

**Dutchess County
Criminal Justice Council
Meeting Minutes**

November 25, 2014

Present: Mary Ellen Still, Chair, Director of Probation
Shirley Adams, CIC Chair
Thomas Angell, Public Defender, Re-Entry Chair
Susie Balutis, Probation, Women in CJ Chair
Onaje Benjamin, D.C. Jail
Bill Carlos, Citizen Appt.
Gary Christensen, Consultant
Hon. John Crodelle, Judge, T/Northeast
Karen DeSimone, Probation, Juv. Justice Chair
Sharon Doane, Family Services Inc., Victims Chair
Mary Kaye Dolan, Health and Human Services Cabinet
Angela Flesland, DC Legislator
Greg Gale, DCJ
John Gildard, Citizen Appt.
Bridget Goddard, DCFS
William Grady, District Attorney
Hon. Stephen Greller, County Court Judge
Tracy Hermann, C/Pok Common Council
Margaret Hirst, DMH
Barbara Jeter-Jackson, DC Legislator
Ronald Knapp, C/Pok. Police Chief, Special Pop. Chair
Noel Knille, Commissioner, DCDPW
Jill Lenard-Horne, NYS DOCS, Parole
William O'Neil, County Executive Representative
Ken Roman, DC Legislator
Hon. Katherine Moloney, C/Pok. Judge and D.C. Bar Assoc.

Guests:

Diana Armstead, Office of Probation
Sam Busselle, Citizen
Jon Heller, Office of Probation
Dr. Pamela Edington, President, Dutchess Community College
Mary Haight, Women's Center, Project MORE
Hon. Frederick Romig, Judge, T/ East Fishkill Court
Bill Rubin, ENJAN

Mary Ellen Still called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

MaryEllen welcomed the Honorable Katherine Moloney as a new member to the Council, representing the Dutchess County Bar Association and also thanked Dr. Pamela Edington, President of Dutchess Community College, for attending the meeting.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the September 16, 2014 meeting were approved on a motion by Bill O'Neil and Angela Flesland.

2. Presentation on Women's Risk and Needs Assessment—Diana Armstead, Office of Probation & Mary Haight, Women's Center (Project MORE)

Diana Armstead began by explaining that she and Mary had attended a training in spring 2014 presented by the NIC (National Institute of Corrections) and the University of Cincinnati. The training certified them as trainers in the use of the WRNA (Women's Risk and Needs Assessment.) Research started in 2008 to develop gender-specific assessments for the criminal justice system. Going further back, there was discussion around the importance of creating assessments and programs that addressed the specific needs of women.

Diana explained that extensive studies were done in the development of the WRNA. The assessment (which is about 25-pages) is used at the Women's Center by Mary Haight. The questionnaire covers employment, education, criminal records, relationships, abuse and trauma, support systems, etc. It provides a big picture of their lives as well as risk and needs. This assessment is similar to the COMPAS, but is geared to the specific risk/needs of women. Like the COMPAS, risk is categorized by low, medium and high.

Mary Haight next spoke about the use of this assessment in case planning. It is an evidence-based tool that can be used with the COMPAS. They are using these objective assessments in a meaningful way. Women in the criminal justice system are often in their early 30's, are under-educated, under-employed, and may have substance abuse issues. Case planning involves matching the client with services that are most beneficial and target specific needs. Dutchess County is also using a pre-trial tool called the Inventory of Need (ION), and they can use this form to target interventions.

They also look at behavioral health issues, family issues, relationship issues and parental stress. There is a focus on the strengths of a person such as education, relationships and family support. The case plan looks at the needs of each person and includes objectives to target those needs. Often cognitive interventions are used, and the case manager uses a decision matrix that includes risk levels. Diana gave specific case examples to explain how the WRNA is applied.

Questions & Answers

Gary asked how the University of Cincinnati tool correlates with the COMPAS. Mary said when cases get to them the COMPAS has already been completed, so they use a form of the tool called a Trailer. Mary Ellen said that this is still very new and is not yet available electronically, but soon will be. This enhances and further defines the COMPAS, adding specific areas such as prior trauma. Once the WRNA is available electronically, further training will occur.

Judge Romig asked about the second risk level, or medium risk, and whether there are factors that would change risk level and make it more positive? Diana said that if the person follows the treatment plan to address risk factors, the risk may be lowered. Mary Ellen added that when a person is first on probation we do an initial assessment; we then know what the risks are, and we reassess and adjust the case plans accordingly. We measure progress periodically.

Onaje Benjamin asked if there are any plans to use any other NIC programs or programs such as Seeking Safety. This is available, but other programs and interventions are available as well, depending on the individual's specific needs. Margaret Hirst added that there are various programs available in different agencies. Mary said that they also make referrals to other agencies for treatment so as to best meet the needs of the person. There are referrals and communication among the agencies.

There was discussion about the need to focus on trauma issues for men as well. Sharon Doane said that DACC is looking at the need to uncover childhood and/or adolescent trauma.

Gary asked if the University of Cincinnati is supporting any research on the outcomes. Mary said that she understood this will be part of ongoing research.

3. Research Update—Gary Christensen

Gary said that he is working with the Special Populations Workgroup. He is trying to create a one-day snapshot to identify what the flow of the population looks like and cross reference that with the 8,000 person sample population. We are also looking at what the impact will be of having the pods and bringing inmates back. We realize that our admissions are constant, but our population is increasing so we need to look at our processes and try to bring the population back down. Also, once the pods are in place and we have all our inmates back, we will be better able to realize our actual "normalized" population. This will also affect the ALOS and show effects of housing out. From there we will be able to make better and informed decisions and evaluate the real needs for the jail transitions center. We will be reaching out to different individuals to look at ways to improve our processes and system. Gary said that we may need to find additional resources. The Public Defender's Office, DA's office, and Probation play key roles. Mary Ellen said that we need to look at this through a systems approach.

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

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

5. Committee Reports:

CIC—Shirley Adams

Shirley Adams said that Tracy Stevens from CTC did a presentation on their program. A holiday wrap-up will be held around the third week in December and will have highlights from the presentation over the last year.

Juvenile Justice—Karen DeSimone

Karen said the Juvenile Justice Committee is continuing to grow and is very busy. Their last meeting was Thursday, November 20th. At the prior meeting, they had looked at Family Court and Orders of Protection with very positive results. The courts are now able to get more information in a timely manner. The Building Bridges Conference in October had 150 participants with representatives from 10 school districts and 30 agencies. This conference brings awareness about services that are available. The Regional Youth Justice Team meets again on Dec. 3rd, and the focus will be on using grant funding and programs. They are also looking at reform initiatives. Part of this reform includes the detention risk tool. The committee meets again on January 22, 2015 with a presentation from the Dept. of Mental Hygiene on the new helpline. Tom Angell asked where things are with the “raise the age” initiative. Karen said recommendations were made to the governor's office, and there is a certainty that some type of change will occur, but don't know what it will be.

Re-Entry—Tom Angell

Tom said that they met in October and the focus was on veterans. Their next meeting will be December 18th at Christ Church. They will continue to focus on veterans.

Special Populations—Ron Knapp

Ron said that they are meeting monthly. We are housing out 200+ inmates a day. When we do bring back this group there will be a transition period. We are working to develop jail programming for higher risk inmates. This programming will be evidence-based and linked to community programs. We are looking at diversion opportunities as well. Mary Ellen said that in July there was a workshop sponsored by the SAMHSA GAINS Center focused on diversion. As part of the follow-up we are planning to form a committee that will focus on diversion for people with behavioral health issues. A request to create such a committee was sent to the County Executive.

Women in CJ System—Susie Balutis

Susie Balutis was in court and was not able to attend this meeting. Their most recent meeting focused on the women's assessment instrument.

Victims—Sharon Doane

Sharon Doane distributed a flyer for an upcoming workshop on human trafficking. Their first meeting focused on the purpose of the subcommittee and brainstormed ideas for criminal justice responses to victim issues. We want to look at immediate needs of victims and know what is available. We also need cross-training between agencies to inform them on available services. There is a need to do annual training on mandated child abuse reporting. We also recommend creating a Speakers Bureau to raise awareness about services for victims. We want to identify all the different agencies-- law enforcement, charities, etc., that work with victims. Next meeting will be on December 12th.

6. Old Business

Mary Ellen said that the website is completed and will be updated on a regular basis. There is the ability to ask questions.

7. New Business

None

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.

Catharine Street Community Center

Poughkeepsie, New York (Entrance at 152 Mansion Street)