

***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force  
Meeting Summary for December 12, 2016***

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**1. Call to Order**

*(Clerk's Note: The Task Force began discussion at 9:00 a.m., but did not have a quorum until 9:23 a.m.)*

Task Force Chair Jill Bernstein called the meeting to order at 9:23 a.m.

Present: Jill Bernstein, Anne Deacon, Bill Elfo, Stephen Gockley, Daniel Hammill, Fred Heydrich, Jack Hovenier, Ken Mann, Irene Morgan, Randy Polidan

Also Present: Leslie Finch for Chris Phillips, Kathy Walker for Dave McEachran

Absent: Angela Anderson, Jeff Brubaker, Susan Gribbon, Mike Knapp, Betsy Kruse, Nick Lewis, Kelli Linville, Byron Manering, Dave McEachran, Moonwater, Darlene Peterson, Chris Phillips, Tyler Schroeder, Greg Winter

**2. Committee Updates**

Deacon reported for the Triage Facility Committee, which is waiting to find out next steps in additional funding for the facility from the Stage legislature. She reported on the status of the Triage Facility (*see agenda item four*).

Deacon reported for the Behavioral Health Committee. There was no meeting in December. A community effort is underway to consider a coordinated system of response and engagement:

- Prearrest diversion
- Hospital and emergency department diversion
- Intensive case management programs
- Supportive housing programs
- Hope to create a formal system including all efforts and to identify gaps

**3. Update by Jurisdictions on Jail Diversion Programs**

Elfo reported on the status of the jail:

- The jail continues to experience failures, so the population is artificially low
- Electronic home monitoring contract with Friendship Services begins in January
- They are using more pretrial supervision through District Court Probation
- The Administrative branch has more liability than the Courts regarding pretrial liability

Heydrich reported on programs from Superior Court:

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- He is trying to allow alternative cash bails at first appearances, and is encouraging the other Commissioners to allow them.
- The judges are enthusiastic about creating a pretrial services unit and choosing or developing a pretrial risk assessment tool.
- He would like to have a work group that includes the Court, the Public Defender, the local Bar, Prosecutor's Office, and law enforcement to begin choosing an appropriate risk assessment tool.
- He plans to visit Spokane to get information on their pretrial services.

## **Other Business**

### Electronic Home Monitoring, Pretrial Supervision Unit and Risk Assessment

The Task Force discussed:

- Efficiencies gained by jurisdictions combining to use a single service provider for electronic home monitoring, which would make programs more economically viable
- Pretrial supervision through District Court
- VERA's report on pretrial supervision, which concluded that Whatcom County should not adopt any of the risk assessments models without being customized
- Continuing the process in developing a pretrial supervision unit and choosing a risk assessment tool
- Using VERA consultants to provide a national perspective on pretrial risk assessment and supervision

## **4. Triage Facility**

Deacon reported on the status of developing a new triage facility:

- The County lobbyist will encourage the State legislature to put pressure on the Healthcare Authority to continue to fund operations into the future
- They don't yet know the projected annual operating expense, but is anticipated at \$4 to \$4.5 million annually for both units
- There will be four to six 23-hour chairs in addition to the 32 beds with an average stay of three to five days

The Task Force discussed:

- Whether or not the Affordable Care Act is repealed and replaced, 80,000 people in the region would lose access to care and impact the jail population and funding to the triage facility
- Outreach to the neighborhood community will hopefully occur by the end of March 2017
- The land use documents for the site don't have a restriction on this use

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- Funding documents say that when a new jail is built, they will reconsider whether the facility is used for corrections
- When the State legislature will adopt its capital budget
- Scheduling a Triage Facility Subcommittee meeting in February to discuss the changes to the architect's plan, get an update on working with the NSBHO Project Manager on neighborhood outreach, the requirement to engage providers to finalize the architectural design.

At the neighborhood meeting:

- Have some degree of certainty about the location
- Explain the lack of viable cost-effective location options for the triage facility
- Explain that developing a new triage facility must happen
- Be transparent about the research into other location options, and how they concluded that this location is the only viable option
- Also provide information on the City Planning Department analysis

## **5. VERA Institute: System Mapping Next Steps**

Mann thanked everyone for participating and stated they must keep the momentum going.

Forrest Longman, County Council Legislative Analyst, reported on the status of the exercise and next steps:

- They are close to having an electronic first draft of the system map
- Data analyses are moving forward. The consultants are getting the information they need from all the stakeholders.
- The consultants will help with the discussion about pretrial supervision

Bernstein stated the consultants will merge the data they collect and analyze with the second draft of the system map and present it to the Task Force at a future meeting.

Morgan submitted handouts and read from a statement (*on file*) on the mapping exercise and her perspective in working with the people who go through the criminal justice system. The VERA consultants are being very thorough. The mapping process must include and work for the justice system customers. Map the costs for the taxpayer, including the return on investment. Jail alternatives should include housing, transportation, and employment. People are released from services and medical care without a place to live, so they're homeless. The programs that exist are great, but there are funds that could be diverted to create not only new programs, extensively expand programs for continuing services with no gaps in services.

## **Other Business**

### Task Force Committees

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Bernstein asked the Task Force members to sign up for their subcommittee for 2017.

Gockley stated he would like to explore the idea of creating a reintegration committee. He asked if the Task Force can undertake such an issue, or if community organizations can undertake reintegration.

Bernstein stated Gockley and Morgan can talk to VERA consultants about including their suggestions on the system map.

**6. Review Phase III Report Deadline and Deliverables**

Mann stated he will get the Council to amend the ordinance to extend the Phase 3 deadline to early July, with an update report in March, if the Task Force agrees.

The Task Force concurred.

**7. Final 2017-2018 County Budget and IPRTF Recommendations**

Mann stated it's necessary to have fully-formed programs for the Council to consider. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) funds are set aside for public safety programs.

The Task Force discussed:

- Whether the Task Force will continue working after Phase 3 is complete
- Whether the Task Force could function as the Law and Justice Council
- The City and County coordinating on programs and projects
- Understanding the continuum and need for services, including housing.

**5. VERA Institute: System Mapping Next Steps**

The Task Force discussed the next steps for VERA consultants:

- They are finalizing the first version of the map with stakeholders
- A memorandum of understanding of data sharing must be approved soon
- The consultants will supplement the first draft of the map with data to create a second draft of the map
- The consultants will return with the second draft of the map and recommendations, identify challenges to reform, identify the existing opportunities for reform, and will create a presentation
- Get a summary of events, observations, and initial impressions that occurred during their first visit in November.
- Make sure the mapping exercise continues information on mental health and substance use disorder.

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**8. Public Comment**

Joy Gilfilen referenced the handouts from Irene Morgan and spoke on the financial impact on clients and consumers from corporate fees.

Ray Baribeau spoke on a meeting schedule of the Legal and Justice System Subcommittee that allow all the judges to attend.

Bruce Van Glubt, District Court Administrator, spoke on three District Court programs:

- Court check-in
- Electronic devices for indigent folks
- A new probation case management system

**9. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.