

STATE OF COLORADO



Debbie Wilde, Youth Zone Executive Director (Chair)--Present
Jamin Alabiso, Deputy District Attorney, First Judicial District
Greg Brown, Chief Probation Officer, Twentieth Judicial District--Present
Spiro Koinis, Division of Youth Corrections Victim and Restorative Justice Services Coordinator--Present
Bernadette Martinez Felix, 8th Judicial District Victim Advocate--Present
Amanda Nagl, Estes Valley RJ Partnership Executive Director --Present
Michael Ramirez, Department of Education Senior Consultant—Not Present
Beverly Title, Ph.D., Teaching Peace Founder and Director of RJ in Schools--Present
Meg Williams, Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Manager—Present
Ben and Wetzel—Present
Matthew Riede, Victim Services, 1st Judicial District--Present

Monday, October 31, 2011 9:00 A.M.-NOON Boulder Justice Center, Mt. Sanitas Conference Room

1. Approval of Minutes from September 26th Phone Meeting:
Minutes from the September phone meeting are approved and adopted.
2. Approval of By-Laws – Meg and Bev:
The compilation of the by-laws is still in process and this is tabled for the next RJ Council meeting. *action item*
3. Enhancing Education of RJ – Chapter 1& 2 from Teaching Peace – Bev:
Bev Title led a discussion regarding the information in Teaching Peace chapters 1 and 2, which serve as an homage to the pioneers of RJ from the ancients to the more modern individuals who laid the foundation for current practice. For the December meeting, the Council will read and discuss Chapters 3 and 4 of Teaching Peace. A suggestion for future discussion is Don Miguel Ruiz' The Four Agreements.
4. COVA guests:
Spiro reached out to COVA, and they are interested in having the dialogue with the Council, but due to their Conference and the tight time frames were unable to attend. The Council feels that it is very important to link to the victim services community as a critical part of restorative justice's future, and is concerned that there is almost no conversation about RJ across the two groups. There was a Council discussion concerning where the issues between the victim services community and RJ community are developing. One conclusion was that there may be some semantic issues where certain language is interpreted differently in each community; for example how the words "equal" and "balanced" are interpreted by each group of practitioners could be a stumbling block. Some in the victim community has expressed concern about how victims are represented in RJ processes and that the

guidelines do not expressly make RJ a victim-centered model. The RJ approach is to consider the process a balanced process; while it is not weighted to one party, it must be victim sensitive, victim-initiated, and the victim must be well communicated with. These statements are very similar, and seem to have the same intent, but the language is viewed differently by each community and this seems to be a good place to start the discussion with COVA. Ben's feedback from his attendance at the COVA conference was that there seems to be a sentiment asking if RJ and the legislation is just another instance of the system telling a victim what justice is. He also reports that there was not a lot of RJ information and there were no presentations at the conference. Likewise, there were very few RJ professionals in attendance. A few years ago, there was an RJ track, but it was only attended by RJ practitioners, so there historically is not a lot of cross communication between the communities. Given the history, the Council decided that it might be most effective to attempt to attend the conference and build a presentation around making RJ victim focused and empowering, and how to use RJ processes to validate victim experiences. This kind of discussion can also be initiated as part of the RJ conference itself, having the same kind of discussions at both might provide a lot of linkage with the victim community. Matt has a good relationship with COVA and seems to be a good contact point. The Council decided that it would like to be a part of the COVA conference as part of this outreach and building this alliance with the victim community.

Legislation issues—the victim community has raised this concern, and RJ practitioners have also brought this concern to the table. At this point, how do system players access RJ as required by the legislation; at this point there is not a strong infrastructure statewide to implement the legislation. One good starting spot will be to attend the District Attorneys' conference and their meetings; the next meeting is 12/2 (Pete Lee will be present at that meeting). Ben and Greg will attend that meeting to introduce the Council as a resource and report back in December. From the DA's questions and the information from that meeting, the Council hopes to be able to use the website to provide information and support the implementation of the legislation on an ongoing basis. In addition to the DA's, the Council needs to do outreach to the RJ Directors, the Chief Probation Officers, and Chief Judges regarding the legislation and how to be a resource. The Council is on the CPO agenda in January. One conclusion is that there may be geographical areas where the Council may need to step in and help create programs as a partner to the local system players. Ultimately, every location should be able to use the website to contact someone to act as an RJ resource.

Given the number of other system players revealed by this discussion, an agenda item is placed on the next meeting to consider a process for the addition of new membership on either an ad hoc or on-going basis.

5. RJ Platform Updates – Ben:

Ben reports that the blog has become the heart of the website and is the place that is generating the traffic. At this point, the forums are pretty static. Given that information, Amanda suggested that the issue of membership and member interaction on the site be reconsidered.

6. RJ Conference:

Spiro reported back on the RJ conference in Niagara Falls (National VOD Conference and Victim Assistance Providers). One thing that he found very interesting is the infrastructure other states have put in place, such as VINE (Victim Information Notification Every day). This enables them to create a good linkage to the victim services community and communicate well at critical notification stages.

Planning of the conference is progressing and the site is finalized, with the space is donated. In addition to CU-Denver, Metro State and CCD are now considering sponsoring the event. As the sponsorships are finalizing, this enables LCJP to develop the conference budget. Ben provided a draft of the sponsorship packet for the Council to review before they begin to solicit sponsorships. The form was reviewed and the current sponsors' logos will be added to the package, once it is sent out the prospective sponsors will need to get it completed and sent in so that there is a solid sense of the available budget.

At this point, Deb Wetzel conducted a brainstorming session with the Council to help clarify what tracks and breakout sessions should be offered at the conference. "What keeps you passionate about RJ/why do you come to these meetings and what action does that make you want to take?" This discussion is intended to hone the themes and ideas so that they can put together the tracks and ideas for presenters. In response to this question, there were the following answers:

--It provides an opportunity for transformation of current justice systems.

I can examine places where it is not healing harm or where people are being harmed by the system and try to change those outcomes.

--Outcomes can be so much better for juveniles.

Impacts the adult system, and creates better, healthier adults. Can we do the same for adults? I want to examine where we can infuse RJ and understand RJ systemically.

--It provides a system for conflict resolution at a number of different levels. It motivates me to solve conflict and have better relationships. Ultimately, it teaches people to do that for themselves.

--The process/the way in which the change happens; change is not only limited to a one or two person arena, but has a ripple effect across more participants than in the traditional system. This causes people to become active in the process and deprofessionalizes justice process and creates a motivation to build capacity.

--RJ provides the other side with a different perspective, promotes a change, and this development applies to everyone involved in an RJ process. The person who was impacted develops an understanding of why an offender something. The offender gains the empowerment of understanding how their actions have impacted others and their place in the community. That understanding creates a drive to promote change within the system.

--People take responsibility for themselves, and RJ provides the opportunity to do so and thus grow and change. Creates a desire to provide this opportunity everywhere.

--RJ works and is something that the system does not provide, it is inclusive and not a divided/adversarial approach. Since it is not manufactured, practitioners develop a motivation to spread it and practice it. "Experience the magic".

--Village making, as those participating have to define community as a means of being in the circle, and that kind of community building does not happen very often outside these processes. In turn this creates a desire to push the frontier—what about restorative funerals, nursing, tax services, etc.?

--RJ practitioners develop an understanding and a like for each other, which builds respect.

--RJ is the most natural and best opportunity to partner with communities for people who work within the system, which is needed as the system typically operates in a vacuum.

--RJ is a learning and self-improvement motivated process.

--RJ is relationally based; the process is about developing relationships between individuals. In turn, this results in a strengths-based approach which promotes looking for commonalities to find solutions.

--RJ promotes being the change; practitioners begin living and modeling this view of the world, develop the culture and spirit behind the steps, and creating a culture and spirit of positive and good intent. The culture and spirit becomes a part of who you are and what you believe.

--Practical concerns, I would like to know where the state is and how to move forward. We need to answer the question, "now what?" How do practitioners blend the passion side with the harsher reality of punitive approaches and a world where not everyone has good intent.

--I go to a conference because it speaks to my pain and what I need or do not know. I go to find answers or find ways to fill in holes in my knowledge. This could be a way to look at EBP and the language that we use.

--What about tracks and attempting to appeal to certain practice communities, such as victims, DA's, and PD's? Maybe the tracks should not be structured by practice communities, but in a more innovative and inclusive manner. Teaching Peace in their development of the conference assured the Council that there will not be tracks based on practice groups, but something more broadly designed.

The other issue that Teaching Peace needs to have the Council address is for leads to be identified for conference planning areas. Volunteers are needed in the following areas:

--Develop the shape/framework for the conference/shaping the conference. Volunteers: Deb Wilde, Meg, and Amanda

--Food and Beverage. There has been a suggestion that the Council make a concerted effort to use as much local and organic food as possible for this event. There is funding being provided through NYC which Spiro has arranged.

--Media and Documentation.

--Partnerships and sponsorships. The current intent is to make this process as simple as it can be. Jill Kaplan has agreed to coordinate this area. The Council suggested making sure that the fliers/forms clearly indicate that checks should be made to LCJP. UCD GSPA, NYC, and whoever else has already agreed to sponsor the conference should have their logos included. Finally, Greg suggested asking CU-

Online to be a sponsor. The sponsor response form will be updated, revised, and come out to the council this week. Greg volunteered to be the Council representative in this area.

--Accreditation of the Conference for Professional Development Credits (e.g., CLE, social worker, POST, and teacher education).

Jamin may be a good fit for this area and will be asked.

--Budget. Deb Wetzel will be the lead in this area.

7. Update Regarding Adult Diversion and RJ – Meg

Meg updated the Council regarding this initiative, to this point there has just been one meeting and another one is scheduled for November. The interest in this area has grown out of conversations in the CCJJ about creating an adult diversion program. RJ did not really come up in that meeting, but this is still in a very preliminary stage. Amanda volunteered to be a resource for this as there is currently an adult diversion program in her district.

8. Updating Council's History Document

The current history document on the website includes the Council's history through March 1st, 2011. The Council discussed updating the history document and it was determined that Bernadette will update the document from 3/1/11 to the present. When Bernadette leaves the Council on 12/31/11 another Council member will be appointed to maintain this information.

9. Other Business

The Council was notified that the school discipline task force has produced a bill which attempts to address the number of violations from school settings. The focus is on the use of prevention, intervention, and RJ to reduce the incidence of legal and disciplinary issues and to motivate the development of an RJ mindset in school settings. Meg will keep council informed on the development and progress of this legislation.

10. Summary of Action Steps/Agenda Items for Next Meeting:

*Finalize, review, and approve the by-laws.

*Spiro and Matt will meet with COVA and start to get a handle on the concerns the Victim Services community has with RJ. They will also invite COVA to the next State RJ Council meeting.

*Matt will contact COVA and get the RJ Council on the COVA conference agenda. The Council will develop a presentation/panel for the conference.

*Greg and Ben will attend the 12/2 DA meeting and report back to the Council.

*Develop a process for the addition of new members or member agencies to the Council.

*Reconsider the issues regarding membership on the website.

*Identify Council leads for conference planning areas.

The November conference call meeting was canceled and the December meeting time extended.

Next Meeting – December 9, 2011, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM at Boulder Justice Center.

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. Final year review of JAG grant (before January)