

STATE OF COLORADO



Restorative Justice Council 2011

Debbie Wilde, Youth Zone Executive Director (Chair)--Present
Jamin Alabiso, Deputy District Attorney, First Judicial District--Present
Greg Brown, Chief Probation Officer, Twentieth Judicial District--Present
Spiro Koinis, Division of Youth Corrections Victim and Restorative Justice Services Coordinator—Not Present
Bernadette Martinez Felix, 8th Judicial District Victim Advocate—Not Present
Amanda Nagl, Estes Valley RJ Partnership Executive Director –Remotely via email/phone
Michael Ramirez, Department of Education Senior Consultant—Not Present
Beverly Title, Ph.D., Teaching Peace Founder and Director of RJ in Schools—Not Present
Meg Williams, Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Manager—Present
Matt Riede—Present
Ben Emery—Present
Deb Wetzal--Present

Guests: Nancy Lewis , Executive Director, COVA

**Friday, December 9, 2011 9:00 A.M.- 2:00 P.M.
Boulder Justice Center**

1. Approval of Minutes from October 31st Meeting—Debbie Wilde
Minutes from the October meeting are approved and adopted.
2. Approval of By-Laws – Meg Williams
 - * On page 3, the section titled “Member Change”, was amended to be titled “Member Removal”
 - *The yellow highlighted sections were changes from the previous bylaws. Meg reviewed these changes with the committee.
 - *A discussion occurred regarding the ability of council members to take issue positions. The ability of Council members who are also state employees to take issue or policy positions will be reviewed by Meg and modified for review at the next meeting. These findings will be presented and then incorporated after review by amendment at the January meeting.
 - *Appropriateness of proxy votes was discussed and the Council determined that voting by proxy is inappropriate.
 - *The bylaws were reviewed and approved with the above amendments.
3. Approve Meeting Calendar for 2012—Debbie Wilde
 - *The proposed meeting dates listed at the end of these minutes are adopted and scheduled.
4. Enhancing Education of RJ – Chapter 3 & 4 from Teaching Peace – Bev Title
 - *Bev is absent and this agenda item is thus tabled.

5. COVA Guests and Discussion—Nancy Lewis

*Nancy provided the Council with her personal background in relationship to restorative justice. Her feedback for the Council was that she has experienced that there is a barrier with the victim community because of the lack of overarching standards and training in place for restorative justice programs. There is an overriding concern in the victim community that standards and practices need to be put in place for restorative justice. In the absence of those standards, the victim community is hesitant as there is no assurance that victims are not unnecessarily placed at risk of being re-victimized. On a related note, COVA's primary concern about the recent legislation was how victims would be impacted. While COVA does not oppose restorative justice processes that are used when the victim does not want to participate, it feels strongly that any victim participation needs to be initiated.

*Nancy indicated that COVA could be a bridge between the victim services community and the restorative justice community, but standards and training protocols need to be in place before that can be productive. The Council asked what steps COVA needs to see from the restorative justice community before it will be willing to partner. Nancy indicated that there is a feeling that something similar to the way COVA operates would be a good start. COVA's structure is member based, and includes:

*Field Based Management of Professionals. The victim community has ethical and practice guidelines and standards which are enforced by the members of the community as a professional body.

*Training. with the trainers selected by subject matter committees of experts for the particular training subject. Training includes a victim services academy, with instructors who are hand selected by COVA leadership providing the instruction.

*Victim Advocate Accreditation. Accreditation requires supervised hours worked in the field, an ethics commitment, and a set amount of training. Following completion of the requirements, there is an application and review process managed by COVA's accreditation committee.

*Nancy agreed to be part of helping the Council move restorative justice and the connection with the victim community forward through

helping with discussions about setting standards, defining best practices, and participating in the conference. The Council and COVA agreed that the victim services community is a critical partner for restorative justice to succeed. For example, District Attorney buy in to these processes will be much more likely if COVA supports them.

*The RJ Conference and COVA's potential role were discussed with Nancy. To begin with, there will be a COVA representative as part of the planning. One idea is to utilize the victim advocates who are currently coordinating and working with restorative programs. If the conference has a more dialogue based design, COVA would bring participants to be in discussions about training, standards, research, and advancing restorative justice. Nancy indicates that victims would be stronger voices than professionals in those discussions, and would be willing to help facilitate victim participation. A suggestion was made that the Council apply to the federal OVC for funding to support a victim to attend and speak at the conference. That application is due in mid-February, and would be helpful for the Council to have some idea of who would be appropriate.

*A discussion followed about the difficulties of having a victim initiated process when victims are not aware of the option. The discussion concluded with a determination that the most effective way is have a strong community awareness of restorative justice programs so the information comes from a variety of sources. This lead into a discussion about how to improved the interaction between the communities and how to build bridges and minimize isolation and push-back/resistance.

*Council Questions to Nancy:

What level would COVA want to be involved with presenting at the summit?

Can RJ participate in COVA conference? Nancy heads up the COVA conference and would like to really take a look at what the desired outcome of having restorative justice present at the would be and work to accomplish that result.

How can we get victim services staff to attend these events and discussions so that there is not just a room full of RJ professionals?

*A proposal was made that COVA be invited as a sponsor of the restorative justice summit/conference. Discussion of the proposal was tabled for next meeting.

6. Web site and Web Members' Page – Ben Emery

*The page for the conference page is now up on the website, and there is a link to it on the main page.

*A contractor has been hired and is working on some site updates and search engine optimization. Search engine optimization is a concern because the website's name itself is not generating traffic from search engines.

*Website traffic and views is down in December, Ben suggests that part of the reason may be that informational e-blasts were not sent out at the end of November and start of December.

*A membership page is being developed, with the idea of building an interactive system that is similar to Facebook with a registration page, a link to the training application. In turn, this information would be used to create a searchable database. This is not live yet or final, and charging a fee for access to the members' area as part of the continued sustainability plan, are proposals for the Council to consider.

*Sustainability of the website was discussed—the website costs \$79 per month and Ben's time supporting an maintain the site costs between \$200 and \$300 per month (10-15 hours at \$20 per hour). In addition to those fixed costs, short term but time intensive projects come up that will need to be paid for. All told, Ben estimates that the average monthly cost to run the website is \$1,200.

7. Fiscal Sustainability Discussion—Debbie Wilde:

*A discussion of sustainability grew out of the discussion of the membership area of the website. The RJ Directors are beginning to support a movement towards the development of a professional association. Other organizations and restorative justice practitioners seem to be asking for standards and practices to be developed. An organization or committee with voluntary membership cannot really effectively promulgate and enforce them, but a professional association might be able to start the process of establishing them. In the end, the council has to raise the dollars to have the staff to run an association to enforce standards or stand as an advisory board with someone else doing it.

*A proposal was presented that the Council formally request that the RJ Directors develop proposed standards for review and posting on the website for public comment. The proposal was voted on and adopted by the Council. The Council wants to make sure that this proposal was passed in support of the RJ Directors' desire to establish standards than as a directive or order to the Directors. The Council's stated intent is to serve as a mediator between

CDAC and COVA and other organizations for development of standards of practice and to provide a forum for the standards to be promulgated.

8. Review of JAG Grant—Deb Wetzel and Ben Emery

*Copies of the final JAG report were provided to the Council. The Council is currently in year 3 of the JAG funding and there is only one more year of possible funding. The application for the next year's funding will be available on 1/9, due in February, with an October start. This grant is the sole source of funding for the Council. Ben and Deb did present to the Council a concern that if year 4 is focused on evidence based practices and research supporting restorative justice that LCJP may not be the most qualified contractor to address those issues. LCJP's board is thinking about it and seeing if they can do it or provide that support.

*A suggestion was made that the Council should determine what it wants to have in place and completed at the end of that final grant period. What can the Council produce that will sustain the Council's work for a long time after the funding expires? In other words, with getting standards established and the summit started, what is the next logical step on the path of institutionalizing the Council? The feedback from the District Attorneys' meeting might inform this issue, so the Council moved to that agenda item.

9. DA's Meeting Report – Ben Emery and Greg Brown

*Ben and Greg attended the meeting and reported to the Council that the DA's seem to feel a kinship with RJ and their main priorities are the same as COVA's: standards of practice and guidelines. Some of the concerns seem to be the potential for the misuse of RJ, timeliness of processes, funding and how to set up RJ processes in jurisdictions without money, and who will be providing the services. Out of their attendance at the meeting, Greg and Ben thought it would be good to encourage more DA participation at the summit with specific tracks to address these concerns, including how to set up an RJ program, how the new RJ standards impact caseloads, how to use RJ as part of case management, results and outcomes. It seems that outcomes measures are important to DA's. In addition, creating a collaboration will be very important, as there was a feeling that the new restorative justice legislation was forced on District Attorneys' offices.

10. Standards Discussion From 5, 8, and 10, Continuing Discussion of How to Institutionalize the Restorative Justice Council and JAG Grant Objectives

*The Council had a discussion regarding standards of practice as this issue came up in a multitude of previous agenda discussions. The need for standards

is coming up to the Council from the local and grassroots level as well as from other key stakeholders for the long term success of the Council. In relation to the JAG grant and Council activities, one possibility would be to use the fourth year to conduct two or three pilots and provide facilitation to local entities, such as DA's, to develop a local RJ coordinating and teach them how to create/strengthen/develop RJ programs. This suggestion is similar to providing an intensive year-long technical assistance to a locality. The Council can then use the staff who gain experience from those activities to do outreach and support to other localities. Standards seem to be the number one issue/theme from other entities. That seems to be the foundational piece for moving forward. Maybe the council could create the model after developing the standards?

Related to providing this support, perhaps a meta-analysis could be conducted or these programs could be evaluated. What data should be collected? Standards of practice could be informed by this particular information, maybe JJDP and DU could provide resources for the research. Part of this would be to develop a template for programs to be researchable.

RJ needs to develop a language and methodology that is consistent with evidence based practices and best practices in order for any standards to be grounded in what works. A lit review of RJ may provide information for developing a methodology for evaluating programs.

*In year four, not having a solid sustainability plan is going to be an issue in the JAG grant application, so there will need to some planning done to develop an idea of how to carry the things created by the Council forward into the future. Perhaps the development of the professional association growing out of the RJ Directors group is part of this. A non-profit/501(c)(3) may be an option for taking in and managing money, perhaps with support from the Center for Non-Profit Development in Denver. Meg will get clarification on if the JAG grant funds could be used to support the formation of a professional organization or nonprofit. If these are not options, perhaps becoming a partner or branch of COVA would be a feasible alternative. Another option, since the Council is housed within Judicial, there might be a place for agencies to commit funds to supporting the RJ Council. In addition, if SCAO would waive the fee for managing the grant, that would cover the cost of running the website for the year. Greg will look into this possibility.

*The Council decided on three goals/objectives for the last year of the JAG Grant:

1. Develop and Promulgate Standards. The standards are being developed in the grant's third year. However, once developed, the will

need to be communicated to the field, education provided, and the website continued to be maintained for the purposes of supporting the standards. Support of the website thus needs to be continued in year 4. Standards will in turn lead to the development of professional standards and development of restorative justice programs and practitioners. An outgrowth of the professionalization of restorative justice will be the development of training standards for practitioners.

2. Develop a language and methodology that is consistent with evidence based practices and best practices. Identify what data needs to be collected and begin a meta-analysis of EBP. The Council will create and test a template for the state of Colorado to research its programs.
3. Support the development of a professional restorative justice association for the ongoing promotion and support of RJ. This will include seeking partnerships with non-profits, government agencies, educational organizations, and communities to provide continuation of the work the Council has been doing. Utilize the summit to actively seek partners and develop alliances.

*In the current JAG Grant year, one goal is to develop evidence based practices and create a statewide vision and unified goal. Identifying restorative justice practices that can be evaluated in terms of EBP and developing collaborative research goals supports that objective. In the current year at the summit, the Council will provide training on evidence based practices for RJ practitioners and research methods to enable programs to collect data to support restorative justice practices. In year 3, the Council can report that it has created a partnership with the University of Colorado at Denver and the Graduate School of Public Affairs. The GSPA currently has a research and methodology class, which has students devoted to gathering and putting this information together, and there will be a program evaluator who will be coordinated by Greg. Greg will meet with Debbie Wilde to ensure that the data being researched and collected supports the grant objectives and is usable. A training directory needs to be launched this year as part of the website. Since this is also one of the objectives of the RJ Directors' in developing a professional association it will be done in coordination and support of those efforts. The training directory would also be something of a practitioner and resource directory, which is a very good synergy with what the RJ Directors are attempting to accomplish.

11. RJ Conference/Summit-Ben Emery and Deb Wetzel

*The title of the conference will be the “2012 Restorative Justice Summit” and 5 bylines have been developed in support of the title. At this point, the budget committee has met and structured how funds will be spent, though no money has been made available yet. The webpage and application for sponsorships are ready for people to see and respond to. Two points remain that need to be decided by the Council today so that conference planning can continue:

*Issue 1—Structure of the Conference. LCJP proposes that the Council adopt an unconference/interactive model for the conference. In this model, for example, Greg would propose evidence based practices as a breakout session and there’s a dialogue with those who are interested instead of a scheduled X is in Y room at Z time. This is also called an open space model. Another possibility is to use a discovery and action dialogue—for example, people might be coming because they don’t get restorative justice but they have been told that they have to do it. A facilitator would but 7 questions to the group and then the group wrestles with them. This is called liberating structures. The idea is to use training approaches that are more facilitations than lectures, which align well with restorative practice approach on the ground.

Dominic Barter is the keynote speaker. One reason for him to be the keynote is that he will also be present as a conflict watchdog. As conflicts arise during the summit, he will step in model RJ problem solving for those conflicts. The idea is that the conference itself will feel like a big circle, and the idea is to create an experience in the event that attendees have not had before.

There was then a discussion about how to market the summit. One idea was to place a video brochure on the website. It may be hard to get DA’s to attend, but not hard to get the RJ practitioners in the DA’s office to attend. A COVA presence will likely help DA attendance and should be highlighted. In addition, it may be a good idea to have a half or quarter day DA oriented and focused programming at a reduced registration rate of \$75-\$100.

Due to the different audiences and groups which will be present, the Council adopted a hybrid model with the open meeting approach generally and specific tracks and more structured presentations for certain groups.

*Schedule—there are two options for the schedule for the conference. It could be held on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday with Saturday being a youth day, or Thursday through Saturday straight through. It

could also be reduced to two days. After a discussion, the Council determined that the conference will be two and a half days with a block of time for a youth focus.

*Issue 2--Funding and Pricing Structure. LCJP will do the math and figure out how it to price attendance at the conference in light of sponsorships and other factors after the next design meeting with Keith. The RJ Directors indicated that they felt that \$100-200 would be a reasonable level for the registration fees. The structure of the summit promotes a feeling that the fee is part of supporting and sponsoring restorative justice in Colorado. This idea can be used for marketing, worked into the announcements, literature, and advertising. Dominic Barter will be consulted about how to approach the fee, and the Council finished with a final suggestion that the registration fee be set at \$225.

12. RJ Strategic Plan –Debbie Wilde

The strategic plan was handed out to the Council for members to reference and review.

13. Other Business

*Officer decisions. Greg will rotate into the position of the chair for 2012. A vice-chair will need to be selected. The Council place a note in the minute with respect to the bylaws for review—the rotating basis language for officer selection is confusing and should be deleted.

*The Council was reminded that the authorizing legislation sunsets in 2017.

*Appointment of a vice-chair is placed on the next agenda, as is Matt's election to the council on the next agenda.

12. Summarize Action Steps

--Update section of bylaws regarding representation and ability of council members to take issue positions. Meg and Bev.

--Change the Council's stationary to clarify the entities and organizations that council members are representing.

--Meg will investigate if JAG grant funds can be used to support the development of a non-profit.

--Greg will investigate if SCAO would be willing to waive the grant management fee for the State Restorative Justice Council.

--Selection of a vice-chair.

--Appointment of Matt Riede to the Council.

Meeting Dates for 2012

2012 RJ Council Meeting Dates - from 10:00 AM -12:00 PM by Conference Call

January 13, 2012

March 9, 2012

May 11, 2012

July 13, 2012

September 14, 2012

November 9, 2012

2012 RJ Council Meeting Dates, Boulder Justice Center, 9 AM - Noon

February 10, 2012

April 13, 2012

June 8, 2012

RJ Conference: August 9, 10, and 11, 2012

October 12, 2012

December 14, 2012

Items for Future Agendas:

1. How do we have the balance of the 3 entities in our process i.e. community, victim, offender
2. Sustainability
3. Bev and Greg do the True Colors training with us
4. Keeping repository current
5. Accreditation
6. Addressing gaps in representation or collaboration
7. Strategic plan items
8. For January meeting, consider inviting COVA to be a sponsor of the restorative justice conference/summit.

9. Appointment of vice-chair.

10. Appointment of Matt Riede to the Council's membership.