State of Connecticut
Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS-CT)
Governing Board
55 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105
Phone: (860) 622-2000 | Email: CJIS.HelpDesk@ct.gov
https://portal.ct.gov/CJIS

CJIS-CT Governing Board – Governance Committee – Meeting Minutes

March 08, 2024, 10:00AM
Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

CJIS-CT Governing Board Members and Designees in Attendance:
Ronnell Higgins, Commissioner, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection; Daniel Karpowitz, Undersecretary, Criminal Justice Policy and Planning, Co-Chair, Office of Policy and Management; Chief Donald Melanson, Avon Chief of Police, Connecticut Police Chiefs Association; Mark Raymond, Chief Information Officer, Department of Administrative Services/ Bureau of Enterprise Systems and Technology; John Russotto, Esq., Deputy Chief State's Attorney, Office of the Chief State's Attorney

Other Attendees (Guests):

Glory Bulkley, CSO, DESPP; Naveen Prathikantam, Director IT, DCJ; Steven Mann, BITS CSM for DESPP, Pradeep Ankaraju, IT Manager, DESPP

CJIS-CT Staff and Contractors in Attendance:

James McGennis, CJIS-CT GB Executive Director; Mark Tezaris, CJIS-CT Program Manager; Chris Lovell, CJIS-CT Senior Project Manager; Tamika Potts, CJIS-CT Technical Writer

I. Welcome

The Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS-CT) Executive Director, James McGennis, opened the meeting at 10:01 AM. He began by thanking everyone for attending, acknowledged the absence of CJIS-CT Governing Board Co-Chair Judge Caroll, and proposed starting the meeting with other business topics to allow for maximum discussion time, given the presence of four members of the Governance Committee. He mentioned that CIO Mark Raymond, who has experience filling in as a former ED for CJIS-CT, may be able to assist in Judge Carroll's absence to guide the meeting. Additionally, McGennis introduced the new OPM Undersecretary for the Criminal Justice and Policy Planning Division and Co-chair of CJIS-CT, Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz, who expressed gratitude for the opportunity to join the meeting. Undersecretary Karpowitz noted that he is new to the organization and still in the process of onboarding, acknowledged the importance of the division's work, and expressed eagerness to contribute.

II. Approval of Minutes

Previous Governance Committee meeting minutes (for the meeting held on February 09, 2024) were approved by vote.

III. Business Topics

a. Welcome New Undersecretary Karpowitz

- Executive Director McGennis first welcomed Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz to the Committee, recognizing his role in overseeing the Division for Criminal Justice Policy and Planning within Connecticut's Office of Policy and Management. ED McGennis highlighted Undersecretary Karpowitz's experience as a special advisor to the Governor of Minnesota and Assistant Commissioner in the Minnesota Department of Corrections and as the state's first interagency lead for criminal justice and education. He also praised Undersecretary Karpowitz for his significant contributions during his 20 years as the founding Director of Policy and Academics for the Bard Prison Initiative.
- Undersecretary Karpowitz introduced himself to the Governance Committee and shared his background including working with educational institutions, philanthropy, and state governments, particularly in the Department of Corrections. He noted successful collaborations in Connecticut, such as the Wesleyan Partnership, which thrived between Middlesex Community College and Wesleyan University, and partnerships with Yale University and the University of New Hampshire (UNH) related to criminal justice. Undersecretary Karpowitz praised Connecticut for its leadership in reducing crime and over-incarceration. He expressed enthusiasm for joining the criminal justice community in Connecticut and noted the nationwide recognition of Connecticut's accomplishments in juvenile justice and corrections.
- In addition to welcoming the new Undersecretary to the committee, CIO Mark Raymond recommended that the four Governance Committee members should also introduce themselves to the new Undersecretary.
    - Deputy Chief State's Attorney, John Russotto, introduced himself and his role at the Division of Criminal Justice. He noted that he represents all employees at the division, with a focus on the 250 prosecutors who work in court daily. Deputy Chief State's Attorney Russotto highlighted the close collaboration his office has with various entities, including the police, the public defenders' office, Connecticut State Police (CSP), federal law enforcement, and other state agencies. He emphasized that their office serves as a central hub for information sharing in the criminal justice system.
    - Chief Information Officer (CIO), Mark Raymond, introduced himself and his role for the State of Connecticut. He outlined his responsibilities, which include overseeing technology services within the Executive Branch and providing support for applications, data centers, networks, and other technology-related matters. CIO Raymond also offered his expertise as a long-serving member who had been with the committee from the beginning, including serving as acting CJIS Executive Director when the seat was vacant. He expressed willingness to share historical knowledge and assist in various capacities.
    - DESPP Commissioner Ronnell Higgins introduced himself and expressed his pleasure at meeting Undersecretary Karpowitz who shared his background of recently arriving in Connecticut after working in Minnesota. He concurred with the Undersecretary on the strong work done and the potential of Connecticut to do more in the field of criminal justice. Commissioner Higgins also mentioned being a Practitioner in Residence (professor) at the University of New Haven in criminal justice and highlighted his previous experience at Yale University as the Vice

President for public safety. He expressed anticipation to collaborating with Undersecretary Karpowitz to advance criminal justice initiatives in Connecticut.

- Chief Donald Melanson introduced himself as the Chief of Police for Windsor Police Department representing the Connecticut Chief of Police Association involved in the CISS program. He highlighted the importance of technology and committee projects and expressed his commitment to working together to move initiatives forward and strengthen cooperation among stakeholders.

a. CISS Electronic Workflow Status Updates – NexGen RMS Supplemental Transmittal Testing Status

- Senior Project Manager, Christopher Lovell, provided an update sharing that the testing of new code from NexGen which will add functionality to the workflow system, specifically focusing on the Bond tab and Supplemental Transmittal. He noted that CSP is starting to send in arrests using the new functionality in the CISS User Acceptance Testing (UAT) environment. Lovell also discussed the progress made in bidirectional communication with 35 PDs around the state currently ready for testing. There are plans to complete testing with CSP and ensure familiarity with new options available through the NexGen RMS application.
- Chief State's Attorney, John Russotto, expressed thanks for the progress made, while Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz mentioned asking offline questions for a better understanding of the system and potential challenges. ED McGennis suggested scheduling a separate meeting with Undersecretary Karpowitz to provide an overview of the CISS system and its data sources. The participants agree to discuss these details in the weeks ahead to address any questions or challenges.

b. CISS Search- New Agency Approver Process & Legal Committee Charter

- ED McGennis initiated the discussion by presenting the process of onboarding new agencies that request access to the Connecticut Information Sharing System (CISS). He noted the establishment of the CJIS-CT Legal Committee and the need for its review in the agency approval process. ED McGennis proposed the idea of either continuing to involve the Legal Committee or considering alternative approaches, such as involving the Attorney General's Office for legal review. He highlighted the importance of confirming statutory authority and clarified the role of the Legal Committee in providing peer-to-peer discussions rather than legal advice. He also mentioned a recent request from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) for access to the system, triggering the need for clarification before involving the Legal Committee in the review process. He expressed interest in reforming the Legal Committee with new members and seeking input from the committee on the process.

    - CIO Mark Raymond shared thoughts on the process, discussing the involvement of the Attorney General's Office in providing legal advice. Regarding the CJIS Legal Committee, he emphasized the benefit of educating new legal staff and advised considering the data being shared as part of the approval process.

- Chief State's Attorney, John Russotto, raised questions about the efficiency of the Legal Committee and echoed CIO Mark Raymond's suggestion of involving the AG's office. He inquired about historical plans to have a representative from the AG's office on the committee and suggested the possibility of having the best of both worlds with legal advice from both the committee and the AG's office.
- CSO Glory Bulkley reviewed the flowchart and requested accommodation in the flowchart to reflect DESPP's role in approving background checks and access to the CISS portal.
- Program Manager Mark Tezaris reassured Bulkley that DESPP is already part of the stakeholder security review process (a step on the flow chart). He acknowledged DESPP's exisitng role in approving background checks for new CISS users and that this will not change.
- ED McGennis summarized the discussions, with the plan to re-establish the CJIS Legal Committee, with AG office participation, to review the recent request from DEEP Environmental Conservation Police for access to CISS.

c. Open Discussion – other topics

- There were no other items raised during the open discussion period.

Risk/Issues/Tasks

ED McGennis provided the group with a shared context around the definitions of risks and issues used in the project reviews. He presented the concept of risks in project management as potential events that could positively or negatively impact project objectives. He emphasized the distinction between *risks*, which are uncertain events that may occur, versus *issues*, which are problems that have already occurred. The primary aims are to prevent risks from becoming issues, to mitigate risks effectively, and to prepare resolution plans for issues that arise. Program Manager Mark Tezaris noted that the presentation will only focus on top level/high impact risks and issues for the stakeholders. A comprehensive spreadsheet that includes all project risks, issues, tasks, and mitigations is included in the documents package provided to the governance committee.

- **Key Risk - RMS Vendor Participation Does Not Provide Minimum of 90% of all CT arrests shared to CISS.**
  - Tezaris addressed the risk and issue management of a decade-long project, focusing on the CISS Electronic Workflow process and its advantages. He noted that the CISS Electronic Workflows aim to transition from physically delivering arrest packages to courts to utilizing electronic messages and document transmittals is a more efficient process for police departments, courts and prosecutors. In response to Undersecretary Karpowitz's inquiries about data uniformity and compatibility with different vendors, Tezaris explained the standardization process through established Application Programming Interface (API) specifications for CISS connection, to support 3rd party Record management System (RMS) vendors. He detailed ongoing negotiations with RMS vendors to ensure a substantial proportion of arrest data is integrated digitally with CISS. A

follow-up meeting with Undersecretary Karpowitz is planned to provide more comprehensive background about the CISS project.

- Further contributions to the discussion included CSO Bulkley's insight that one RMS vendor holds approximately 70% of contracts with local municipal police departments, including CSP.

- **Key Issue – Source Systems Not Available to CISS Search**
  - ED McGennis initiated the conversation by highlighting the issues with the Weapons database and the communication breakdown spanning the last two years. He underscored the critical need for law enforcement safety and the urgency to rectify the problems hindering data sharing. He also noted that he has reached out to the Attorney General's office to explore the legal intricacies of data sharing and to consider potential legislative solutions.
  - Program Manager, Mark Tezaris, further elaborated on the Weapons database issues, pointing out the absence of daily updates, the necessity to integrate the new source system- Deadly Weapons Offender Registry (DWOR) data, and the difficulties accessing Wanted information. He stressed the significance of law enforcement officers having access to precise and up-to-date information to maintain safety during field operations.
  - CSO Bulkley noted concerns regarding the Weapons database and its sensitive content, particularly the details of firearm ownership. She advocated for stringent controls and permissions to manage access and mentioned the FBI's likely role in auditing the data sharing practices ensuring they are up to standard.
  - Commissioner Higgins expressed the need for the implementation of sufficient controls and restrictions governing the access to Weapons data. He noted that access should be confined to law enforcement officers tasked with specific responsibilities. He pointed out the dual importance of leveraging technology to support policing while also safeguarding data security and adherence to legal regulations.
  - CIO Raymond discussed the importance of security measures and data access controls for weapons data. He acknowledged the DESPP security staff's responsibility in establishing security roles and permissions and advocated for educating the team on security protocols. He emphasized the need for clear and transparent access control mechanisms to support the integrity of law enforcement operations.
  - Tezaris mentioned that CISS uses the Global Federated Identity and Privilege Management (GFIPM) standards and guidelines for establishing security for data sharing, and that data owners must agree on access protocols before any sharing (this is already in place with CISS). The GFIPM program is managed by the federal government DOJ/Office of Justice Programs.

- Regarding questions raised around CISS access to Weapons data, McGennis indicated CJIS-CT should have a meeting with the key stakeholders to discuss the topic further. Commissioner Higgins concurred, and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss access to Weapons data. Agency legal counsel and AG office justice & public safety staff will attend.

IV. Next Governance Committee Meeting

Date: Friday, April 12, 2024

Time: 10:00am

V. Adjournment

In his closing remarks, ED McGennis invited Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz to share any final comments in his capacity as Co-chair. Undersecretary Karpowitz noted that the conversation today was interesting and that there was a lot to unpack due to the extensive knowledge shared. He expressed interest in continuing the dialogue in the future, thanked everyone for the warm welcome, and expressed his gratitude for being a part of the meeting.

Before the meeting concluded, CSO Glory Bulkley extended a wish to Technical Writer, Tamika Potts, for a Happy International Women's Day.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 AM.