

**Others in attendance in person:** Steven Fingado (Cameron), Andrew Cooper (Dauphin), Geoffrey Willett (Franklin), Amanda Yurky (Indiana), Adam Oakes (Jefferson), Abby Krepps (Juniata), Brett Cole (Lancaster), Jennifer Nissley (Lancaster), Colton Spade (Mifflin), Renee Ficzkowski (Montgomery), Michelle Orris (Perry), Kelly Ross (York), Rhys Kershaw (York)

Helene Placey (CCAPPOAP), Todd Sackett (JNET), Tom Backenstoe (PA Sentencing Commission), Kathy Clarke (PCCD), Jackie Weaknecht (PCCD), Frank Scherer (PCCD) Rick Parsons (Carey Group)

**Others in attendance via Zoom:** Renawn Harris (Allegheny), Brendan Harker (Berks), Amy Petracca (Butler), Amanda Jackson (Butler), Joe Berke (Carbon), Bill Mann (Chester), Rick Marnari (Chester), Sandi Larson (Chester), Bill Decker (Elk), Chris Frye (Lebanon), Ryan Gingrich (Lebanon), Pam Sheffer (Lehigh), Kristin Berke (Lehigh), Rob Wolff (Pike)

Tom Dougherty (DOC-Court Services), Nevin Warner (AOPC), Sally Barry (PCCD), Robert Sisock (PA Commission on Sentencing)

*Note: There were other individuals on zoom that were not able to be identified.*

**Meeting called to order:** by President April Billet at 9:00 am

Secretary Len Hahn and Helene Placey took roll call of all county chiefs in attendance. It was determined a quorum had been established.

## **President's Welcome:**

April Billet welcomed all those attending the meeting.

## **OFFICER'S REPORTS**

### **President**

April and Doug had a meeting with the Governor's Office to discuss probation reform since it was most likely going to be reintroduced. April and Doug encouraged streamlining the early termination process.

April informed the Chiefs that Senate Bill 838 proposing probation reform had passed the Senate and was now being introduced in the House for passage. April encouraged the Chiefs to read SB 838 as the association will most likely be asked for our position on what is being proposed. Helene indicated that she will summarize the bill and send it out to the Chiefs to get a consensus on the association's position on the bill.

April reminded the Chiefs that at our last general membership meeting on 3/3/23 it was approved to raise the annual assessments by 10% in 2024.

April recently met with Jason Snyder who is the Director of Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services, Behavioral Health Division with the Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association (RCPA) to discuss the changes in PA's drug and alcohol confidentiality laws. With these changes it eliminates the requirement that a D&A provider can only release 5 points of information even with a release. The new regulations are in line with standard HIPPA regulations. DDAP has given no guidance to providers though, so providers continue to fall back on the old, outdated regulations. April will continue to communicate with RCPA and anticipates participating in a future panel discussion about D&A confidentiality to help raise the issues.

Lastly, April discussed a problem that York County has experienced since implementing an early termination policy. It was brought to her attention that intercounty transfer cases should also be eligible for early termination, but it would require the county providing courtesy supervision to notify of completion of court obligations and/or goals. April has asked Pam to have her committee (Intercounty Affairs) develop guidelines for early termination of transfer cases.

### **Vice President**

Doug Wilburne had no report.

### **Secretary**

Len Hahn reported that a draft of the minutes from the March 3, 2023 General Membership meeting were disseminated by Helene via email. Len asked for a motion to be made to approve the minutes. Chad Libby made the motion and Chris Pawlowski seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. Helene reminded the Chiefs that all of the general business meeting minutes are posted on the Chiefs Association website for review under the members only section.

## Treasurer

On Christine Shenk's behalf, Helene reviewed the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter Treasurer's report for 2023 showing an ending balance of \$214,255.80 after all expenses (Helene's 1<sup>st</sup> quarter salary & expenses, Hyatt Place State College-March Meeting, Cincinnati Insurance-liability premium, Liberty Mutual-dishonesty bond, L.E.O Motivation-deposit for 2023 conference speaker, Sheraton-EBP strategic planning session) were paid and revenue from county assessments, membership dues and Premier Biotech dividend was deposited. However, Helene's 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter salary and expenses still needed to be paid and deducted. These expenses will be deducted in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.

## Executive Director Report:

Helene Placey reported the following:

- Assessments- 65 counties paid (64 paid in 2022), 1 county didn't pay (2 non payments in 2022)
- Memberships-63 chiefs paid; 1 chief didn't want to join (100% paid in 2022); 159 associate memberships were bought so far (Helene believe there will be more associate memberships prior to the Conference (increased from 134 in 2022)
- Reminder that the 2024 assessments will be increased by 10%; assessments haven't been increased since 2008; due to increase in costs the association had to raise the assessment fee
- Helene was having issues with her emails (gmail address) getting blocked when she was corresponding to all of the Chiefs so she changed her email to [heleneplacey@ccappoap.com](mailto:heleneplacey@ccappoap.com) hoping this would fix the problem, but she is still getting blocked by several counties. She suggests Chiefs check with their county's IT department to see about getting her email added to the "white list" so that her emails will not get blocked as spam anymore
- Act 57 of 2021 (Law Enforcement Hiring & Separation database)
  - Helene recently attended a meeting with AOPC, MOPEC and JCJC regarding ACT 57 of 2021
  - MOPETC was inquiring why probation departments aren't participating; so far only 15 counties are participating with 2 counties in the process of enrolling
  - MOPETC indicated that the biggest complaint to Judges was that it was time consuming entering all of the data into the system
  - Mark Wilson commented that Lancaster opted into Act 57 after he explained to his PJ that his department wouldn't have hired three (3) employees if the Act 57 database system would have been in place back then; he also agreed to opt in because Lancaster Co.'s HR department hired a fulltime ACT 57 coordinator
  - Mark reported that entering data into the Act 57 system is easy and not time consuming but unfortunately the process has added an additional wait time for hiring; an extra 22 days has been added in average due to waiting for fingerprint cards from PSP

- Helene asked if there were any repercussions for counties if they do not opt into Act 57 and was told “no”, but that MOPEC indicated that the system should be utilized because of its intent to eliminate hiring “problem officers”. So MOPEC is going to reach out to Judges in hopes of persuading them to get probation departments to start utilizing the ACT 57 system
- Pretrial, Probation & Parole Supervision week is July 16-22; a proclamation from the Governor will be sent out
- Helene reminded Chiefs of the upcoming conference in September; register early for reduced rates, reserve your lodging and check the Chief’s website for updates
- EBP implementation grant update; grant training funds has been depleted (ended in March 2023); EBP Coordination Grant with Carey Group ended in March of 2023 as well
- New Grant with PCCD for EBP Coordination & Implementation is pending
- The new Grant if approved will include: Continuation of EBP Coordination with Carey Group consulting, new videos, various Train the Trainer courses (ORAS, MI, CCP, EPICS, Thinking 4 a Change, WRNA and others), EBP Training Workshops, a Data dashboard project and a RNR program fidelity tool

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Chiefs EBP Committee Report**

Report from April Billet, Chair

- The EBP Strategic Planning Retreat was held Thursday, May 25, 2023 at the Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey; established new goals for implementation, training, effective interventions, communication, data and quality assurance
- New workgroups (implementation, training, effective interventions, communications, data & quality assurance) were established at the EBP Strategic Planning Retreat; therefore, the association will be looking for volunteers to participate in these new workgroups; April stated that “you don’t have to be an EBP expert to be on these workgroups”.
- Rick Parsons (Carey Group) indicated that the EBP Strategic Plan is still in the draft form; it’s a two-year plan
- Rick highlighted what some of the workgroups will be working on
  - Implementation workgroup- will be working on a caseload realignment document and developing a strength-based risk/needs PSI;
  - Training workgroup- produce a EBP overview e-learning course and sustain EBP training through statewide train-the-trainer modules;
  - Effective Interventions workgroup- implement a standardized case planning process and create a program fidelity manual;
  - Communications workgroup- share success stories and implement the EBP Communication Toolkit
  - Data & Quality Assurance – collect and use data to inform and strengthen practices and ensure EBP fidelity

- BJA Smart Probation grant activities are still ongoing; The 14 counties that were awarded the Planning Grants are reporting monthly to the Carey Group
- April and Rick Parsons attended a Conference in the Washington DC area to be on a EBP panel for Pennsylvania; at the conference a presenter from Connecticut discussed the importance of using a trauma informed checklist; this presenter is going to be asked to do a training webinar for the association

#### Work Group #1- Risk Assessments; Report from Chad Libby

- Specialized risk assessment user manual was published and available on the association's website under EBP Stakeholder Resources
- The results of the survey on specialized risk assessment tools used by departments that was completed by the Communications committee are posted on the Chief's website (resources/members only section)
- Chad indicated that this will conclude this workgroups work

#### Work Group #2- Implementation; Report from April Billet

- Case/Success Plan webinar was recorded and posted on the Chief's website
- More EBP briefs were created (stakeholder resources); posted on the association's website under the [EBP Stakeholder Resources](#) tab
- Working on a fidelity assessment tool (like SPEP in juvenile probation); adult probation doesn't have funding to do on site fidelity assessments so an online self-assessment (R&R) is going to be utilized; in the EBP grant is monies budgeted to identify a small cohort of counties to pilot the fidelity assessment tool and evaluate outcomes
- April reminded Chiefs of the documents on the website under the resources tab that can be utilized; she specifically mentioned checking out the "spotlight of Indiana and York County, small vs large" which shows how EBP can reduce recidivism in any size county
- April also informed the Chiefs that two (2) EBP videos and discussion guides (Building a Professional Alliance & Overcoming Resistance to Change) have been posted on the Chiefs website; great training for rookies and new hires

#### Work Group #3- Infrastructure, Data & Dashboard; Report from Chris Pawlowski

- Chris reiterated checking out the outcomes published in the EBP spot light "Improved Outcomes in Jurisdictions Large and Small"; Chris indicated that the data showed advantages of implementing EBP in both York and Indiana Counties
- Currently there are twenty-five (25) EBP briefs available; all available EBP briefs are posted on the Chief's website; eventually there will be thirty (30) EBP Briefs created for the EBP library when done
- Chief Darby Christlieb gave a presentation on how he introduces the "EBP Briefs" to his staff; According to Darby the delivery of the briefs to staff is important to be impactful; during staff meetings his management team goes over the few briefs that was previously sent out to staff prior to the meeting; staff is able to ask questions about the briefs therefore gaining knowledge needed to prepare for other EBP projects/implementation

## **Communications Committee Report**

Report from Doug Wilburne, Chair

- Newest survey results posted on members only page (Specialized Risk Assessment by County and Caseload Size & Structure by County)
- Doug emphasized not releasing the results of these surveys to the public
- 53 counties completed the Specialized Risk Assessments survey and 65 counties completed the Caseload Size survey
- Doug mentioned that an issue for the caseload size survey was that risk levels are not the same in every county
- Any ideas for surveys to be conducted please contact Doug

## **Inter-County Affairs Committee Report**

Report from Pam Sheffer, Chair

- Intercounty affairs committee updated all info in the Intercounty Transfer information section; including specific policies/information for some county's transfer criteria
- Pam informed the Chiefs that if they have any changes for the point of contacts in their department, please let her know and she will make the change on the website
- An issue about transferring cases with active warrants was discussed; Pam indicated that there is a section in the transferring guidelines that specifically covers this issue indicating that offenders are to take care of the warrants prior to their transfer request; However, she suggested reaching out to the Chief if his or her department is unwilling to accept the transfer in an attempt to resolve the issue

## **Policy & Legislative Committee Report**

Report from Helene on Todd Bergman's (chair) behalf

- Met on 3/28/23 to review the Operating Standards and to make recommendations to the Executive Committee; Todd's committee to take a comprehensive review of the standards to see if there are any issues that the association may want resolved and if so, make those recommendations to PCCD
- Probation Reform bill was reintroduced (SB 838); now that the association has gotten a "seat at the table", Legislators are asking for the association's opinion/position; attended meetings with legislatures in the house & senate judiciary
- Todd's committee will be looking into amending the by-laws for the purpose of removing "offender" from the association's mission and vision statement and replacing it with something like "person under supervision"; a vote by the Chiefs will be sent out via email

## **Training & Education Committee Report**

Report from Chris Pawlowski, Chair

- Continuing Education workgroup

- 2021-2022 “lunch & learn” webinars; topics were-Bias, Officer Wellness, Interstate 101-104, Trauma Informed, Credit Time
- For the lunch & learn webinars in 2021-2022 there were 600 plus registrations; a 66% attendance rate, 20% no shows and 10% placed on a wait list
- Due to the amount of “no shows”, Chris asked the Chiefs to stress attendance to their staff/Training Supervisors if signed up; If unable to attend, Helene needs to be notified immediately so that she can contact those on the waiting list
- Helene indicated that notices of registration are sent out via email, a reminder is sent prior to the training via email so staff can’t use the excuse they weren’t notified or reminded of their upcoming training
- 2023 virtual “lunch & learns” completed (Jan-June) were Interstate 101-104 and Sovereign Citizens; Scheduled (July-Aug) is Suicide Intervention, JNET, MH/Depression
- 585 registrations so far in 2023
- 2023 Future Webinars (July-Dec)- Mental Health 101, Medical THC Dispensaries, Gang Culture, Victims, and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; plus, possible repeat webinars
- Conference Planning workgroup has been busy finalizing seminars and events; Conference will be held from Sept. 18-20 at the Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center
  - Announcement/Registration for the conference has been sent to all members and exhibitors; info posted on Chiefs website; book lodging now (room block ends 8/2023)
  - Confirmed seminars- Legal Updates w/ Stu Suss; Justice Dougherty; and others
  - Monday evening Member social event will be held at the Axemann Brewery
  - Tuesday activities that members can participate in are: Golf, Beaver Stadium tour, Arboretum tour, and a Vineyard tour

### **Racial Diversity Committee Report**

Report from Renawn Harris, Chair

- Expanded committee membership
- Formed 3 new workgroups (Resources, Job Fairs and Mission Statements)
- Resource workgroup is continuing to add resources and updates to the resource document on the chief’s website
- Job Fairs workgroup is working on strategies to increase minority hiring (recruitment), promoting and retaining once hired
- Missions Statement workgroup is working on developing mission statements and policies that emphasize diversity and inclusion

### **Nominations Committee Report**

Report from Darby Christlieb, Chair

- Will be seeking nominations for December Elections
- President, Secretary and Treasurer (2<sup>nd</sup> terms expire on 12/31/23)

- Vice President (1<sup>st</sup> term expires on 12/31/23)
- At Large Members (2 positions- 2<sup>nd</sup> terms expire on 12/31/23)
- There has been thirty-six (36) new chiefs appointed in the last five years; Doug and April encouraged those new chiefs to run for office because the knowledge gained as an officer is valuable and rewarding

## **CAPPAC & CAPPAC SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

**Funding Subcommittee** – Vice Chair, April Billet, reported that the funding subcommittee is meeting next week to discuss the funding formula to be used for GIA and IP funding since the JRI-2 funds don't exist.

**Standards Subcommittee** – Chairman, Scott Kerstetter, indicated that the standards subcommittee is working on creating more standards to be used.

**Firearms Subcommittee** – Member, Tim Heitzman, informed the Chiefs to get their officers Con Ed courses scheduled.

**Training Subcommittee** – Chair, Dan Heydt, reported that the subcommittee will meet on 7/21/23 to get an update on the DT and BTA curriculums that Temple University is developing.

## **STATE AGENCY UPDATES**

### **JNET**

Report from Todd Sackett

- Todd reported that the CIPP project is done and currently working with one vendor to obtain their data
- Services are available through their JNET's help and support catalog
- Currently looking at meeting locations in order to have regional work groups
- JNET is working on enhancement requests
- JNET is looking for new ideas for services that they can provide to probation/parole departments, so if any Chief has any ideas please contact Todd
- JNET Conference was held at the Scholar Hotel in State College on 6/15 – 6/16/23
- If Chiefs need JNET training for their staff, they can email Amelia and Todd to get it set up; can be in person on site or virtual
- Chris Pawlowski discussed about the integration of the RMS's and PAJCIS/CIPP; Chris will try and set up a workgroup in order to fix the integration issues; Chris will keep the Chiefs updated in his progress in setting up this workgroup

### **AOPC**

No update

### **DOC - Court Services**

Report from Tom Dougherty



- Since ACT 57 was passed there has been issues with what agency is responsible in collecting and distributing ACT 35 supervision fee funds (PCCD or PBPP/DOC); According to Tom a legislation fix is needed
- Until a legislative fix is passed the PBPP will get its legal department to draw up contracts with each county to release ACT 35 funds that have been collected since September of 2022; Tom indicated that this may take a few months to get done
- Once the contracts are done, PBPP will release one payment for all Act 35 funds collected thus far that haven't already been released previously (since Sept of 2022)
- PBPP plans on going back to every six months release of ACT 35 funds if there is no legislative fix
- Tom then reported that he will be retiring from PBPP on 7/28/23; he expressed his gratitude in working with the association and all of the Chiefs through his career

#### **DOC-Field Services**

No update

#### **DOC-Reentry**

No update

#### **DOC - Interstate Services**

No update

#### **PACM**

No update

#### **PCCD**

Report from Kathy Clark, Criminal Justice Specialist Manager

- Kathy provided staffing updates; Frank Shearer was recently hired as a County Adult Probation/Parole Analyst for the Western Region; he joins Vance VanOrder, County Adult Probation/Parole Analyst for the Eastern Region and Nancy Heisler, County Adult Probation/Parole Analyst for the Central Region
- Dan Hoover will still be the contact person for training needs
- The 2023 CJAB Conference was held on 3/21-22/23 at the Penn Stater Hotel
- The 2024 CJAB Conference is scheduled to be held on 4/9-10/24
- The 2023 Statewide Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Symposium was held on 4/20/23; The 2024 Statewide Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Symposium is scheduled to be held on 9/25/24
- On 6/13/23, Sally Barry sent out via email a training needs survey a survey that will steer the development of training programs for county adult probation and parole officers and support staff; Sally asked to complete the survey by 6/30/23; the results of the survey will be given to the association

- CAPPAC recommended the DT and BTA curriculum that was developed by its training subcommittee to Temple University; Temple University is now tasked with developing these recommended curriculums into training modalities; Temple University is to develop the written curriculums and instructor manuals for DT and BTA by 6/30/23
- Temple University is also developing a train the trainer curriculum for DT
- PCCD will hold five (5) BTAs in total for 2023; the next BTA will be held on 9/18-22/23 virtually and from 10/9-13/23 in person; the last BTA of 2023 will be held in December
- PCCD will hold six (6) BTAs in 2024
- PCCD is developing a Training registration system for BTA, DT and Firearms (con Ed); similar to JCJC's JEMS system
- PCCD just approved JAG funding for FY 24/25; In January of 2024 counties can apply for JAG funding; Kathy recommended to Chiefs to sign up for PCCD's funding announcement alerts if they haven't already done so
- The association applied for a million-dollar grant from PCCD for EBP implementation
- CIP grants were approved in June; meeting with PA Sentencing Commission to see if counties that applied for CIP funding met the certification criteria; if IP plan/grant needs amended get it done quickly
- '23-'24 GIA funding announcement will come out as soon as the state passes its budget; PCCD is going to propose the new funding formula again; also proposing to keep harmless those counties that will get a reduction in their funding for '23-'24
- For the '23'24 GIA there will be an additional attachment required under ACT 57 (supervision fee expenditures for training, operational and personnel costs)
- Initial monitoring visit will be an introduction; these visits have started and if your county has not yet been scheduled it will be soon
- Caseload report for 2021 will be released soon; 2022 caseload report will be released in the fall
- Dr. Orth (IUP) is gathering data to determine PA's recidivism rate; he is currently gathering from counties that are participating in his research project their ORAS results to analyze; Recidivism rate findings will be shared with the participating counties in March of 2024
- Jackie Weaknecht asked for Chiefs to have their support staff complete the job task analysis survey

### **PA Commission on Sentencing**

Report from Tom Backenstoe

- Robert Siscock was recently hired as the Education & Outreach Manager
- Final analysis and formal certification by the Commission occurred earlier this month and PCCD was sent notice of each county's compliance for IP funding
- 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the sentencing guidelines will go in effect after the 90-day review period by the legislators; the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of sentencing guidelines will go in effect in 1/2024
- 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the sentencing guidelines will be added into SGS; a total rebuild of SGS will also occur in 2024

- Commission trainings are underway, SGS web over, Commission update, and sentencing and sentencing guideline fundamentals all monthly; registration is on our web site under the calendar section; a survey will be sent out about 8<sup>th</sup> edition training needs (virtual/in person)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> day of Fundamentals training will start transitioning to covering the 8<sup>th</sup> edition
- Sentencing Commission will be sending out updates on the 8<sup>th</sup> edition
- Deputy Chief Geoffrey Willet inquired if SGS will ever have the capability for Chiefs to run a report to find out what sentencing guidelines need done and/or are missing prior to the commission's deadline for submission of guidelines for certification; Tom informed Geoff that the commission is going to make this happen

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- Chief Keith Bowser (Bedford Co.) retired in May
- Allegheny County's Chief position is still vacant

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- Recognized the new chief appointments
  - Paul Singley, Northampton County (April)
  - Bernard Smith, Bedford County (July)
- 2023 Quarterly membership meetings:
  - September 20 @ Penn Stater Conference & Hotel
  - December 8 @ The Graduate Hotel, State College
- 2023 Conference: September 18-19 @ Penn Stater; Reminder to Book hotel for the conference now
- Chief Chad Libby informed the association that he is in the process of putting together a Connectrex user group. Any other county that wants to partner up with Dauphin is to contact Andy Cooper.

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted,  
Leonard R. Hahn  
Secretary