

Dutchess County
Criminal Justice Council
Meeting Minutes
July 13, 2021

Present: Mary Ellen Still, Chair, Director of Probation
William O’Neil, County Executive’s Office
Dr. Gary Christensen, CJC Consultant
Jon Heller, D.C Probation, Special Populations Chair
Tom Angell, Office of the Public Defender, Re-Entry Chair
Bill Eckert, DBCH
Nancy Kelly, DBCH
Shirley Adams, CIC Chair
Karen DeSimone, D.C. Probation, Juvenile Justice Chair
Steve Miccio, PEOPLE USA, Diversion Committee Chair
Matthew Weishaupt, D.C. District Attorney’s Office (for William Grady)
Honorable Gerald Hayes, Citizen Appt
Kelly Bunt, KB Forensics, Victims Committee Chair
Honorable Frank Mora, Poughkeepsie City Court
Rebecca Edwards, D.C. Legislator
Hon. Joseph A. Egitto, Dutchess County Family Court
Austin “Brud” Hodgkins, Citizen Appointment
Debra Long, Family Services
Ken Roman - Police Reform & Reinvention Collaborative
Alisyn Gaffney, D.C Probation, Justice-Involved Women’s Co-Chair
Cherrell Evans-Tillery, Project M.O.R.E., Justice-Involved Women’s Co-Chair
Honorable Frederick Romig, East Fishkill Town Justice
Bridget Goddard, DCFS
Kari Rieser, Citizen Appointment
Hon. Edward McLoughlin, County Court Judge
Pastor John Perez, Citizen Appointment, Faith Temple Church
Jean-Marie Niebuhr, Deputy Commissioner, DCDBCH
Martin Lynch, Project M.O.R.E.

Guests: Tom Morris, Dutchess County Probation
Molly Shanley

1. Welcome

Mary Ellen welcomed new members Pastor John Perez, Citizen Appointment, Faith Temple Church, and Cherrell Evans-Tillery, Project M.O.R.E., Justice-Involved Women’s Committee Co-Chair.

2. Notice

Mary Ellen noted that Dawn Hawley has retired and that all CJC communications should be sent to her, Jon Heller and/or Tom Morris until further notice.

3. Approval of May 11, 2021 minutes

The minutes of May 11, 2021 were approved on a motion by Judge Frank Mora, seconded by William O'Neil.

4. Jail / ATI report –Mary Ellen Still

The Jail/ATI reports were sent electronically. There were no questions or comments.

5. Research and Planning Update–Dr. Gary Christensen

Gary shared a power point to update the Council on the jail population numbers and the impact of bail reform. The period of time represented in this study was January through July. The slides showed an analysis of the current jail population and admissions. Gary obtains the data on a weekly basis and the data is further analyzed by the Pretrial Services staff. Gary displayed an example of this analysis from June 30th with the identifiers deleted. Gary detailed admissions, comparing similar time periods over a span of five years. Violent crime admissions are up from last year. Brud asked if the overall drop in admissions for 2020 was due to bail reform. Gary indicated that it was likely, as the admissions data indicated the absence of the non-qualifying offenses. Tom Angell indicated that overall, crime is not up. There was continued discussion on the impacts of bail reform.

Slide 7 showed admissions by jurisdiction. Gary indicated that the Quality Assurance team began looking into the numbers in response to an inquiry about more violent felonies in the jail. Slide 9 showed violent felonies by court and type. Pastor Perez asked if that data was available broken down by race. Gary indicated that while not displayed here, the data does exist, and he would look into obtaining it. Slide 10 showed the type of violent offenses by crime. Most of the crimes involved a weapon of some kind, primarily illegal handguns. Rebecca Edwards inquired about the ability to trace these weapons. Matt Weishaupt indicated there is an attempt to trace every weapon and that the police department maintains records of this. Slides 11 and 12 identified trends in the short period that MAT has been available. It would appear that recidivism is down for those who are high risk to recidivate (based on Proxy score) who received MAT at the jail. Most of this population participated in RESTART. Of the 62 releases reported here, there was unfortunately one overdose death post-release. Pastor Perez asked if the data could be broken down by race, and Gary indicated that he would look to see if the data was available. Slides 13 and 14 provided data on forensic assessments. From 2018 through 2021, the referrals have decreased overall. Slide 15 showed that jail referrals were down significantly, where community referrals remained stable. Gary attributed this to bail reform. Slide 16 detailed some of the next steps of the Quality Assurance committee, including participation in the City University of NY Bail Reform study in which Dutchess County agreed to participate. The QA committee has already communicated with this group relative to the impacts of Covid on the data for this study. The three agencies providing data are Probation, Public Defender and the DA's office. Seven counties are also contributing to this study. We are in the process of determining what data can be provided. Additionally, the committee will continue to study case processing efficiencies, impact of violent felonies on the system, outcomes for RESTART and the full impact of bail reform.

6. Committee reports:

Quality Assurance – Dr. Gary Christensen, Tom Angell, William Grady

Gary indicated that his presentation covered this report.

Raise the Age – Judge Egitto

Judge Egitto indicated that since this committee was an implementation committee, they planned to dissolve it. The final meeting was the 24th of June. Judge McLoughlin reported that he has two Youth Part cases and that 90% of the cases were referred to the Family Court. The state has hired a resource coordinator to be a liaison for the educational needs of youth coming into the Youth Part. District RTA met yesterday on how best to utilize this person. The committee will continue to meet once every three months.

Police Reform and Reinvention – Ken Roman

Ken reported that the City of Poughkeepsie Police Department and the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office continue to lead in all aspects of the Executive Order on Police Reform. City of Poughkeepsie was already training on procedural justice and implicit bias. The Sheriff's Office has worked with the county's EEO office in recruiting for the new exam. Overall, police applications are down significantly, but outreach efforts are being made. All agencies have openings, and currently there are not enough qualified recruits to fill those positions. The community policing unit is aiding in recruitment efforts. They have asked Shirley's Community Involvement Committee to help in getting the word out. The exam is free and there are test prep classes available. CIT continues, and Dutchess is leading the way. Every new recruit is trained. Helpline continues to operate at the 911 center. The goal is to send all non-violent mental health calls to mental health professionals. Steve Miccio indicated that Westchester County received a grant for a dispatch diversion program. Ken will speak to Steve about that. Ken noted that in 2022, there will be a national mandated suicide prevention program known as 988. Ken met with the undersheriff last week to review the metrics of the executive order. The undersheriff will provide a quarterly report on progress. Tom Angell said that he, Shirley, Rebecca and some other members of CJC attended the procedural justice training. It was excellent and he strongly encourages others to attend.

Victims—Kelly Bunt

Kelly reported that the committee's focus has been on the Marist College collaborative survey on disruptions to victims' services caused by Covid. All the data is in and the surveys are done. Last Friday, the committee met with Dr. Hanssen and she indicated that she would be able to present the results of the study in September. There were 48 victim survey responders; 47 provider responders. Dr Hanssen said that these numbers were appropriate for the study.

Juvenile Justice- Karen DeSimone

The committee has not met since the last CJC meeting. The next meeting is slated for the 22nd of July. There is currently one female in non-secure detention.

Re-Entry – Tom Angell

The Re-Entry Committee had their meeting in July with a presentation by Step One. It was noted

that Step One expanded services during the pandemic. Step One sent therapists to where the people were in the community. They sent counselors to the pods and to the Salvation Army. The next meeting is August 19th and Kelly Bunt will be presenting. Also, Kevin Warwick will be meeting with Exodus on Monday about program integration and fidelity.

CIC – Shirley Adams

Shirley reported that they had a very successful virtual forum on Tuesday the 29th of June. They had planned for this first forum to present some good news, so it was focused on positive interventions surrounding the opioid crisis and to show the successes and value of the programs. There were 38 attendees at the forum. Judge Segal and Judge Pagones presented on Judicial Diversion and the Beacon Drug Court along with two program graduates; one from each court. Their talk was very powerful. Bill Eckert and Amu Ptah reported on measures like the syringe exchange. There were also presentations by Jean-Marie Niebuhr on other resources and Steve Miccio on the Stabilization Center. Tom Angell wrapped up the forum exploring what might be possible in the future to further incentivize diversion programs in the community. Shirley thanked all of the members of the Criminal Justice Council who helped make the forum possible. Brud had a question about housing resources for the diversion population. Tom answered that there is a Diversion Court team member who works for Hudson River Housing and is an invaluable resource.

Diversion – Steve Miccio

Steve indicated that there will be a CIT class in November. The Stabilization Center welcomed 276 guests last month, which is about 9 people per day. There were 17 brought in by law enforcement, 16 by CIT trained officers. Two came from Ulster county. There is a CIT conference in Phoenix in August and Steve will be a presenter. Steve is also putting together a white paper on prevention. Referencing the sequential intercept study that was completed in Dutchess County a number of years ago, Steve indicated that after the identification of gaps in the system, intercept zero was created. Steve said that now he is looking at intercept negative one: prevention. While CIT is effective, it is not the final answer. Also, Steve has been working with New York State OMH on drafting rules and regulations for Stabilization Centers in NY. The draft will be released in October. The center has established good partnerships in the surrounding community as well as the rest of the state and even out of state. They are continuing to evolve. What is not evolving is our hospital (Westchester). Representatives from the county met with hospital staff a month ago. The hospital requested ‘real-time’ evidence of issues with care which have occurred every week. Steve indicated that the issues continue to be long waits, elopements, and poor care. This is specific to WMC Health. Steve indicated that they have followed up with the hospital staff, and he has been in contact with the State Office of Mental Health. Rebecca asked about the status of the NY Matters program in Dutchess County. It is active in both Emergency departments and the jail.

Justice involved Women’s Committee—Alisyn Gaffney and Cherrell Evans-Tillery

The committee met on the 15th of June. They worked on the re-entry guide, adding a number of resources. It is intended to be placed on the Jail’s website with QR code links. There will be more work on the guide when the students return to Marist in the fall. They are also working with Marist staff to develop a survey to determine needs of women at the Women’s Center. The

Women's Center is running in-person but will continue to offer virtual groups for those who need it. The next meeting is the 24th of August.

Special Populations – Jon Heller

Special Populations met on the 21st of June. The discussion began with an update on MAT. The state passed legislation requiring MAT in correctional institutions, so it is fortunate that Dutchess County started before a mandate. Jon gave a RESTART quality assurance update. The next RESTART QA meeting is Monday, the 19th of July. Nicole Willoughby gave a RESTART update. There were eight female and 27 male participants with a waitlist of six. RESTART is back to full time. Marty gave an update on the new women's residence. Jenna Sarvis gave an update on DVOP (formerly IPVI). Kelly provided a sex offender treatment update.

There was a group discussion on re-entry housing issues and Sam Busselle reported on his remarks to the County Legislature regarding spending recovery money for youth programs. The meeting concluded with a discussion on the use of the COMPAS risk and needs assessment tool. The next meeting is Monday, the 19th of July.

7. Old Business

Bill O'Neil reported on the Justice and Transition Center. They had a "topping off" ceremony a couple of weeks ago. That means that the last piece of steel has been set. The project is on time and under budget. Programs in the existing jail are going well but will be even better in the new facility. Judge Egitto had contacted Bill about a program in the 9th Judicial District called Faith Based Court access. It is a program where faith-based organizations would make space available in their facilities for people to access court remotely. Two organizations in Dutchess County have offered space. If it works out, the program will expand.

Mary Ellen updated the group on the status of centralized arraignment. At this point, the Jail does not feel that they are quite ready to accommodate centralized arraignment. The committee will continue to work on a plan which must be finalized and approved by OCA before centralized arraignment can be arranged. Tom Angell said we are making progress.

8. New Business

Rebecca Edwards asked about the Red Flag law. Tom Morris indicated that those proceedings are held in County Court. Mary Ellen asked Tom to follow up on the law and report at the next meeting. Pastor Perez asked about equipment to participate in the Faith Based Court access. Bill O'Neil indicated that the foundation will provide the equipment.

9. Announcements -This is Bill Eckert's last CJC meeting. Bill was thanked for his work.

10. Adjourn – A motion to adjourn was made by Karen DeSimone seconded by William O'Neil.

Next Meeting—September 14, 2021 at 8:00 a.m. (virtual)

