

Minutes – Criminal Justice Alternative to Incarceration Meeting

Date: May 24, 2023

Time: 12:00-1:30 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Bridgette Nugent, Scott Miller, Matt Van Houten, Sherron Brown, Lance Salisbury, Keegan Young, Jerry Wright, David Sanders, Deana Bodnar, Kate Shanks-Booth, Ray Bunce, Stacy Cangelosi, Michael James, Taili Mugambée, Rich Jon, Judy Griffin, Louise Miller, Emily Ashby.

1. Welcome and Introductions:

- a. **Sherron-** Six participants graduated from the program this month. CIU is looking at how the next prep program will work. That program will start in the Fall.
- b. **Dave-** Imagine That Volleyball tournament this year will be OAR staff, clients and Probation staff.
- c. **Kate-** Shared information for the “Anxious Nation” screening at Cinemapolis on June 8th. This is open to the public and there will be a Q&A with local experts after the screening. Bridgette asked Kate to send her the information and she will share it with the group.
- d. **Scott-** In the MH Court they have not filled the Resource Coordinator position. Bridgette asked if there is any way for the County to promote the position. Scott said that when the application process opens again he will forward that to Bridgette to share.
- e. **Matt-** Hired a Data Analyst, she will begin the Tuesday after Memorial Day. There are six felony trials coming up in the next 4 months.
- f. **Stacey-** Recently they had the ribbon cutting for the Open Access center. Due to staffing shortages, they are not fully open yet. Angela Sullivan is retiring as the Executive Director; Stacey is the Interim Director. Rich suggested hiring Cornell and Ithaca College nurses as they are not working in the summer and there has been some interest.
- g. **Rich** has been working on mapping ATI’s and he has a draft, but he needs to integrate information from the Sequential Intercept Mapping report. He is going to present his report for next month. Rich said he is still working on the report for the Jail Task Force. He is going to collect input from local judges and others and the report should be ready in July. Rich invited CJATI members to come talk to the working group. They can contact Rich or Travis Brooks.
- h. **Taili-** There are 50 folks signed up for the reading group. The session begins June 15th. It will be in-person outside the First Presbyterian Church. He is very busy with grant writing. There will be a painting party at 502 W. State Street on June 3rd at 5:30. Keegan added that URO was at the jail working with inmates at the jail on reentry, that went well.

2. **Changes to Agenda:** The presentation on mapping ATI’s is being moved to the agenda for next month.

3. Minutes Approval: April minutes approved.

4. Updates:

a. Chair's Update- Bridgette Nugent – She announced that County Administration has hired a Homeless Services Coordinator, Tammy Baker. She has worked in homeless services roles in Tompkins County for a long time so some may be familiar with her and her work. Bridgette will invite her to the June or July meeting.

b. Updates on Bail Reform-Scott Miller:

Bail reform began in 2019. There have been three roll backs since then. In May was the latest roll back that takes effect on June 2nd. There is no statistical evidence that bail reform has increased crime. Even states that have less stringent bail reform have not shown an increase in crime. The media focuses on the outlier stories to show why bail reform doesn't work.

The newest rollback in bail reform states that judges will no longer be required to impose the least restrictive alternative to insure a principal's release. Also, the presumption of release has been removed for bail eligible offenses. For bail eligible offenses courts no longer have a presumption of release. The purpose of bail reform is to determine whether monetary conditions or non-monetary conditions should be imposed based on a reasonable assurance that the principal will return to court. The list of qualifying offenses is still mostly misdemeanors and non-violent offenses. Bail Factors have not changed. There must be a defense attorney and a prosecutor present. More information is better. They have to consider activities and history of charges, Criminal conviction history, adjudications as a juvenile, record of flight to avoid prosecution, ability to post bail without undue hardship, violations of orders of protection, history of use or possession of a firearm, and whether charges caused serious harm to an individual or a group of individuals. There is no guidance on whether judges can consider additional factors like evidence against the principal. Non-monetary and monetary conditions can both be used. This allows for more creative release options. Courts can impose MH or substance abuse residential treatment. The dangerousness standard was not added, meaning that a judge's assessment of a principal's propensity for crime and dangerousness to the community has not been added.

Taili asked when it comes to the removal of the least restrictive will there be guidelines that local judges will use regarding this. Judge Miller said there is no guidance, and it depends on the judges in the community reflecting the values of the community.

Lance said that one thing to keep in mind is that the reason bail reform occurred is because there was a large increase in non-convicted people of color in other county jails in NYS. He reiterated that bail reform is not tied to an increase in crime. He said there may be some tension in how this plays out in the local courts and that will be tracked. He does not expect dramatic changes in incarceration in TC. There may be an increase in electronic monitoring.

Matt said that the rollbacks will have zero effect on jail populations and bail decisions in TC.

Rich said that there were not big drops in numbers based on the reform. He said that the impact was more in other counties and those counties did not have other services in place to meet the needs of the people that were being released to the community.

Lance said that bail reform may have decreased recidivism in NYC but at the same time there were ATI pilot programs that may have also contributed to that.

Taili asked if it is possible that people can be released without monitoring. Scott said that is possible. Scott said that the monitoring option paired with a lower bail may help people be released. He also asked if MH evaluations are done in residential treatment centers. Scott said they are, and that information is confidential unless a release is signed. The information that is shared is whether the person completed treatment or left.

Judy said that if there are changes that allow courts to send people to treatment centers that the care is subpar for people that have Medicaid and that can be a barrier to people as they try to recover. Scott said that it does not always have to be residential treatment, people can be ordered to outpatient treatment.

Lance that addiction is a chronic condition and that sending someone to treatment is not a quick fix. Judy agreed. She also said that being incarcerated has a negative effect on people's health. Ray said that the jail is a housing facility, it is not a treatment and health facility.

- 5. Long Term Inmate Report- Cpt. Bunce:** There have not been a lot of changes.
- a. Matt said that 6 of the 8 people on the list have upcoming trials. The other 2 are one person waiting for sentencing and the other person is waiting for a bed in a MH facility.
 - b. Lance said that when you have a person in the jail that is waiting for a bed in a MH facility they continue to degenerate, and this is a burden on the individual and the staff at the jail. Lance said that the county reps need to push for more funding for MH beds for people.

- c. Ray reiterated that they have some MH services available, but they only allow for maintenance not real treatment.
- 6. **Adjournment- Bridgette** asked folks to reach out if they have agenda items. The next virtual meeting is June 28th at 12:00 p.m.