

***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force  
Meeting Summary June 10, 2019***

**1. Call to Order**

Task Force Co-Chair Stephen Gockley called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

**Present:** Angela Anderson, Barry Buchanan, Jerry DeBruin, David Doll, Bill Elfo, Arlene Feld, Heather Flaherty, Stephen Gockley, Dan Hammill, Jack Hovenier, Moonwater, Eric Richey

Perry Mowery (proxy for Anne Deacon), Mike Martin (proxy for Scott Korthuis), Mike Parker (proxy for Greg Winter)

**Absent:** Travis Brockie, Anne Deacon, Deborra Garrett, Deborah Hawley, Raylene King, Scott Korthuis, Kelli Linville, Byron Manering, Eric Petersen, Darlene Peterson, Dave Reynolds, Tyler Schroeder, Kevin Turner, Bruce Van Glubt, Greg Winter

**2. Update on funding of Crisis Stabilization Facility**

Mowery updated the Task Force on the County Council's approval of the crisis stabilization facility construction bid process:

- The bids will be let before the end of June
- They are hopeful for a construction start date in August
- They anticipate construction will take nine months
- Operational costs of non-Medicaid individuals was a concern

The Task Force members discussed the need to address funding gaps and align services with the needs of law enforcement and emergency medical services (EMS) and changes to behavioral health funding through managed care organizations (MCOs).

**4. Update on Ground-level Response and Coordinated Engagement (GRACE) Program**

Mowery updated the Task Force on the GRACE Program:

- They have hired program manager Malora Christensen
- They are negotiating a contract for an advanced registered nurse practitioner (ARNP)
- Positions for three case managers and one community health worker are filed
- The office is set up
- More than 70 individuals are invited to participate; maximum capacity is 80 individuals

The Task Force members discussed whether the program is working with law enforcement; the intensive case manager and behavioral health officer positions at Bellingham Police Department; the Sheriff's Office plans to hire a second behavioral health deputy; developing a program evaluation mechanism for the GRACE program; local trends in rising behavioral health responses from law enforcement and ensuring that staff needs are met; the Sheriff's need for a total of four behavioral health deputies; training with the small cities; behavioral health training for all officers in the Bellingham Police Department; and a State mandated 40-hour training course for all officers by 2028.

**3. Review of 2019 Annual Report**

## ***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force Meeting Summary June 10, 2019***

Hammill moved to approve the report as presented. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

### **5. Update on Intergovernmental Policy Group: Resolution Reducing Incarceration of Young Adults**

Buchanan and Hammill reported on the County Council, acting as the Health Board, resolution and the work of the Policy Group, including:

- State Representative Shewmake's work on crisis stabilization funding
- Plans for an upcoming presentation at a conference in Philadelphia
- The value of having an intergovernmental team

### **6. Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD)**

Richey gave a presentation on his plans to develop a LEAD program:

- He is applying for grant funds
  - Federal grant, three years, \$900,000
  - State grant, \$500,000
- The biggest need is for more case workers
- How the program would work, including a 24/7 case worker support for law enforcement and working closely with the GRACE program

The Task Force members discussed the potential for housing support; starting a smaller pilot program to gauge success; the services to which people are being diverted; service capabilities and gaps; the results of an inmate survey by a teacher in the jail that indicate top needs for housing, jobs, and transportation; eligible charges; simple possession and relapse crimes; the need to develop specific criteria; lack of access to GRACE for some folks who don't qualify; local medical providers who provide medication-assisted treatment (MAT) services as a resource for County programs; and using creative partnerships to fund housing.

*Note: Task Force members DeBruin and Flaherty left the meeting. There was no longer a quorum of members.*

### **7. Role of the IPR Task Force in Incarceration Prevention Efforts**

Hovenier and Hammill submitted a handout (on file) of proposed motions and reported for the Steering Committee on a discussion about the possibility of focusing the Task Force more on the social determinants of health that impact incarceration risk factors. The proposal is to amend the Task Force enabling ordinance.

Hammill suggested that the County Council add language in the highlighted sections of the handout in Whatcom County Code section 2.46.020, "identify, examine, and recommend implementing programs and policies that focus on prevention and intervention strategies that are pursuant to reducing incarceration."

Task Force members discussed whether or not they should focus on an age population of 0 to 24 years, the need for building an fair and just system that prevents kids from entering the criminal justice system, how to create sideboards for the Task Force so it doesn't get too far outside the Task Force

***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force  
Meeting Summary June 10, 2019***

purview, ensuring they focus the work on evidence-based best practices for criminogenic factors, past Task Force decisions to focus on systems changes they could make immediately and now evolving toward working on more long-term solutions, whether they need to expand the scope of the committees to include juvenile court, and not excluding the possibility of new, innovative, and successful programs that may not have yet earned status as a best practice.

Buchanan stated he will take the suggestions for ordinance amendments to the County Council. No Task Force members present objected to the proposed amendments to the ordinance. Richey stated he can speak in support of the proposed changes as a proxy on behalf of Task Force member Heather Flaherty.

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

Elfo reported that the County no longer requires jail alternative programs to be self-sustaining, which allows them to expand the program to more participants. He also reported on:

- District Court pretrial funding
- Jail bed days saved by increasing out-of-custody work crews
- Working with Goodwill Industries
- A variety of counseling and treatment services available to inmates, including the medication-assisted treatment (MAT) program
- The challenges that service providers experience working with inmates who have a dual addition to opioids and methamphetamine

**9. Committee Updates**

Buchanan reported for the Steering Committee on the sequential intercept service inventory, moving the work into committees, and adding an intercept level 0 for community services that work to prevent risk factors for incarceration.

Gockley and Hammill reported for the Joint Behavioral Health & Law and Justice Services Committee meeting, including:

- The committees decided to have semi-annual joint meetings; the next joint meeting is November 12.
- Tomorrow's Legal and Justice Systems Committee will focus mainly on drug court.

Hovenier referenced and read an email from Tyler Schroeder regarding the report from the INDEX Committee.

**10. Other Business**

There was no other business.

**11. Public Comment**

Joy Gilfilen, Restorative Community Coalition, spoke about being pleased with the annual report and the possible changes to the Task Force enabling ordinance to focus on prevention and intervention. The Restorative Community Coalition needs a seat at the table.

*Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force  
Meeting Summary June 10, 2019*

**12. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10:54 a.m.