

***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Meeting Summary August 6, 2018***

1. Call to Order

Task Force Co-Chair Jack Hovenier called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Present: Angela Anderson, Jill Bernstein, Anne Deacon, Jerry DeBruin, Todd Donovan, Bill Elfo, Deborra Garrett, Stephen Gockley, Daniel Hammill, Kate Hansen, Jack Hovenier, Deborah Hawley, Raylene King, Kelli Linville, Byron Manering, Darlene Peterson, Chris Phillips

Heather Flaherty (proxy for Lisa McShane), Kathy Walker (proxy for Dave McEachran)

Absent: Betsy Kruse, Nick Lewis, Dave McEachran, Lisa McShane, Moonwater, Tyler Schroeder, Greg Winter

Announcements

The Task Force held a moment of silence in honor of former Bellingham Police Chief Todd Ramsey, who recently passed away.

Bernstein reported on the presentation of the annual Task Force Report to the Bellingham City Council and on the upcoming Legal and Justice Systems Subcommittee meeting with representatives of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals.

Review July 16, 2018 Meeting Summary

There were no changes.

2. Committee Updates

Deacon reported for the Behavioral Health Committee on the following items:

- Opioid crisis and rise in methamphetamine use
- Housing to promote safe and stable recovery
- Figuring out jail data regarding behavioral health issues

The Task Force members discussed:

- Challenges of methamphetamine substance use
- Funding and lack of best practices for meth treatment
- How the Task Force can deal with the meth use crisis by supporting treatment options, including a recovery house
- Making sure State and federal legislative delegations are aware of the problem
- Identifying gaps, specific projects, and funding
- The need for some kind of lock-down treatment center as an alternative to jail and to prevent people from leaving or not going to treatment, or the ability to have a deputy transport someone directly to treatment
- Identify gaps and necessary programs for funding decision-makers
- The need for prevention, early intervention, and focusing on juvenile first offenses
- Attracting professional treatment providers to the community
- The challenges of 12 step programs finding meeting space in the community

Phillips reported for the Crisis Recovery Facility Committee on the following items:

- Voluntary versus involuntary certification
- Seclusion and restraint versus recovery model

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The Task Force members discussed:

- The benefits and problems of a private facility on the North Sound Behavioral Health Organization (BHO) funding
- Smokey Point facility audit
- The need for treatment beds that accept Medicare/Medicaid

Garrett reported for the Pretrial Processes Workgroup:

- The State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) will validate the risk assessment
- Pretrial services development is the next step
- Timeline for implementation

The Task Force members discussed pretrial programs in District Court and the municipal courts.

3. Update by Jurisdictions on Jail Diversion Programs

Peterson reported for the City of Bellingham that 71 percent of defendants sent to Yakima are pretrial.

The Task Force members discussed:

- The complexity of multiple courts and multiple jurisdictions
- Further jail restrictions due to upcoming jail repairs
- Consecutive versus concurrent sentences from multiple jurisdictions
- Costs of county jail versus Yakima jail

Elfo reported for the Whatcom County:

- District Court added funding for more pretrial services
- The new crisis intervention deputy will soon be active

4. Report on County Council's Criminal Justice Committee Listening Tour: Highlights that can impact the goal of incarceration reduction

Barry Buchanan, County Councilmembers, introduced information gathered at the County Council's Criminal Justice and Safety Committee listening tour. Holly O'Neil, the facilitator for the listening tour, will present a full report to the Committee at its next meeting.

Holly O'Neil, Crossroads Consulting, gave a presentation on the listening tour's findings related to incarceration reduction and prevention:

- The community is paying attention to the work of the Task Force
- Invest in programs that prevent incarceration and address root causes
- Tax dollars should go to rehabilitation and treatment instead of jail facilities
- People should leave jail as contributing members to the community
- Get good data and make it available
- Community members referenced the Vera Institute of Justice report and supported several of the report's recommendations.

5. Other Business

Hovenier reported on data information received from Anne Deacon about state and national data on incarceration.

Anderson announced the recent warrant quash day.

Task Force members discussed warrant quash procedures in municipal court, the need for more notice to the community, and community safety concerns.

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6. Public Comment

Hovenier read a letter the Task Force received from a young student, Ruby Lewis.

Joy Gilfilen, Restorative Community Coalition, submitted a handout and spoke about complex post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of being in the criminal justice system.

Irene Morgan, Restorative Community Coalition, spoke on complex PTSD and the need to map the experiences of people in the criminal justice system.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.