Minutes – Criminal Justice Alternative to Incarceration Meeting
Date: September 23, 2026
Time: 12:00-1:30 pm
Location: Zoom

Attendees: Bridgette Nugent, Cpt. Lauran Harrison, Matt Van Houten, Chris Kai-Jones, Dave Sanders, Cpt. Ted Schwartz, Jennifer Brownell, Joanna Stergion, Donna Scott, Ali Hubbell-Howell, Tara Morgan, Maura Kennedy-Smith, Holly Mosher, Harmony Ayers-Friedlander, Lance Salisbury.

1. **Welcome and Introductions**: Bridgette welcomed the group.
    a. OAR invited CJATI members to attend their 50-year anniversary celebration at Henry St. Johns on October 3rd from 3-6 pm.

2. **Changes to Agenda:**
    a. Matt will share his update ahead of Travis, Travis is not present at the beginning of the meeting.
    b. Dave asked if the group could have an update on how the 2027 budget process for Tompkins County might affect programs and positions that support reentry resources. Bridgette said that there will be a discussion so that the group can discuss this further in the broader conversation about the vacant jail reentry coordinator position in TC Whole Health.

3. **Minutes' Approval:** The minutes of the July 22nd meeting were unanimously approved.

4. **Updates**:

    a. **Chair's Update- Bridgette Nugent**
    b. **Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) Update-** Travis Brooks -Travis was not in attendance; his presentation will be added to a future agenda.

    c. **Updates from the Tompkins County District Attorney- Matt Van Houten:** Matt provided an overview of the role of the District Attorney's office in Tompkins County.
        - The DA's office prosecutes criminal cases for the courts in all the towns as well as the City of Ithaca Court.
        - They handle all cases from traffic tickets to felonies.
        - They do not investigate crimes; they work from the investigations of all counties LE agencies.
        - They consider all the ATI's available in the county when they review cases for potential penalties. Some individuals may be referred to Treatment Court, Ithaca Wellness Recovery Court, the LEAD program as the main alternatives.

- The DA's office reviews the list of people that are incarcerated each day to determine if they need to be there.
- There is a victim advocate that works in the DA's office. This person reaches out to victims to assess their needs and connect them to local services that may benefit them. This person also keeps them informed at each step as their case progresses.
- The DA's office also employs a Data Analyst. This person maintains and updates the dashboard. Being able to track the data related to arrests is helping the DA's office identify racial and other disparities so they can work with groups like CJATI to identify why the disparities exist.
- Matt invites feedback from individuals and groups in the community.
    - Bridgette asked if there are any recent trends that Matt can share. Matt said there are no specific trends. He said that warmer weather brings people outside together and that can lead to an uptick in incidents. He said more recently there is an increase in drug and domestic violence related crime. He said that there is a decrease in the number of gun-related crimes.
    - Dave said he agrees with Bridgette, Travis and Matt that the dashboards are important resources and the work on those dashboards needs to continue to be funded. Not funding this work would be a step back from the transparency that the community is asking for. The group will create a statement to submit to the Legislature urging them to continue funding this important work. Dan reiterated the importance of the dashboards and agrees with the group that investment in this work is imperative.

d. Long-Term Inmate Report: Matt VanHouten:

- One person has pleaded guilty and will move forward to the sentencing phase. Two others have been scheduled for retrial after their trials resulted in a hung jury. One person is on parole with current legal motions pending in court. The last person on the list also has active legal motions pending in court. Matt said that the last two listed will likely not be on the list at the next meeting.

e. Any other Questions or Concerns:

- Dan said that his staff is reporting an uptick in signs of human trafficking in the area. Matt and Jennifer said that the DA's office and the Advocacy Center are also aware that there is serious human trafficking happening locally. Bridgette asked what can be done in terms of community response and awareness. Jennifer said that the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) task force offers training and conferences to help educate advocacy and LE groups to identify signs of trafficking and learn ways to combat it. She will send information to the group about an upcoming

conference. Dave also shared information with a trafficking educator that he has worked with.

- Chris asked for clarification on the rules surrounding prescribed drugs for people that are involved in treatment court. Matt said that the MH Court Coordinator will be the best person to summarize the judge's position on that. Dan suggested that Chris attend the team meeting of either of the treatment court teams to get more information.

Meeting Adjourned; at 1:42 pm. The next meeting will be on October 28, 2026, in the S. Heyman Room at 125 E. Court St., 1st floor.