

**Dutchess County  
Criminal Justice Council  
Meeting Minutes**

January 13, 2015

Present: Mary Ellen Still, Chair, Director of Probation  
Shirley Adams, CIC Chair  
Thomas Angell, Public Defender, Re-Entry Chair  
Onaje Benjamin, DCJ  
Bill Carlos, Citizen Appt.  
Hon. John Crodelle, Judge, T/O Northeast  
Karen DeSimone, Probation, Juv. Justice Chair  
Sharon Doane, Family Services, Victims Chair  
Greg Gale, DCJ  
John Gildard, Legislative Appt.  
Bridget Goddard, DCFS  
Hon. Stephen Greller, Judge, County Court  
J. Tracy Hermann, C/Pok Common Council  
Margaret Hirst, DMH  
Barbara Jeter-Jackson, DC Legislator  
Ronald Knapp, C/Pok. Police Chief, Special Pop. Chair  
Honorable Katherine Moloney, DC Bar Assoc.  
William O'Neil, DC Exec Office  
Julia Pagones, DC Planning  
Richard Perkins, DC Legislator  
Ken Roman, DC Legislator

Guests:

Hon. Frederick Romig, Judge, T/O East Fishkill Court  
Carlos Valencia, Exodus

Mary Ellen Still called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.

**1. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the November 18, 2014 meeting were approved on a motion by Tracy Herman and Bill Carlos.

**2. Jail/ATI Report—Greg Gale and Mary Ellen Still**

Jail and ATI reports were emailed. There were no questions.

The ATI reports were still incomplete. They were waiting for the end of year reports from some of the agencies. The CTC has a new vendor, Project MORE, and they are still in the process of transferring data. Once that is complete, the full ATI reports will be sent out. Based on initial December stats, the

average daily population was 564. There were 128 admissions into the various programs.

### **3. Committee Reports:**

Mary Ellen explained that the bulk of the meeting would be devoted to a summary to each committee's activities for 2014 and plans for 2015.

#### CIC—Shirley Adams

Shirley said 2014 was a productive year for the committee. Their focus was on Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI). They were able to have presentations from guest speakers such as Tom Angell from the Public Defender's Office, Marty Lynch from Project MORE and Tracy Stevens from CTC. Mary Ellen and Gary Christensen also spoke to the CIC to recap 2014's activities for the CJC. They will be meeting at the end of January to discuss their theme/focus for 2015, and are open to suggestions.

#### Juvenile Justice—Karen DeSimone

In 2014, the committee met six times on a bi-monthly basis. There were some additions to the committee's membership in 2014 including: Honorable Joseph Egitto, DCSO Lieutenant Pat Whelan, City of Poughkeepsie Detective John Stitt, Katrina Williams from Lexington Center and DCJS Juvenile Specialist Lorraine Hogan.

Among the agenda items for 2014 were Juvenile Justice Reform initiatives and proposals throughout the state. The committee continued to stay involved with the Mid-Hudson Regional Youth Justice Team. This Regional Team meets quarterly, and in 2014 had received a grant of \$100,000 to be used for training within the seven regional counties. The Team discusses issues regarding reform and systemic concerns. Comments/suggestions are then relayed back to the statewide committee.

A frequent topic of discussion is 'Raise the Age'; whereby 16 and 17 year old youths would be taken out of criminal court jurisdiction. A Commission formed by the Governor's Office was expected to submit their report and recommendations by December 31, 2014. The VERA Institute met in June with representatives from each regional team for their recommendations. The Mid-Hudson Region recommended the following: no unfunded mandates resulting from the change, funding should be provided for community programming and for any transition to occur in stages.

The committee monitored the initiation of the DRAI (Detention Risk Assessment Instrument) which completed its first full year of statewide use in 2014. Local committee discussions have been helpful in reviewing the utilization process and addressing any systemic concerns. The Mid-Hudson

Regional Team has requested a statewide validation study to see if this tool is working.

Also included in committee discussions is a review/update of existing programs and training opportunities:

The Curfew Monitoring program offered by the Office of Probation resumed in September 2014 and is expected to continue through March 2015. This historically successful program is utilized by Family Court as an alternative to detention.

The Building Bridges Conference, held on October 17, 2014 was a full day conference this year held at the former Faith Christian School. Over 150 representatives from 30 agencies and ten school districts attended. Dr. David Crenshaw presented "The Effects of Childhood Trauma" and several additional training opportunities were also offered.

In 2014, a stakeholders group began the formation of a Dutchess County Juvenile Fire Setters Intervention Program. This program will use a multi-disciplinary team approach and an evidence-based screening tool. The group is organizing participants to take the required training and be operational by Fall 2015.

The Youth Services Unit relocated to DCFS and is accepting referrals to assist at-risk youth and families. In addition, they continue to provide on-site training on various youth-related topics including bullying prevention & intervention. Dutchess County will add a fourth Family Court judge on January 1, 2016.

In May 2014 the Juvenile Justice Committee had a discussion regarding the filing of Family Offense Petitions by parents/guardians against their children. These petitions are filed by parents/guardians seeking an Order of Protection (either limited or full) against their children after threats or actual acts of violence occur in the household. In an effort to address the many concerns voiced, the September committee agenda was dedicated entirely to this topic and guests from outside the committee were invited to participate. After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that, when needed, the Family Court would 'second-call' a case and (upon consent) seek assistance from the Office of Probation to interview the petitioner and respondent and then provide a recommendation to the court. The committee reviewed this process in November and it appears to have made a significant improvement regarding the cited concerns. Several committee members have requested a similar meeting to discuss Family Court 'Runaway' Warrants. There are some concerns regarding system efficiencies in the processing of those warrants. A meeting with additional invited guests will be scheduled for further discussion. In 2015, the Juvenile Justice Committee will continue to monitor and discuss the proposed reform initiatives as they impact Dutchess County. The committee will also invite different speakers throughout the year to speak at

the bi-monthly meetings. For the January meeting, there will be a presentation from DC Mental Hygiene on the Helpline Texting feature, the Suicide App and the Mobile Crisis Team enhancements. Later in the year, the committee will invite Courtney Ramirez, from NYS DCJS, to attend a meeting. Ms. Ramirez is the NYS Disproportionate Minority Representation (DMR) Coordinator and a member of NYS Juvenile Justice Advisory Group. Membership goals are to increase representation from school districts, the community and parents.

#### Re-Entry—Tom Angell

Tom began with an explanation of what re-entry does as compared with other CJC committees. In addition to re-entry being a committee with agency representation and citizen involvement, it also oversees a program which has paid staff and provides services. The funds for this contracted program, Exodus, are provided by a yearly grant from the state.

The committee itself meets six times a year to address issues that affect those returning to the community from prison. They address needs for housing, public assistance, substance abuse, mental health issues, employment, sex offender therapy, domestic violence programs, cognitive therapy, anger management, family support, etc.

Exodus provides some in-house programs and also refers to other services. Potential candidates for the program are selected from those with higher risk scores as determined by the COMPAS risk instrument. When they are accepted, they are assessed for the type of service needed. Reassessments occur at 45 and 90 days. There is one full-time staff person paid for by the grant and two additional staff paid by Exodus.

Carlos Valencia, the re-entry coordinator with Exodus since September 2013, next spoke about his role with re-entry. He said that there are now 322 participants. Of those, 209 are on parole, and 113 are on probation. They provide employment assistance in the form of interviewing skills, resume preparation, and how to dress. They are also working with Dutchess Community College for GED preparation. They offer anger management and everyday case management. They are also looking start a MRT Program, and to offer the Ready, Set, Work program in the near future. The reason they have not been able to offer MRT so far, is that it takes two trained people, and they only have one at this point. Also the booklets are \$25 each and there is no money available for those items.

Margaret asked if there are any statistics on the number of people who complete the re-entry program who lived in Dutchess County. Tom said Parole dictates where the person is discharged and it's generally where the person lived before incarceration. Re-entry does not keep track of that. Ron Knapp added that a person can come here if they have family members here. Tom noted they do contract with Hillcrest for housing. Ken Roman added that there is a mix of populations at Hillcrest, and this brings up many safety issues.

Parole meets weekly and decides who will be referred to re-entry. Those with lower risk scores are not accepted into the program. Parole refers 12 to 13 people a month. Tom said that if the program exceeds the allotted number in the grant, they do not get paid for the additional persons.

Tracy Hermann asked what has the greatest impact on recidivism. Tom said that cognitive behavioral therapy is most effective, in conjunction with the other mentioned services. In Dutchess County, CBT is provided by probation and CTC.

#### Special Populations—Ron Knapp

Ron said the Special Populations Committee was formed in August 2014 and meets monthly. Its purpose is to address the needs of the special populations in the jail. It is led by Kevin Warwick who is a consultant with Alternative Solutions Associates. It is anticipated that this committee will conclude its work at the end of 2015. One of the goals of the group is to develop a program to address the needs of higher risk inmates. This programming will begin once the PODS are occupied.

There is also an RFP being written to solicit vendors for in-jail programming. The vendor will be part of a team comprised of the Department of Mental Hygiene, Probation and jail staff. Some members met with RicciGreene Associates at the end of December to discuss programming space needs.

Steve Miccio of PEOPLE, Inc., was selected to lead the new Diversion sub-committee. This committee will be tasked with discussions surrounding the creation of a crisis center. This will be a diversion center/drop-off area designed to avoid incarceration when appropriate.

A goal of programming is to reduce recidivism. Therefore there is need for internal and external programming once the person is released. It was noted in a recent meeting that it takes 18 to 24 months to actually reduce a person's recidivism rate. There is then the need for services once a person has re-entered the community.

The committee's minutes and Powerpoint presentations are available on the county website. The committee is very diverse, so there has been a lot of discussion on many of the topics from a range of county and community representation. There are many programs or initiatives already in place (such as PREA) whereby inmates are screened and assessed. Much of the programming and people who provide services are already there, so we now need to coordinate the jail and community-based services.

There is also an External Advisory Group meeting on January 29th that is open to the public. This is led by former Senator Steve Saland. The meeting will be held at the Bardavon at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome.

### Women in CJ System—Susie Balutis

Susie Balutis was in court and was not able to attend this meeting. Mary Ellen said that the committee took an inventory of women's services. They also reviewed the technical assistance grant from the Center for Effective Public Policy and the National Resource Center on Justice Involved Women. They also reviewed jail programming and women's risk and needs assessments. They plan to work with the Victims' Committee in 2015.

### Victims—Sharon Doane

Sharon Doane said that this committee resumed meeting again in October 2014. Their initial meetings focused on membership and activities/goals. There is a need to focus on children, veterans, and immigrants. They also discussed activities such as educating first responders, cross-training between victims services, improve communications, annual refresher training for first responders and creating a speakers bureau to raise awareness about available services.

### **4. Old Business**

None

### **5. New Business**

Mary Ellen stated that Steve Miccio will chair the newly created Diversion Committee of the CJC. The committee will be addressing behavioral health issues and focusing on diversion initiatives. The committee is being organized at the present time and will shortly hold its first meeting.

### **6. Announcements**

The External Advisory Committee will hold a public meeting on January 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Bardavon in Poughkeepsie. All are welcome.

Shirley added the CIC wanted to remind everyone of the Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. They plan to acknowledge the members of the CJC at that event.

### **6. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 am.

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, MARCH, 24, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.**

(changed from March 10<sup>th</sup>)

Catharine Street Community Center

Poughkeepsie, New York (Entrance at 152 Mansion Street)