

## **Dutchess County Criminal Justice Council**

Meeting Minutes

March 12, 2019

Present: Mary Ellen Still, Chair, Director of Probation  
William O'Neil, County Executive's Office  
Dr. Gary Christensen, CJC Consultant  
Honorable Frank Mora, Poughkeepsie City Court  
Jon Heller, D.C Probation, Special Populations Chair  
John T. Gildard, Citizen Appt.  
Tom Angell, Public Defender, Re-Entry Chair  
Bridget Goddard, DCFS  
Karmen Smallwood, Dutchess County Probation, Women's Chair  
Bill Eckert, DBCH  
Shirley Adams, CIC Chair  
Rebecca Edwards, D.C. Legislator  
Honorable Gerald Hayes, Citizen Appt.  
Karen DeSimone, D.C. Probation, Juvenile Justice Chair  
Kelly Bunt, KB Forensics, Victims' Chair  
Honorable Frederick Romig, East Fishkill Town Justice  
Barbara Jeter-Jackson, DC Legislator  
Loren Petrella, County Executive's Office  
Hon. Peter Forman, Dutchess County Court  
Steve Miccio, PEOPLE Inc., Diversion Committee Chair  
Dr. A.K. Vaidian, Commissioner of Behavioral & Comm. Health  
William Grady, D.C. District Attorney  
Denise Rivera, Project MORE, Inc.  
Austin "Brud" Hodgkins, Citizen Appointment  
Dawn Hawley, Coordinator

Guests: Joanne Nellis, Dutchess County Probation  
Tom Morris, Dutchess County Probation  
Martin Lynch, Project M.O.R.E.  
Jeffrey Schneider, ENJAN  
Molly Shanley, DCJ volunteer  
Sam Busselle, Citizen

**1. Approval of January 15, 2019 minutes** — The minutes were approved on a motion by Jon Heller seconded by Bill O'Neil.

**2. Jail/ATI Report—John Alessi and Mary Ellen Still** – The jail report and ATI stats were sent out. The admissions and the average daily population have remained in the same range.

### **3. Presentation – Interactive Journaling/the Women’s Center**

Marty Lynch, the Director of Programs for Project MORE in Dutchess County, informed us about Project MORE and how they fit into the partnerships within Dutchess County. The name Project MORE comes from Model Offender Reintegration Experience. The corporation was founded in New Haven, Connecticut in 1972 with the express purpose of working with offenders. Since that time, Project MORE has continually operated programs in Connecticut and in New York. The focus is on evidence-based programs and positive outcomes. Project MORE operates day reporting Programs, residential programs, intervention programs, and in-jail programs. Project MORE has been operating the Transitional Housing Program in Dutchess County since 2007. This is a 38-bed residential facility for people that are in the criminal justice system and experiencing problems with drugs or alcohol.

Project MORE secured funding for a much-needed women’s reporting center. The Women’s Center has been in operation for almost five years and has been tremendously successful. Marty added that they are currently in talks with DCJS regarding expansion of services. These programs are making an impact on recidivism and quality of life for people in the criminal justice system. Marty added that due to the work of the council, we have been able to provide consistent programming throughout our system. One of the most important things we can do is provide a clear and consistent message. We use MRT and Interactive Journaling which address the criminogenic needs of our clients. Marty thanked all the partners and Dutchess County for the support they have received throughout the last 15 years. Marty said that it is a real pleasure to work with Dutchess County and the state of New York as a not-for-profit.

Marty introduced Probation Officer Karmen Smallwood and Women’s Center Director Denise Rivera. They have been trained in Interactive Journaling. Denise said that it is an exciting new program and they are seeing good results. They offer gender-specific services in response to the increasing numbers of women involved in the criminal justice system. Research shows that women respond better to treatment received separately from men. Many women in the criminal justice system have mental health issues along with co-occurring substance use disorders. The Women’s Center offers a variety of interventions as well as prosocial activities. Women that come to the Women’s Center often have a history of physical and/or sexual abuse as well as a history of trauma.

The WRNA (Women’s Risk Needs Assessment) – is the assessment tool used at the Women’s Center. The WRNA assesses both gender-neutral and gender-responsive factors and is an evidence-based tool. Some of the services offered to women are: case management, MRT, anger management, Interactive Journaling and Ready Set Work!

Case managers facilitate all groups. They create individual case plans for each client and assist with housing, medical needs, insurance, treatment, employment and educational needs.

The Women’s Center staff work in conjunction with the Office of Probation and Community Corrections. A Probation Officer is available on-site Tuesday – Thursday.

Karmen spoke about the Interactive Journaling program and distributed some journals for CJC members to view. This program was developed by the Change Companies, a national provider of programs for

justice services, substance use, mental health and other behavioral change programs. This program is evidence-based, client- centered and addresses the prevalent risk and need domains of justice involved individuals. There are 14 Interactive Journaling topics in the current series. Each journal targets a specific criminogenic risk or needs factor. When working with individuals on probation, parole or in jail, it is essential that an evidence-based assessment be completed to target the appropriate risk/need factors for case planning.

Interactive Journaling can be done in a group setting or one-on-one. Karmen works one-on-one. Anyone Karmen invites to journal has completed MRT. Journaling is voluntary. Interactive Journaling is a resource for women who have finished their mandated programs but are not ready to leave the Women's Center. RESTART is getting ready to offer Interactive Journaling.

Karmen was asked about dealing with people who might be limited in their reading and writing skills. Karmen said she asks whether people are comfortable reading or if they would prefer she read to them. She has also done the writing with a participant dictating the information to her. Karmen said this program can be used for everyone regardless of their reading and writing ability. Mary Ellen thanked Denise and Karmen for their presentation.

**4. Research and Planning – Dr. Gary Christensen** – Gary distributed a document showing how and why jail beds are used. Gary said it is important to understand how our system works. Every person coming into our jail facility is screened by Pretrial Services. Those with a high likelihood to reappear in court are recommended by probation for release. About 95% of those recommendations are followed by the courts.

It was found that people with 100+ days were convicted of a crime over 99% of the time. Expanding on the study, Gary included several groups of people that were incarcerated 30-99 days. This was broken down into three groups of people: those who served 30-44 days, 45-59 days and 60-99 days. People who are in jail for 30+ days represent 93.5% of all jail days used. From 2013-2019 there were 17,627 releases. Gary said we found the rate of conviction at 98% for those incarcerated 45+ days. The rate of conviction in the 30+ days group was a little lower at over 98%. Overall, the most important finding of the study is that 98.4% of people released after serving 30+ days were convicted of a crime. It influences the way we deliver services and programming and shows the importance of developing programs like RIO.

#### **5. Committee Reports:**

**“Raise the Age: – Honorable Joseph Egitto** -Judge Egitto was not present. Mary Ellen said there was a meeting in January. The bulk of the discussion was on processing for youth removed from the Youth Part to Family Court and whether they must go through Probation Intake for consideration for diversion. The Office of Court Administration was at the meeting and clarified that in almost all instances a youth transferring from Youth Part would go through Probation Intake. Mary Ellen said they are also looking at process issues in terms of arraignments in local criminal courts outside the cities of Poughkeepsie and Beacon. As with most other counties, our plan submitted to the state is still pending approval. We requested funding for older youth. Tom Angell said so far there are small numbers of RTA youth. Mary Ellen added that 17-year olds will be included on October 1, 2019.

**Re-Entry – Tom Angell and Irma Machado**-Tom reported that the committee met on February 21. Brud Hodgkins from Indoor Organic Gardens of Poughkeepsie gave a fascinating presentation. Brud started this program with the idea of addressing nutritional needs at many different levels. Brud is also using the re-entry population to work in his program.

The committee will meet on April 18 and will have a presentation from Hudson River Housing.

Tom said that the Coming Home Program, which is a mentoring program, will have graduation tonight at 6:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

**CIC – Shirley Adams**--Shirley reported the committee is doing outreach with the hope of increased participation from community residents. There are several upcoming forums: Tuesday, March 12 – A Public Forum to discuss service needs of Individuals with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities, April 11- A Public Forum to discuss service needs for Individuals with Chemical Dependency, May 7 - A Public Forum on Mental Health Service Needs for Adults.

All forums will be held 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the Training Room at the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health, 230 North Road in Poughkeepsie. Shirley added that individuals unable to attend may comment by phone or mail.

**Diversion – Steve Miccio** – Steve reported that 16 officers graduated from CIT in February. Two of the trainers on the team are going to Albany for train-the-trainer certification. The next academy class will begin on May 20. The Steering Committee for the Stabilization Center has made progress in getting a hospital decision-maker to attend meetings. The hope is to better engage people at the hospitals.

**Victims - Kelly Bunt**--Kelly reported that the focus of the Victims Committee is to assist the aging population at risk of being victims of crime. The project they are working on is called the SOS magnet project. This stands for Safety of Seniors and is a collaborative effort. The District Attorney's Office is helping with funding for this project. The Office for the Aging is assisting with identifying seniors. The committee is also collaborating with a home-based meal program. They are looking to serve at least 500 seniors. They are using Arlington Inc. for the design of the prototype magnet. It will be a 6-piece puzzle magnet and will give tips on staying safe. The tips will focus on neglect, sexual and physical abuse and financial and emotional abuse. Kelly plans to have the prototype for our next meeting. The goal is to have it completed by June 14, which is Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

**Justice Involved Women -Karmen Smallwood** – Karmen reported that the committee changed their name to Justice Involved Women. At the February 5th meeting, Jail, Project MORE and Probation statistics were reviewed. The collaborative research project with Marist College's Center for Social Justice Research was also discussed. Committee members reviewed the interview protocol and provided valuable feedback which was presented to the research team last week for submission to the IRB. The proposed study will examine the experiences of justice involved women prior to and during their involvement in the criminal justice system. Karmen said they are excited about taking a deeper look into pathways to criminal justice involvement.

Committee members have taken an active role in seeking support from underrepresented community sectors to increase information and resource sharing. For example, Legislator Rebecca Edwards reached out to Aviva Kafka, Deputy Superintendent in the Hyde Park School District. She shared her experiences and knowledge of trauma-informed services within school systems at the last meeting.

Karmen added we are looking forward to learning more about the Department of Behavioral and Community Health's programs for women and children at the meeting this evening.

**Special Populations – Jon Heller** - Jon reported that the committee met yesterday. Project MORE received a grant to expand cognitive-based interventions inside the jail. This allowed Project MORE to hire two new staff. They are currently receiving MRT training. Jon said there will be another MRT focus group in April. There will be a State Symposium regarding the cognitive-based intervention grant that will be held in Albany on March 20 for all grant recipients.

There was a RESTART quality assurance meeting where the committee discussed RIO (Release Interim Option). RIO addresses the individuals who chronically spend 6-9 months in jail on misdemeanor offenses. RIO was developed through the collaborative efforts of Probation, the Public Defender and District Attorney. Participants spend the first eight weeks in jail doing intensive work in RESTART. They are then released on Interim Supervision to Probation to complete their discharge plan. Gary added that they must complete each requirement. Upon successful completion, they return to court and are given an agreed upon sentence.

Jon said the Medication Assisted Treatment in the jail was discussed. Bill Eckert reported that since the program's beginning, we have had five people in the jail being maintained on methadone. OASAS approved "guest" dosing for people who were not involved in the methadone program in our county. The group also reviewed the Franklin County, Massachusetts MAT protocol for their jail. Jon said we will soon begin working on administering suboxone. The committee's next meeting date is April 8.

Legislature Edwards asked if we have a profile of people serving 30+ days in jail. Gary said we triage populations using the Proxy. The Proxy provides a risk of recidivism. The person in RESTART, for example, is someone arrested at an early age and who has multiple arrests.

**Juvenile Justice - Karen DeSimone** – Karen reported that the committee met the end of January and talked about their goals for the coming year. They plan to discuss the needs of mentally ill youth in the juvenile justice system. The next meeting is March 28.

**6. Old Business** – Bill O'Neil said there will be tours of the Law Enforcement Center on March 26 at 10:00 a.m. and March 28 at 5:00 p.m. Please rsvp to Dawn. Bill said legislators will be invited.

**7. New Business** – none

**8. Announcements** – none

**9. Adjourn** – A motion to adjourn was made by Karen DeSimone, seconded by Bill O'Neil.

Next Meeting: May 21, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. at 230 North Road, Poughkeepsie, NY