

Minutes for Criminal Justice/Alternatives to Incarceration Advisory Board (CJATI)

Date: 4/28/2021

Call to Order: 12:04

Attendees: (29) Harmony Ayers-Friedlander, Tammy Baker, Deana Bodnar, Marie Boyer, Karla Brackett, Travis Brooks, Ray Bunce, Suzi Cook, Dan Cornell, Erica Cotraccia, Donna Fleming, Henry Granison, Judy Griffin, Amy Heffron, Amie Hendrix, Lisa Holmes, Julia Hughes, Jessica Janssen, Rich John, August Miguez, Louise Miller, Scott Miller, Taili Mugambee, Bridgette Nugent, Benay Rubenstein, Angela Sullivan, Matt Van Houten, Keyanna Vann, Jerry Wright.

Excused: Deb Dietrich, Susan Robinson, Lance Salisbury

Introductions and brief announcements were made by attendees.

Minutes: 03/24/2021 meeting minutes were accepted.

Moved: Angela Sullivan

Seconded: Henry Granison

Chair's Update:

a. Lisa reported that after the last meeting, there was a small group to discuss how to measure recidivism. The DA's office has a way of tracking arrests with a centralized database. It does not include data on traffic stops and wouldn't include New York State police data. There may be additional opportunities around data collection with RPS, and potentially with LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Program), and it may be best to take a very comprehensive look at this with additional partners.

Matt Van Houten: RPS will create a public safety dashboard. It would put out meaningful and transparent information to the community. As far as demographics of the criminal justice system, there is a data analysis subcommittee in the County JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion) program that has taken on some of this role. The Community Justice Center may also have a major role in the process of putting together the dashboard.

b. Lisa reported that CJATI has now received the 13a funding from the state, which goes to College Initiative Upstate. CIU will now be able to voucher for money owed to them over the previous year. CJATI will continue the contract with CIU but will also issue RFP's next year to give opportunity to other agencies.

Updates:

a. Mental Health and Wellness Court

Scott Miller reported that the Court has been up and running for 24 months. In late fall it expanded the Ithaca Wellness and Recovery Court beyond the city of Ithaca. It diverts individuals coming out of jail into mental health treatment, often individuals who have a long history of diagnosed mental illnesses but haven't had any recent treatment. We find these individuals housing and get them back into consistent mental health treatment, usually with TC Mental Health Department.

Originally the court was only available to individuals who have a mental illness, have a qualifying misdemeanor, usually not a sex offense or a violent misdemeanor, and have been arrested in the City of Ithaca but it has expanded county-wide, is only available for Tompkins county residents. It will also be opening up to participants at the felony level.

There are 15-20 participants at any one time. The past year has been mainly virtual but should be opening to meeting with participants in-person in early June. The court sessions are every other Tuesday from 2pm - 4pm, and open to the public.

The Court had applied for a Department of Justice grant for funding the case management and peer advocate position but was not successful. A similar grant is going to be available soon and the Court is working with another agency for help with the grant process to help fund these positions.

b. Reimagining Public Safety

Rich John reported that the Public Safety Committee passed a resolution to set up the Community Justice Center. This will be a new department that will cross between the County and the City. Its purpose is to coordinate and collaborate data analysis. There are administrative goals, community goals, and New York state goals. It is a very large project. We are making progress, but it will take several years to roll it out. The Committee will be putting together staffing options, job descriptions, office location, and coordination between the City and the County. The next step will be to organize all of the pieces of the plan into a coherent timeline. We want to have a regular system for transparency and input from the community. We want to look at a change in hiring practices, re-visit training, pilot programs with emergency and non-emergency calls, mental health issues, and there will be a major lobbying effort for funding. There may need to be hiring of a consultant to assist with all of the pieces. There will be ongoing reports to CJATI.

c. LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion) Program

Travis Brooks explained the LEAD program: to take persons who are caught up in the legal system who commit crimes related to poverty, mental health and addiction and get them the help that they need so they are no longer engaged in the legal system. The goal is to divert people pre-arrest, so if somebody commits a crime that falls into one of these categories, which are mostly misdemeanors or low level felonies, the LEAD trained officer will make the determination whether the individual fits the criteria. The officer will then contact the service provider and, in this case it's REACH, and the individual has to be on board for social referrals. The City of Ithaca got a grant from the Department of Justice to do this program. REACH is the program partner, and there are a collection of stakeholders throughout the City and County that are part of the governing body. There is a Community leadership team that meets bi-weekly. REACH is about to hire for a case manager, so it is anticipated the program will start taking in clients in May. The program will take up to 10 cases to begin. There is funding for two caseworkers. When another caseworker is hired, each will have up to 25 on their caseload. The idea for caseworkers first is harm reduction and meeting the clients where they are. This is for people who commit crimes within the City. In 2022, LEAD hopes to expand in the County, especially the Lansing area. Ithaca was chosen by the National Lead Support Bureau to be a proof of concept site, so right now the national program is going over the site plan. It is beneficial because there was a lot of resistance in developing and implementing the LEAD program. A lot of the heavy work was done in 2018. There is funding this time around, and new partners are at the table. Non-compliance of the program will result in ineligibility for the program the next time.

d. Long-Term Inmate Report:

Matt Van Houten reports that five of the seven names on the report will be going to trial in the next few months. Cases have been resolved for two of the inmates. Two names are new to the list, but they were

arrested a few months ago and both were sent to a psychiatric facility until they were determined to be capable of participating in their own defense. They have not been in the TC jail continuously for the five month period. Over the next six months we will see many of these individuals off the list because they will have had trials or other resolutions of their case.

Ray Bunce: A group of eight inmates moved out of the jail to state prison. State facilities were not accepting inmates for quite a while, which caused quite a backlog in the local jails. The jail has six other state ready inmates waiting to be sent to prison. The jail will be down to the 20 range again soon.

Vaccination update: 15 individuals have volunteered to get the vaccine. The jail continues to offer the vaccine. The Health Department will be giving the jail the J&J vaccine, which is the one shot vaccine, so there doesn't need to be tracking for the second dose.

Shared by Taili on behalf of URO- Trauma Series Pilot Episode Date: Wednesday, April 28th @ 5:30-7pm
Link: <https://youtu.be/2Ee7PAjT5Zg> (will go live on the 28th)

Adjourn: 1:17

Motion: Rich John

Second: Matt Van Houten