

**Dutchess County
Criminal Justice Council**

Meeting Minutes

September 12, 2017

Present: Mary Ellen Still, Chair, Director of Probation
Dr. Gary Christensen, CJC Consultant
Bridget Goddard, DCFS
Hon. Denise Watson, DC Family Court
Kelly Bunt, Victims Committee Chair
Honorable Gerald Hayes, Citizen Appt.
Mio Mercedes-Carbone, Project M.O.R.E.
Honorable Frank Mora, Poughkeepsie City Court
William O'Neil, D.C. Executive's Office
Julia Pagonos, D.C. Executive's Office
Chief Tom Pape, City of Poughkeepsie Police Dept.
John Alessi, Dutchess County Jail
Margaret Hirst, DBCH
Jon Heller, D.C Probation, Special Populations Chair
Shirley Adams, CIC Chair
Honorable Frederick Romig, East Fishkill Town Justice
Tom Angell, Public Defender's Office
John T. Gildard, Citizen Appt.
Steve Miccio, PEOPLE Inc., Diversion Committee Chair
Mike Young, Poughkeepsie City Council
Kari Rieser, D.C. Legislator
William G. Carlos, Jr., Citizen Appointment
Dawn Hawley, Coordinator

Guests: Thomas Morris, Dutchess County Probation
Martin Lynch, Project M.O.R.E.
Sam Busselle, Citizen
Bill Rubin, ENJAN
Peter Van Schaick, Collective Impact
Santos Dimaris, ENJAN
Jen Herman, NYCLU Intern
Shannon Wong, NYCLU Intern
Charlie Robitaille, DBCH

Mary Ellen called for a moment of silence in honor of Petty Officer Corey Ingram who will be laid to rest today.

1. Approval of July 18, 2017 Minutes – The minutes were approved on a motion by Bill Carlos and seconded by Jon Heller.

2. - Introduction of new member—Miosotis Mercedes-Carbone - Mary Ellen introduced and welcomed Mio to the Criminal Justice Council. Mio is the new Director of the Women’s Center and will chair the Women’s Committee.

3. Jail /ATI Report- John Alessi and Mary Ellen Still – Much of this information will be covered in Gary’s presentation. There were no questions or comments.

4. Jail Based Mental Health Services – Charlie Robitaille –Charlie is the Clinical Unit Administrator at the jail. There is also a Chemical Dependency Counselor, a Case Manager, and an Activity Therapy Aide. There is also the mental health outreach program at the Office of Probation and Community Corrections that Charlie oversees. Mental health services are provided both at the jail and probation. In addition to mental health services, they also do pre-release and post-release planning. Charlie said they receive referrals from the CMC, (the medical unit in the jail) as well as calls from parents, attorneys and other members of the community for incarcerated people who might need services immediately. Charlie said they evaluate hundreds of inmates in a year and connect over 100 to mental health services. Charlie added that they also provide medication grants for individuals who can’t afford their meds and they assist individuals with housing post-release. Charlie continued that they also provide many transports for people post-release and will also take them to get their benefits as well as help with applications for services. They will also help with Medicaid applications prior to release.

Charlie completed training with the NYC Corrections Academy on suicide prevention in county jails and police lock-ups. Charlie is now able to provide that training to corrections staff. There are some education groups in addition to the RESTART program that are offered in the jail. Many of the classes are basic life skills classes. Charlie continued that there is now a form provided by NAMI to help people communicate with medical staff in the jail about their loved one. NAMI has provided a tremendous amount of support to those in the community. This form allows the family to write down medication and medical information for people in the jail so that the jail medical unit can operate more effectively.

Another program is Stages of Change groups. The CASAC is using motivational interviewing with inmates who are not yet able or willing to decide if they want to continue treatment in the jail or outside. RESTART has an after care group for those in RESTART programing who, once released from jail, may not have the support in the community or with family. Charlie continued that the Forensic Unit provides chemical dependency forensic evaluations for inmates. Jail based services assist in the implementation of those evaluations. They also provide 730 competency examinations in the jail to determine whether inmates understand the court proceedings. Those findings are presented to the judge so the judge can make a more informed decision about someone’s ability to understand their proceedings in court. Charlie said they also provide 927 evaluations in which two physicians indicate whether an individual

requires state hospitalization for stabilization. In most cases, these are inmates that exhibit extreme mental health symptoms to the point that they cannot function.

Charlie continued that another program is the Mobile Crisis Team. In addition to providing services in the community, they also provide services to the courts. They respond with law enforcement and can help to deescalate a situation. With CIT training, law enforcement is very well trained in determining mental illness from criminal behavior. They can refer to our Stabilization Center and possibly avoid further incarceration. The Mobile Team works in the courts diverting individuals at the time of arraignment. Charlie said that if we have a treatment plan, the judge may release an individual under pretrial supervision. If a person is temporarily incarcerated, the Mobile Team will go into the jail and work on services and a plan.

ITAP is an intensive outpatient treatment program. From ITAP individuals may be referred to a half-way house or a three quarter house with a recovery plan. We now have a recovery coach working with us. Charlie said that we have begun providing screening for Vivitrol which is an agent that blocks the urge to use heroin. Fifty two people have been screened for Vivitrol this month. It is provided to those who are medically approved for it. All jail staff has been trained in narcan administration. Inmates will also be trained on narcan administration once the policy has been approved. Mary Ellen thanked Charlie for his presentation.

5. Criminal Justice Report – Gary Christensen

Gary reviewed material that he had sent out before the meeting entitled Dutchess County Jail Admissions, Releases, and Recidivism January – August 2017. Extra copies were available.

Gary first went over the latest recidivism statistics with information on 11,920 people who were released from our jail to the community from January 2012 – August 2016. The chart showed the rate at which they recidivated based upon their initial Proxy score. The Proxy is a simple 3 question instrument that measures risk to reoffend. A Proxy is done on all admissions to the jail. Zero means least risk, six is highest risk.

The next chart compares jail admissions. Gary looked at a sample of all admissions from January through August of 2016 and compared them with a sample of all admissions from January through August of 2017. The chart showed by jurisdiction the percentage of either increase or decrease. It also showed the percentage of increase or decrease by crime type.

There was a 9% increase in admissions and a 37 % increase in violent felony admissions. Gary continued that he also looked at rate of admissions in 2017 by crime type. The highest number of admissions was for Petit Larceny. The chart was color coded to show which crimes were misdemeanors, non-violent felonies, violent felonies and violation/lower. The top three categories for people being admitted to our jail are all misdemeanors. The next slide showed the risk to reoffend. The chart shows that our jail population shows a higher risk to reoffend than is typical. This is indicative of a successful pretrial program. Gary added that our RESTART program specifically targets higher risk people with a Proxy score of 4-6. Projected recidivism rates for people in this category cannot be compared to lower risk

people on a one-to-one basis because the people in this category are responsible for a huge proportion of the crimes in our community. They are the repeat offenders. Gary said that we have an ongoing committee that looks at average length of stay and continues to try to decrease the average length of stay. The next slide looks at total releases. There were 1,936 releases during the same period. The chart also shows the average length of stay by crime type and release destination. Gary said that the chart shows that misdemeanors resulted in the vast majority of jail days in our community in 2017. Gary said “parole only” people are in our jail because they have violated their parole with no new crime. Gary said that he always felt that they should return to state prison but they become our responsibility and use a lot of our jail days. This also puts an influx of higher risk people in our facility that we don’t want “educating” our lower risk population. Tom Angell has been working on this and has made some progress this year. Tom reported that even after the parole case gets resolved, they are often still in our jail five or six weeks later. Tom said there is still work to be done.

Gary gave an update on the progress with the average length of stay (ALOS); we started out with a 55.1 average length of stay in 2016 and progressed quickly to 51.7 today, where we have now stalled. We continue to work on this. Our goal for 2017 was to reduce the ALOS by 5 days. We are just short of that but will keep working on it. Gary said he was pleased to report that while he was running recidivism rates, he ran it for RESTART and for those inmates in the 4-6 Proxy range. We have a reduction of 13% for this group and this is the group that is responsible for 60% of our crime. Gary said one of the things they are working on is to streamline our system to get people into RESTART earlier. Gary looked at this population by risk to reoffend and you can see that we do sentence people as they become higher risk at a slightly higher rate. Gary continued that we know that there is a “sweet spot” in a person’s incarceration when you are much more likely to get a person into treatment. Bill O’Neil added that this information will be on the website by the end of the week. Gary said to feel free to call or email him and he will be happy to clarify or answer questions. Mary Ellen thanked Gary for all the information and time spent compiling it. Mary Ellen added that there is a wealth of information on the website.

6: Committee reports:

CIC – Shirley Adams - Shirley reported that the Community Involvement Committee is tasked with getting out factual information to residents and to do outreach to ensure that people in the community are able to find answers to questions about the criminal justice system. The committee is exploring the possibility of piggy backing on some of our other committees. Shirley will be talking to the Re-Entry chairperson to see if they can piggy back on their meetings every other month. They have many of the same members who are interested in similar topics. This will help cut down on participants having to come to more than one location during the month.

Re-Entry – Tom Angell and Jill Lenard-Horne - Tom Angell reported that their meetings continue to be well attended. The last meeting was on August 17 and they had a presentation on the SNUG program. Tom said they are still focused on their priority, which is housing for homeless parolees. The next Re-Entry meeting is October 19 and there will be a presentation on Collective Impact.

Diversion – Steve Miccio - Steve reported that there is a CIT 40 hour training starting on September 18. There are 24 officers attending. There is also an 8-hour mental health first aid for law enforcement training on September 28. Steve attended the CIT national conference in Florida. They now have two certified instructors. Dispatcher training has been completed. Steve gave an update on the Stabilization Center. They have had over 1,100 guests come to the center. About 2/3 are there for mental health and 1/3 for substance abuse. The partners are working closely together to improve communication and improve the relationship between the hospital and the center. Bill O’Neil said that visitors from Sullivan County recently took a tour of the Stabilization Center. The guests were impressed with our commitment to CIT training and what has been accomplished. Bill continued that we have set a standard throughout the state and we really appreciate the efforts by Steve and all the instructors.

Juvenile Justice- Karen was not in attendance. Mary Ellen reported that the committee continues to work on mental health issues among youth. Mary Ellen said we continue to work within the committee and with the Department of Behavioral and Community Health to find alternatives for youth who have serious mental health issues. They will also be addressing “Raise the Age” which is the initiative that will raise the age of criminal responsibility. Mary Ellen said that on October 1, 2018 the changes will impact 16 years olds. The following year it will impact 17 year olds. Mary Ellen added that this is a very complicated process and it isn’t totally clear yet how it is actually going to be done. County representatives have been working on gathering information and have attended informational sessions including a “round table” with state officials and meetings in Albany. The 9th Judicial District is coordinating judges and other key agencies to work on process and procedures.

Bill O’Neil said that as part of the bond for the new Justice and Transition Center and Law Enforcement Center, funding was put aside for a youth program, Path to Promise. A Boston based company, PCG, has been awarded the contract following an RFP process. They will do a full assessment of not only things that relate to the juvenile justice system, but also the assets that are available in Dutchess County. The intent is to have an action plan, by age group, to help all youth grow up with the best opportunities. That action plan will be created over the next year. The action plan will reinforce the positive and also address how we can improve. It will be very inclusive and include people with special needs. Mary Ellen said there will be connections between this and “Raise the Age”. “Raise the Age” strongly encourages community-based programming. The state has indicated there will be funds to help support evidence-based programming. Mary Ellen said these two plans will complement each other.

Quality Assurance- Dr. Gary Christensen - Tom Angell reported that Gary sends the District Attorney’s office and the Public Defender’s office a list every week of people who have been in jail for around 60 days. Each and every case on that list is reviewed. They look for steps to help move cases forward. Tom feels this has been a very positive step

Victims - Kelly Bunt – Kelly reported that for the last year the Victims Committee has been working on developing a form to track sexual assaults in the county to insure the best outcomes for victims. The form was implemented in July and went live as a pilot with the City of Poughkeepsie PD, the Town of Poughkeepsie PD and the Sheriff’s Office. The committee received its first responses for July and August.

They are working on finding out where there are gaps and where more training may be needed. Kelly added that she is pleased and honored that people are volunteering their time for this initiative.

Special Populations – Jon Heller Jon reported that this committee did not meet in August, but that RESTART continues to focus on aftercare. Jon said the bulk of their August work was developing and testing a new way of making referrals for further treatment. Jon said that at the end of July they began utilizing a screening instrument called the Texas Christian University (TCU) Drug Screen. Based on DSM 5 criteria level and depth of a person’s addiction, probation officers get a score. Higher risk scores, after getting approval from the Office of the Public Defender, trigger a referral for an assessment to DBCH. Tom Angell added that the turnaround for getting the reports is much faster. Mary Ellen added that the system is getting adjusted and we hope to move people to appropriate treatment as quickly as possible.

7. Old Business – none.

8. New business- none

9. Announcements- Margaret Hirst will be retiring and Mary Ellen thanked Margaret for her service to the Council and County and wished her a happy retirement.

10. Adjourn- There was a motion to adjourn by Bill Carlos, seconded by Margaret Hirst at 9:35 a.m.