

CJCC Inmate Reintegration Committee

Inmate Reintegration Committee Meeting Minutes

September 7, 2005

LLRC Room A

Ann Arbor, MI

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Members Present: Natalie Holbroke (AFSC), Gary Greenfield (Corrections Lieutenant), Kirk Filsinger (Jail Commander), Rick Visel (Director, Correctional Services), Ruby Smith (ETCS Community Programs), Scott Patton (CJCC Staff), George Siasoco (CJCC Support Staff), Barbara Levin Bergman (Inmate Reintegration Committee Chair), Julie Chaffee (Director of Community Corrections), Ruth Shabazz (Shelter Association of Washtenaw County), Michael Freed (Dispute Resolution Center), Kate Lange (Dispute Resolution Center), Mike Echlin (22nd Circuit Court Probations Agent), Twyla Snow (MDOC, State Inmate Reintegration Program)

Meeting called to order at 12:35 p.m.

I. Introductions and Approve Minutes

Members introduced themselves to new participants: Natalie Holbroke, who represented Penny Ryder of the American Friends Service Committee; Michael Freed and Kate Lange of the Dispute Resolution Center.

Mike Echlin moved, Julie Chaffee seconded, and members approved the previous meeting minutes.

II. Finalize Gap Analysis

This issue has been tabled until the next meeting.

III. MPRI Conference

Julie Chaffee reported that the state is hosting a conference on its Prisoner Reentry Initiative on September 19, 2005. Scott Patton said that there are eight seats reserved for Washtenaw County. Barbara Levin Bergman referred members to the website (<http://www.publicpolicy.com/MPRI>) for more information.

Twyla Snow presented detailed information on the conference to the committee. She explained that conference will cover topics such as the MPRI model, structure, implementation, and funding. The conference offers an opportunity for representatives from both state and local level bodies to become informed on and discuss strategies for the state's prisoner re-entry initiative. She noted that support from the state governor has been present from the beginning.

Twyla Snow explained that the goal of the conference is to discuss and develop the model, which covers the process from prisoner entry to transition to the local community. Various state department policy teams and advisory councils will be formed during the implementation phase. The state is seeking partnership at the local level in the transition process in order to provide a seamless entry to the communities. Programs will aim to reduce recidivism. The afternoon sessions will be focused on the implementation phase in local communities and next steps. She said that the final talk will concern funding opportunities.

CJCC Inmate Reintegration Committee

Twyla Snow explained the process for this program: asset/gap analysis, community coordinator will follow up, transition teams, determination of service providers (employment, mental health, housing, etc.). She said that the initial movement of offenders in the first phase will progress next spring. Washtenaw County is slated for the second phase of this process, with eight identified sites: organization of communities and funding will be done by October 2007. But there will be funding to hire the community coordinator by January next year to initiate this program.

Twyla Snow clarified that at the implementation phase, the county will form an advisory council and a ten-member steering team which will act as the executive council. Membership in the steering team will include a state representative who will act as a community coordinator, as well as representatives from the prisons, Michigan Works, Mental Health, and the Sheriff's Department. She said that the team will not be autonomous of the MDOC. She referred members to the MPRI model handout and the local organizational structure of the MPRI for more details.

Scott Patton said that the overall model is excellent. He can see different funding stream for these programs. He is awaiting the adoption of a state budget since this will indicate what sectors will be funded or not. The conference offers a great opportunity to educate members. Scott Patton also understood that each site is unique and therefore implementations plans will differ as a result. Twyla Snow said that the structure allows for input from the local communities into the state decision process. She also clarified that prison inmates will be released into the Parole Department. She added that inmates are released to specific counties because they have historical or familial connections there. She also handed out information on the scope of services for the community coordinator.

Barbara Levin Bergman asked how realistic these programs are going to be given the amount of funding that is available. Twyla Snow clarified that will be \$5 million for the first round of 8 sites. The state is also actively seeking federal funds as counties are strapped for funds. Barbara Levin Bergman said that the funds issue will be the key to enthusiasm for cooperation and success of these programs. Twyla Snow said that she will be reporting this feedback to her deputy director.

Discussion ensued on the steering team's hiring of the community coordinator position and what resources are available to the counties. Twyla Snow clarified that Macomb and Kent Counties offer best practice models. She said that it would be helpful to get personnel from these counties to speak to the groups to see how they were able to integrate.

Ruth Shabazz expressed concerns over the lack of coordination between parallel efforts within the community on prisoner reentry initiatives. Ruth Shabazz said that there needs to be collaboration between the two groups to allow for the coordination in MPRI. The danger is that there is a possibility of alienation of the faith-based groups and their expertise. There seems to be two different paths that could allow for antagonism. Natalie asked if there is a possibility that we can get people together to look at best practices. While there are two different aims, Natalie advised getting representatives from both groups to discuss the issue. Ruth Shabazz said that it would be a great opportunity for both groups to work together. Scott Patton suggested that this collaborative effort could be one of the final recommendations to the CJCC.

IV. Next Steps

- The following people were identified as participants for the MPRI Conference: Kirk Filsinger, Rick Visel, Barbara Levin Bergman, and Ruth Shabazz.
- Scott Patton will contact Penny Ryder to confirm that she is going and if there are representatives from the other group who will attend.

CJCC Inmate Reintegration Committee

- Rick Visel asked whether POWER, the third group that applied for federal money for prisoner reintegration, would be interested in attending. Scott Patton will call Denese Brown to see if they might be interested in this conference, as well as continuing to partner with the county in its efforts.
- Barbara Levin Bergman said that the representatives from the four inmate reintegration efforts should meet in the fairly new future to meet to decide who will be on the steering committee. She asked members to contact interested parties, and have an ad to inform and solicit participation from the community. Scott Patton will schedule a meeting after the MPRI Conference.
- Twyla Snow will contact Kent and Macomb county individuals to help in this. She will also send a position description on the role of the community coordinator, and the link to the grant application, to Scott Patton.
- Scott Patton will email some thoughts on next steps.

Adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Next Inmate Reintegration Meeting will be on October 5, 2005, 12:30 – 2:00 p.m., Annex First Floor Conference Room.