

Minutes – Criminal Justice Alternative to Incarceration Meeting

Date: March 27, 2024

Time: 12:00-1:30 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Bridgette Nugent, Lance Salisbury, Matt VanHouten, Marie Boyer, Sherron Brown, Kate Shanks-Booth, Scott Miller, Daniel Cornell, Deana Bodnar, David Sanders, Rich John, Louise Miller, Ray Bunce, Haley Romero, Mike James, Taili Mugambee.

- 1. Welcome and Introductions:** Bridgette welcomed everyone and asked for updates to be shared at the end of the meeting.
- 2. Changes to Agenda:** None.
- 3. Minutes Approval:** The minutes from February were approved unanimously with no edits.
- 4. Updates:**
 - a. Chair's Update- Bridgette Nugent –**
 - i. CJATI Advisory Board Revised Bylaws-Discuss and Vote:** Bridgette asked if anyone had any feedback about the proposed revised bylaws. Matt asked that the language in section J be changed from “ex offender” to “justice involved individual.” Bridgette made the change. The bylaws were approved unanimously.
 - b. Reentry Caseworker, 2023 Annual Report: Marie Boyer-** Marie referred to the Annual Report for her discussion.
 - i. In 2023 services were provided to 121 people of that number 57 people enrolled for ongoing support. There were 2,829 contacts with the Re-Entry Coordinator in 2023. 61% of the people served are not involved with the Justice System.
 - ii. She said that the outreach at the jail is focused on people serving a sentence. She gets referrals from the court and other service providers in the area.
 - iii. The referral areas are Entitlement Benefits, Social Services, Housing, Social Security, etc. (171 were successful). Wellness referrals, MH, Dental, Healthcare and substance use, (64 referrals in 2023). Readiness Referrals, these referrals are short-term and are only supposed to be for 90 days post release; employment and education portions of readiness referrals are the most successful of readiness referrals. Other referrals are for many things, furniture vouchers, food pantries and anything that is not covered under the other referral types.
 - iv. Marie said that 8% of the folks that were involved in reentry services were rebooked into the jail. She said 75% of those clients were unhoused and it is a common theme.
 - v. She said that in the time that she has worked in the program the ability to meet people where they are and have flexibility in providing

services has helped in the work that she does. Marie shared stories of clients that she has worked with and how important it is to have someone that can go to them and check in with them. She shared another story about a client that has been able to stay sober and find employment after Marie was able to secure safe housing for them.

- vi. Marie opened the discussion to questions:
 - 1. Dave asked what the unmet needs Marie is seeing, after housing. Marie said that once people are safely housed the survival mode that they have maintained will relax. She said often that can be an opening for trauma and other mental health needs to come to the surface. She said that having mental health services that can come to someone in their home would help meet those needs.
 - 2. Rich asked what processes are in place to keep Marie safe as she visits people in their home. She said that it is very rare that she feels unsure entering someone's home. It has only happened once in the last 6 years, she let her supervisor know where she was going so someone was aware of her location.
 - 3. Kate asked what the age range of the people she works with is, specifically how many people are between the ages of 18-25. There are 4 people out of the 57 that are in that age range.

c. **OAR Data Indicators: Dave Sanders-** Dave shared his screen with the group to show the criminal justice community indicators data that OAR tracks. The information he reports on comes from the police departments, probation, and the court system from crimes reported as reported in the NYS DCJS system.

- i. He said that a lot of the folks that are affected by crime are the folks that they work with at OAR. When crime rates rise it affects OAR clients.
- ii. Crime rates have risen in the last 3 years.
- iii. He said that the percent of people of color in the jail is trending up but is lower than previous years.
- iv. He said that Opioid overdose deaths have increased dramatically.
- v. Dave opened the discussion to questions:
 - 1. Lance said that care needs to be taken when considering trends in short term data, there can be many factors in the community that affect the criminal justice system.
 - 2. Taili agrees that care needs to be taken when considering trends in short term data particularly as COVID had an affect on trends. He said it is important to understand the trends related to the effects of COVID. He asked if Dave knew how many of the arrests reflected are new arrests. Dave said that information isn't available and would be difficult to collect.

3. Dan said that in addition to COVID, Bail Reform has also affected the data that is received and what it means.
4. Dave agrees that making conclusions is wrong, but it is still important to look at the data and try to figure out what is affecting the increase or decrease in crime.
5. Rich suggested that the board could discuss the data from representatives in the Sheriff's Department, the DA's Office, and the Criminal Justice Center so there is a better understanding of the data and what it means. Bridgette said that it is possible for a future meeting.

d. Long Term Inmate report: Ray Bunce, Matt VanHouten, Lance Salisbury-

Matt reported that there are nine people on the list. Four of the cases are resolved and the individuals are awaiting sentencing. One of the cases is awaiting psychiatric evidence to move the case forward. Another person is awaiting resentencing on a violation of probation. Two of the others have trial dates for April and May, the last person is waiting for a trial date.

e. Group Updates-

- i. Dave said that OAR has started a program every Monday from 10-12 at Super Supreme cuts for people that are unhoused or otherwise in need, they get a free haircut. Dave said if there is anyone in need to please refer them to OAR.
- ii. Ray said that they recently had a jump in intakes but that the numbers will go back down. He also announced that he is retiring, and his replacement has been hired, she will be introduced to the group at the next meeting.
- iii. Dave asked if information can be brought to the group regarding dual treatment options for people that have mental health needs that are exacerbated by substance abuse. Lousie said that it is a difficult process because there are not a lot of people that are ready for the trauma work that can help with that level of healing because it is a hard and scary process. Bridgette said that she is going to contact REACH to find out who their staff is that has this information and can also be a representative on the CJATI Board.
- iv. Taili reiterated what Marie said about how when basic needs are met that can leave people susceptible to their trauma and mental health becoming difficult to cope with and unable to seek the treatment they need. He asked what the extent of MH services in the jail are so that people can get some of the MH care while they are stable. Ray said that it is a limited resource, and more resources are needed. A better facility with spaces for proper treatment.

- v. Dan said that there needs to be a real recruitment and retention push to get the people that are needed to do the MH work and keep them. He said that the Probation Department is working with Cornell Cooperative Extension to start a class for neurodivergence, emotional regulation, mental health, and trauma. The class will serve clients of Probation, if it is more successful and becomes ongoing, they hope to open it to others. He said that the DWI victim impact panels are going to be two times a year because they have reduced the backlog that was in place because of COVID. He also said that they are seeing an increase in polluted drugs that are leading to overdose, recently one client had to be given four doses of Narcan to be revived and that it is getting scary.

5. Adjournment- Bridgette – The meeting was adjourned at 1:30. The next meeting is scheduled for April 24th at 12:00.