

Meeting Minutes
CJCC – Inmate Reintegration Committee
Annex Large Conference Room
July 6, 2005
12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Members Present:

Diane Davidson (Acting Chair), Director of Development/Finance, Washtenaw Housing
Sheila Blakney, Senior Assistant Public Defender
Mike Echlin, 22nd Circuit Court Probation
Deb Pippins, Supervisor Project Outreach, CSTS
Penny Ryder, American Friends Service Committee
Ruth Shabazz, Shelter Association of Washtenaw County
Delphia Simpson, Public Defender Manager
Ruby Smith, ETCS Community Programs
Rick Visel, Director of Correctional Services
Linda Wicks, WC Organizational Development/Staff (Acting Secretary)

The meeting convened at 12:40pm

Davidson announced that Chair Barbara Levin Bergman would not be present, and that she had been contacted to serve as Acting Chair for this meeting.

I. Review of June 3, 2005, Meeting Minutes

Mike Echlin moved approval of the 6/3/05 minutes, supported by Delphia Simpson. The motion carried with no discussion or exceptions and all nine members present approving.

II. Agenda & Introductions

- Agenda: Identify existing community resources for inmate needs (completion of the *Gap Analysis Chart for Inmate Reintegration* initiated at the 6/3/05 meeting)
- Addition to agenda: Discussion of similar efforts in community / update on other groups meeting on reintegration

Committee members noted a related community meeting at the King of King's Church, July 11, 2005, (5:30pm) [Faith-based group involvement, Penny Ryder, AFSC, involved in organization of these community meetings]

Introductions by all committee members were offered (Pippins indicated her additional new job role as Supervisor of Mental Health Services for Jail)

III. Gap Analysis Chart for Inmate Reintegration

Committee members briefly reviewed the *Gap Analysis Chart* which was begun at the last meeting through brainstorming, noting that the minutes provided a good summary. Job Skills/Job Placement were indicated as priority items on this chart, however, Housing was not included and needs to be added as a high priority item.

- Very little money remaining in general fund budget for substance abuse services for fiscal year. Those needing substance abuse services end up on waitlist (priority population = pregnant women)
- Some counties ran out of monies during the first three months of the fiscal year – The County has stretched funding quite well

Substance Abuse Services (referrals, eligibility determination)

- Shelter provides programs six days a week (Access worker can also come and screen)
 - o Weekly prevention group at Shelter
 - o Motivation groups at Shelter (men's and women's)
 - o 12-Step meetings at Shelter
- CSTS provides free Co-Occurring Disorders groups (mental illness/substance abuse)
- YMCA provides programs five days a week (Friday women only) – no prerequisites
- Breaking the Cycle (BTC)
 - o Used by Pre-Trial and Probation
 - o Operated at Community Corrections (not funded through)
 - o Those using sign agreement to attend and do homework; only need to pay if they miss
 - o Diplomas upon program completion
 - o Feedback on BTC all good so far
 - o Echlin will get additional information regarding BTC
- Health Services ACCESS for referrals
- Lectures on Co-Occurring Disorders (Steve Wiland)
- APEX – used by Probation/Parole
 - o Education series and weekly counseling – also does minimal substance abuse assessments (“treatment needs assessment”)
 - Could CSTS/Pippins be involved with assessment?
 - Paid for by Probation fees?
 - Waiting list at Wayne County, not currently at Washtenaw County
 - Referral program coming out of Department of Corrections
 - Quality of service?
 - Blakney to call DOC and get additional information regarding
- Home of New Vision
- Help Source
- Green Brook Recovery Center
- Dawn Farm (offers weekly education series)
- ShareHouse (Detroit)
- CPI
- Salvation Army (not truly a treatment program for drugs)

The 6/3/05 minutes indicated that 56% of inmates surveyed said that substance abuse is a problem that needs to be addressed (Page 4, Item C)

- Is there any mechanism that tells inmates that they have to have treatment, or is it strictly voluntary?
 - o Only mandatory if condition of bond or on probation
 - o While in jail, we don't have the level of services to meet the needs of this 56%
 - DAWN Farm, NAA and NA programs address – no funds for additional programs
 - May change if Community Corrections gets funding
 - Possible expansion of DAWN FARM classes – priority is those eligible through Community Corrections, however if additional seats remain others may attend
- Substance abuse problem does not always get addressed. Many are sentenced to programs such as DAWN Farm, but treatment is not available. (“Sentence is there, but treatment is not”) – The majority wind up waiting for treatment, and end up doing the time in jail instead (e.g., “why go to 90 day treatment program if I only have 3 days left in jail?”)
- 15DC starting Sobriety Court (dealing mostly with drinking issues, not drug)
- If other Counties have monies for treatment, why not Washtenaw County?
- Poverty issue regarding treatment for drug abuse – Folks are more likely to afford treatment for OUIL cases, therefore better Drug Court for this
- Different styles/methods of treatment (“There is treatment and there is treatment...”) – Some providers place emphasis on getting a job, and not on the actual treatment for the individual, which is what is most important
- If court does not order, Probation does not do “drops”

Medical Follow-up

- Estimated that over 50% of inmates released from local jail are in need of some form of medical treatment (psychotropic or other) – most had prescriptions prior to coming in
- What are their funding/follow-up needs to continue medical prescriptions?
 - o Most enter jail with medicines in place for such health issues as Diabetes and dialysis – they are already connected to the system somewhere
 - o System will coordinate doctor appointment as part of discharge plan, but system does not follow-up or assist with signing up for the Washtenaw Health Plan (WHP) at this time
- Quite a few medical issues are diagnosed while in jail. Medical staff is handling pretty well, covering to the next step of an appointment upon release – but no subsequent follow-up
- WHP / Medicaid, referrals in place – perhaps this committee does not need to address medical concerns
- If an inmate is in jail over 30 days, medical arrangements may be cut off. Released inmates may need assistance in trying to re-establish their prior medical arrangements
- Opportunity to interface with DHS and Social Security office (especially for longer term inmates)
- “Flag” inmates prior to release so they can be contacted by appropriate agency before release – reactivate medical care
- DHS visits once a month and interviews
- Possible resources for medical assistance information include:
 - o John Loring, CSTS/PORT
 - o Michigan Poverty Law Program (benefits staff)
 - o Legal Resource Center
- Establish relationship with the following entities for medical follow-up assistance:
 - o Corner Health Center
 - o Packard Clinic
 - o U/M Health Practitioner’s Clinic
 - o Jail Health Oversight Committee – important to educate this group regarding these services
 - o WHP is the key to many of these services – allows access to lots of health care
- American Friends Service Committee would like to have County forms available for WHP, to have on file for those who may be requesting these services
- WHP eligibility – Prove County residence and income level

Food and Housing

- Food and housing issues go together
- Community Kitchen / Shelter – offers lunch and dinner Monday through Friday, and mid-day meals on Saturday/Sunday – open to anyone, simply show up
 - o Staffed by Food Gatherers
- Hunger Coalition – was absorbed by Food Gatherers a few years ago
- A few churches still offer their own meals – Ypsilanti has several churches offering meals
- Salvation Army offers meals
- SOS is good contact for Ypsilanti resources – can provide information on bulk food giveaway non-profit groups also
- St. Andrews offers breakfast

Transportation

- Transportation is the largest gap in community
- Seniors can get senior pass with AATA (age 65 plus)
- Disabled can get discount pass with AATA
- Low income may be eligible for ½ fare pricing
- \$2 rides now available even out of City limit (prior only within City)
- Northfield Human Services Van

Housing

- Housing is huge issue without a lot of answers
- Single adult males – not many options as they come out of jail

- Homeless service provider network – feel strongly that housing is something that should be available asap – stop-gap shelter is not housing
- Costs of rental in community is very high – very little affordable housing
- Working very hard to identify Section 8 vouchers
- Shelter works to find something less temporary – Case Management will start within one week of getting on the waitlist for shelter (when no beds available at shelter, some sleep in chairs on second floor)
- Concept of a housing coordinator working on inmate housing issues almost as soon as inmates enter jail – if internal staff could be identified as housing coordinator this could be very beneficial – learn where the housing is, provide the necessary advocacy with landlords (what a housing coordinator does in shelter)
- Explore possibility of using friends and family for shelter / other options besides commercial solutions
 - o Sometimes family/friends are the worst for the released inmate to connect with – they know that it is bad for them to go home
 - o Example of grandfather needing care, and released inmate taking on this role, while receiving shelter at the grandfather's home
 - o Explore all options

Miscellaneous

- Goal of putting together a comprehensive “Resource List” for released inmates – listing existing resources and how to access them (Mental Health created a similar little booklet of resources)
 - o Issue with print format – always out-of-date
 - o Possibility of a database, kept current – print out most recent info at time of inmate release
 - Database of resources already exists at Shelter – Case Managers have access
 - The more inclusive we can be, the more wisdom and knowledge – increased knowledge base – able to achieve more
- Develop “mentors” to help inmates access the appropriate information (different info needed for each individual – everyone is not going to need all the info)
 - o Meet with mentor once a month and discuss – you can train volunteers/staff to be mentors – have them follow script – stress community volunteers
- Simpson to contact Legal Aid regarding what their involvement is
- Call “211” to access resources and info
 - o Important to route calls through 211, even if immediate impulse is to offer information/resource you are already aware of – will assist 211 staff with development of knowledge base, making 211 a more valuable resource
 - o 211 information referral line is housed at HVA, funded by a variety of sources
 - o United Way involved with 211 initiative – each community can make it as valuable as desired
 - o If a person calls 211 in crisis mode, they should be connected direct with assistance, not just given a phone number
 - o 211 covers broad spectrum of info, from where to get a marriage license to where to get substance abuse assistance
 - o 211 uses a sophisticated database based on a series of protocol questions – to identify the most appropriate resources
 - o Promote 211 number on any “resource listing” booklet to be developed
 - o 211 fills in many gaps / “blanks” – why is this group re-creating?
 - o Need to outline the large items; leave detail to be addressed as needed by 211 and or mentor assistance
 - o Still lots of service gaps – 211 does not have the answer to everything – if a support program/treatment is out of money, it is out of money – even if they get referrals
- Child care may not be needed upon inmate release – but may be needed later when the inmate gets a job
- May need help from protective services – how to get children back?
- Parent classes while inmates in jail? – Currently Planned Parenthood offers once every quarter
- Everything has to be individualized – won't be success unless you look at the person and their specific strengths, opportunities and challenges – be realistic about what is possible and what isn't
- Michigan Ability Partner's – should they be involved in this committee?

IV. Additional Agenda Item

Discussion of similar efforts in community / update on other groups meeting on reintegration

- Trenda Rusher (WorkFirst) leading group which is writing two grants to go after Federal Department of Labor monies around inmate reintegration/job training (Grants due 7/12) – Ruby Smith is link to this committee
 - o Faith Based Project - Agencies include: Power Inc. (Broker of Services), Salvation Army (Treasurer) and Ypsi Gateway for Housing
 - o Two grant proposals (grants “layer” – if you don’t qualify for one, you do the other – same funding provider)
 - o Separate from DOC/State
 - o What is the role of this committee in connection with Trenda’s committee and grant proposals?
 - If they get funding – committee role might be to support and provide input/guidance on needs
 - Have Trenda Rusher or committee representative attend this committee meeting to share information and build bridges (Ruby Shabazz represents, but is not involved in the actual grant writing)

Penny Ryder shared information on a third group addressing these same inmate reintegration needs – at the State level

- DOC meetings in Lansing for past few years
 - o Three meetings each month (Thursday’s)
 - o Other Counties attending Lansing meetings (e.g., Kent County)
 - o Washtenaw County invited to attend State meetings in Lansing via Scott Patton
 - o Penny Ryder has been going to all the meetings in Lansing
 - o DOC program roll-out went faster than expected - Kent rolled out two months ago (not planned for another year)
 - o Counties need to get self organized – roll-out of DOC program must run smooth – if the communities are not ready to work with the reintegrated inmates, recidivism rate will be high and DOC program will be trashed in no time
 - o Roll out scheduled for Washtenaw County in 2006
 - o Penny Ryder was not aware that there was a County initiative also
 - o State has huge grant to apply County “Reentry Administrators” – money for administration, but no additional money to expand resources
 - o If County should have been attending these State meetings, the County should have been invited officially – Need to be informed by State regarding plans / State should be talking with County
 - o State does not want to “tell” Counties what to do – wants “grassroots” movement
 - o What can/should we do now – to move forward?
 - Bring all three groups/representatives together for a meeting (County, State and Grant/Federal groups)
 - Clear up communication misunderstandings about who should be doing what and communicating what
 - Clarify roles
 - Need to do better job of coming together as a larger group
 - All going for same resources – helping same sort of groups
 - Three groups all doing the “same stuff” – can’t we be one group?

V. Next Steps

Request that Chair Barbara Levin Bergman see if a small subset of members from each of the three groups can be convened (County, State and Federal/Grant) – to see if we can figure out where the synergies are and whether it makes sense for WC to at least have representatives at the meetings that Penny Ryder is involved with.