

Dutchess County Criminal Justice Council

Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2017

Mary Ellen Still, Chair, Director of Probation
Eric Knapp D.C. Public Defender's Office
Dr. Gary Christensen, CJC Consultant
Karen DeSimone, D.C. Probation, Juvenile Justice Committee Chair
Bridget Goddard, DCFS
Matt Weishaupt for William Grady, D.C. District Attorney
Barbara Jeter-Jackson, D.C. Legislator
Jerry Landisi, Legislator
Honorable Frank Mora, Poughkeepsie City Court
William O'Neil, D.C. Executive's Office
Julia Pagones, D.C. Executive's Office
Margaret Hirst, DBCH
Jon Heller, D.C Probation, Special Populations Chair
Shirley Adams, CIC Chair
William G. Carlos, Jr., Citizen Appointment
John T. Gildard, Citizen Appt.
Kari Rieser, D.C. Legislator
Dawn Hawley, Acting Coordinator

Guests:

Thomas Morris, D.C. Probation & Community Corrections
Joanne Nellis, D.C. Probation & Community Corrections
Bill Rubin, ENJAN
Molly Shanley, Volunteer, DCJ
Linda Fakhoury, D.C. Dept of Law
Sgt. Shawn Castano, D.C. Sheriff's Office

The meeting was called to order by Mary Ellen Still at 8:09 a.m. Mary Ellen explained that some members could not be present due to the change in schedule caused by last week's severe snow storm.

Mary Ellen reminded everyone that during the meeting questions and comments will be limited to CJC members. After the meeting is adjourned, guests may ask questions or offer comments.

1. Approval of January 10, 2017 Minutes – The minutes were approved on a motion by Bill Carlos, seconded by Jon Heller.

2. Introduction of new member – Mary Ellen introduced and welcomed Legislator Kari Rieser. Legislator Micki Strawinski is leaving the Council.

3. Jail/ATI Report—John Alessi and Mary Ellen Still--The Jail report was distributed electronically. There was a computer glitch with the ATI report. Probation and OCIS are working to correct the problem. The report will be distributed when the issue is resolved. Mary Ellen added that there appears to be no major changes from January.

4. J-FIRE Presentation – Mary Ellen introduced Sgt. Shawn Castano, from the Sheriff's Office, Linda Fakhoury from the Department of Law and Karen DeSimone from the Office of Probation. Sgt. Shawn Castano showed a power point that outlined the history and progress of the program. The program's mission is to provide a comprehensive, non-punitive, multi-disciplinary approach to address the problem of juvenile fire setting by early identification, assessment, education and intervention in an effort to protect lives and property. The J-FIRE Program is a collaborative effort including: firefighters, police officers, county attorneys, probation officers and mental health clinicians from fourteen different agencies. The J-FIRE Program is available to youth in Dutchess County between the ages of 3 and 17. The program does not get involved if a criminal arrest has been made. J-Fire participation is voluntary and anyone can make a referral. J-FIRE uses an evidence-based assessment process that helps determine the level of risk as well as educational strategies for the child and whole family. Education has proven to be the most effective way to stop child fire setting. An Intervention Specialist will assist with making the home safer and aim to mitigate some hazards. If appropriate, there will be a referral for mental health services. The intent is to change the child's behavior and show a healthy respect for fire. The Intervention Specialists also follow up after the case has been closed to see if there are any more fire concerns. Karen DeSimone shared a case review and explained how there are often other issues for the families that the specialist is able to help with. Shawn thanked the Council for inviting them to do the presentation and the County Legislature and County Executive for their support of the program. He also thanked the agencies that have participated as well as the Intervention Specialists who have taken on additional duties to participate in this program. Linda added if anyone has any questions, they may send an e-mail to jfire@dutchessny.gov. Mary Ellen thanked the presenters.

5. Committee Reports--

Diversion – **Steve Miccio** was not in attendance, but Mary Ellen shared that the committee has been working principally on Crisis Intervention Training for law enforcement and the Stabilization Center. The CIT training is ongoing and they have worked to accommodate part-time departments as well as full-time ones. The Stabilization Center officially opened on March 16th. Margaret Hirst added that the Center has been open about 30 days. There was a "soft opening" on February 13th. Margaret stated that as a new program, it is going very well and has had over 100 guests. People are welcomed 24 hours a day. About 1/3 had issues with addiction. Margaret added that they have had individuals brought in by law enforcement, family members and some walk-ins. The first guest came in with law enforcement officers. Karen DeSimone, who is on the CIT training team, said she received an e-mail from one of the recently graduated officers saying he was able to use his new skills to bring someone to the Stabilization Center. Twenty two people have been brought to the Stabilization Center by law enforcement and at least two of them, an officer reported, would have been arrested if they did not have the Stabilization

Center as an alternative resource. Bill Carlos added that the state Police Chiefs Association is discussing adding the basic 40 hour CIT to the recruit school. Police departments think that is a great idea but it increases the recruit school by a week. Bill O'Neill added that Congressman Maloney is pushing a bill that would designate funding for different activities including training for police officers. Bill said that the county has been funding half the cost of training through our municipal grant. Margaret added that we are unique in Dutchess County because we have set up all of our programs in a collaborative fashion. Mary Ellen agreed with Margaret and stated that many agencies step up and volunteer in a number of ways from serving on committees to becoming trainers.

Juvenile Justice – Karen DeSimone said the Juvenile Justice Committee, along with DBHC, is hosting a mapping of the juvenile justice system. OMH is coming to do the mapping with us. The committee has spent the last three meetings discussing mentally ill youth which will help to prepare for the mapping. There will be no regular meeting of the committee this month since the mapping will take a full day of everyone's schedule. Mary Ellen added that mapping is very productive because it looks at various decision points in the system where interventions can occur. Margaret added that it also brings new people into the conversation. Karen reported that two Family Court Judges will be attending as well as a City of Poughkeepsie School administrator and more than 30 other people.

Victims – Kelly Bunt was not able to attend, but Mary Ellen reported that the tracking form for sexual assault cases has been finalized. The next step is to meet with the District Attorney's office to discuss implementation. The next meeting will be on April 14th at 9:30 a.m.

Special Populations – Jon Heller reported that the committee met on February 6th at the Stabilization Center. Steve Miccio gave the committee a tour. Jon thanked Margaret for making the conference room available for that meeting. Toni Ciarfella, Deputy Commissioner for Special Needs, attended the March 6th meeting for a discussion about incarcerated individuals with special needs. This group often has longer lengths of stay because finding appropriate housing can be problematic. State resources have been reduced. A smaller subcommittee of Special Populations will meet to address this issue.

Jon continued that RESTART is progressing very well. We have enhanced communication with the District Attorney's office and Public Defender's office which helps to identify potential participants as early in the criminal justice process as possible.

The application for the Second Chance Act grant has been submitted. We hope to hear in early fall.

The committee's next meeting will be April 10th and will focus on the severely and persistently mentally ill population in the jail.

Re-Entry – Eric Knapp attended this meeting for Tom Angell. The committee's next meeting is April 20th at 2:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Church and will focus on parole housing.

Women in the Criminal Justice System – Mary Ellen reported that Mary Haight has left her position at the Women's Center to take a job with the Council of State Governments. We will soon have a replacement for The Women's Center and a new chair for the committee. Mary Ellen acknowledged Mary for her work and commitment.

CIC – Shirley Adams reported that the committee met on March 16th and Sam Busselle presented the Collective Impact initiative. Shirley continued this initiative it is in its initial stages of development. The

committee was helpful by suggesting the founders of this initiative focus on a particular target group and/or issue. Members of the committee encouraged narrowing the target to something manageable and gave ideas of potential targets and geographic areas. The initiative will be rolled out on March 29th at 7:45 a.m. at the Family Partnership Center. Shirley added they are open to discussion on where their focus should be.

CIC will schedule a meeting in April.

Quality Assurance –Tom Angell and Matt Weishaupt-- Matt attended the meeting for Bill Grady. Gary informed us that work is ongoing and they have been looking at average length of stay and how that contributes to jail population as a whole. There has been a downward trend in Average Length of Stay (ALOS). Gary was pleased to report that ALOS is down to 50 from 55 only three months ago. Gary is doing rolling year averages so that it is an “apples to apples” comparison. Gary continued that there were about 400 more people admitted from April through this March. Gary added that because our average length of stay has decreased, it keeps our jail population stable even with increased admissions.

In the current analysis, Gary provided the Quality Assurance Committee with a data base that breaks clients down into different categories so we can look more closely at processing issues. This will not only affect individual people, but practice as a whole. Gary added that this helps us to look at how practice influences average length of stay and we have already seen some interesting things. As Jon mentioned, the special populations groups not only create a resource issue at the jail, but they also tend to be overrepresented, if not solely represented, in the long lengths of stay in jail. These people often go back and forth between the mental health system and the court system as it relates to competency.

Matt added that with the help of the County Executive’s Office, the District Attorney’s office now has additional resources that allow them to dedicate staff to work on this initiative. Matt continued that they have concentrated their resources on the Town and City of Poughkeepsie which seem to be the two jurisdictions that primarily drive the high ALOS. In addition, Matt met last year with County Court Judges, their law clerks and the Public Defenders office to discuss procedures in the County Court as it relates to processing. Out of that meeting came many things that will be very helpful in affecting processes at the County Court level. The calendar clerk will expedite the processing of incarcerated defendants so the cases can be handled more efficiently and expeditiously. All parties will work to reduce adjournments.

Matt stated the collaborative effort that exists in the county is extremely important in making this system work and the County Executive deserves a big hand for allowing the District Attorney the additional resources needed. Matt added that Gary has done a great job getting the statistics necessary to address ALOS. Matt believes this will continue to make an impact and decrease the average length of stay.

Gary added that he broke down the prison bound population for the first three months and the ALOS is down three days per person. Gary continued that the people who are in the jail 100 plus days are almost always convicted of an offense.

Gary can’t emphasize enough the importance of our collaborative process. It is already showing a five day overall reduction for the year. Gary thanked everyone for their efforts. Mary Ellen thanked Gary for providing us with the data that makes it possible to understand where we need to put resources.

6. Old Business - none

7. New Business - none

8. Announcements - Kari Rieser announced that there will be a Community Youth Forum on Saturday March 25th from 11:00 a.m.--1:00 p.m. at the Family Partnership Auditorium. It will be a conversation about our kids and our city.

9. Adjournment – Bill Carlos made a motion to adjourn seconded by Jon Heller at 9:30 a.m.