

# Press Release

**Contact: Commissioner David S. Keller, Chairman  
Franklin County Commissioners  
14 North Main Street  
Chambersburg, PA 17201  
717-264-4125**

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As early as April 2000, the County Commissioners and the Court of Common Pleas Judges encouraged county leaders to pursue funding and technical assistance to support the creation of a Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB) in Franklin County. Working with a consulting firm, the CJAB convened its first meeting in October 2000. The Honorable Judge Richard Walsh, Common Pleas Judge of the 39<sup>th</sup> Judicial District served as Chair for that initial meeting and continued to serve in this capacity for over a decade.

Under the leadership of Judge Walsh, with the technical assistance of a consulting firm, the Board established committees and sought to establish priorities. During the first 6 months of operation, the Board developed a Mission statement and adopted guidelines for its operations. The mission of the CJAB is “to create a forum of leaders that collaboratively addresses the immediate and future needs of the county by researching, planning, and recommending solutions that will integrate and prioritize the best approaches to criminal justice policies and program planning.

The Judge Richard Walsh Award was established in honor of and presented to Judge Walsh as he prepared to retire at the end of 2012. The award is representative of the leadership and involvement an individual brings to the criminal justice community in Franklin County throughout their career. Judge Walsh awardees possess the ability to move an idea from page to practice while planning and recommending solutions that will integrate and prioritize best practices and approaches to criminal justice policies and program planning. Judge Walsh awardees accept the challenges placed in their paths and address each with unparalleled dedication and commitment. It is with great pleasure that CJAB has awarded the 2018 Judge Richard Walsh Award, to the Reverend Jeffrey Diller. Franklin County Commissioner, Robert Ziobrowski, shared this heartfelt sentiment upon hearing the announcement. “Reverend Diller’s years of service and active participation on the Criminal Justice Advisory Board are extraordinary and Franklin County is a better place because of it.

Reverend Diller was born in Lancaster, PA and after serving churches in Lancaster and Schuylkill counties, he and his wife Harriett, and two sons moved to Chambersburg to become the pastor of Zion Reformed United Church of Christ in 1987. Reverend Diller has served in numerous community capacities. He has served as President of the Franklin County Library Board, President of Kittochtinny Historical Society, Chair of the Franklin County Homeless Coalition, and President of United Churches of the Chambersburg Area. In his service with United Churches, Reverend Diller organized what is known today as the Emergency Needs Clearing House administered by the Salvation Army. He has also served on the Boards of the Healthy

Community Partnership, Family Health Services, Cumberland Valley Mental Health, and the Letterkenny Chapel Committee. He has been a part of Franklin Together and chairs its Healing Community Task Force. He has also served as President of the Rotary Club of Chambersburg, where he and Commissioner Bob Thomas first met. Commissioner Thomas says of Reverend Diller “I learned to know Jeff when I first joined the Chambersburg Rotary Club about 30 years ago. His dedication and service to community was very evident then and remains so to this day.”

In 1990, Reverend Diller took over as chairperson of the Franklin County Jail Ministry where he continues to serve overseeing the work of the Chaplain and the approximately 100 volunteers. It was in this capacity that Commissioner Thomas recruited him to serve as the first at-large representative on the CJAB. His first meeting in this capacity was May 2003. The Advisory Board had been established and the initial By-Laws had been designed.

Reverend Diller’s proudest achievements on CJAB included serving on the Committee designing the new Franklin County Jail and the Committee which created the Day Reporting Center. He played a valuable role in convincing the public of the need for the new Jail by arranging tours for churches and groups at the old jail and by drafting a featured editorial letter in the Public Opinion outlining the need. Commissioner Warren Elliott often noted that the public complaints stopped after that letter appeared. Judge Carol Van Horn, President Judge of the 39<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court confirmed his dedication to service, “Reverend Diller chose to devote his professional life to the task of serving others. The Criminal Justice Advisory Board is very fortunate that he agreed to become a member and provide invaluable insight to discussions that shaped resolutions to community problems.” Franklin County Commissioner Chairman, David Keller, added “We have been blessed to have Reverend Diller’s sincerity, intellect, and character as a constant presence on the CJAB. There is no doubt that he has made a significant and lasting contribution to public safety in Franklin County as a result of his services, for which we are very thankful.”

When asked about his experience with the Criminal Justice Advisory Board, Reverend Diller states that “Over the years, I have been most impressed by the professionalism, competence, and compassion of those working in Franklin County’s criminal justice system and I have made the effort to communicate this commitment to the community.”

For more information about the work of the CJAB, please visit [www.franklincountypa.gov](http://www.franklincountypa.gov) and visit their link in the Judicial drop-down menu.