

***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force***  
***Legal & Justice Systems Subcommittee***  
**Meeting Summary for August 13, 2019**

---

**1. Call To Order**

Committee Co-Chair Raylene King called the meeting to order at 11:32 a.m. in the Whatcom County Courthouse Conference Room 514, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham.

Members Present: Arlene Feld, Heather Flaherty, Deborra Garrett, Stephen Gockley, Deborah Hawley, Wendy Jones (proxy for Bill Elfo), Raylene King, Eric Richey, Peter Ruffatto

Members Absent: Angela Anderson, Bill Elfo, Moonwater, Darlene Peterson, Eric Peterson

**2. Update on the Pretrial Services Unit**

Garret reported on the progress of the Superior Court in setting up the Pretrial Services Unit, including:

- Text messages for court reminders
- Using the Arnold Foundation Public Safety Assessment (PSA)
- County Council approved funding in 2019-2020 for a new PSU department
- Judicial officers are aware of and will consider concerns about racial bias
- No cost training, other than travel expenses, for the Arnold Foundation system trainers
- Washington State will prioritize implementation of the Arnold Foundation software for the courts. In the meantime, they will use a data storage program in the amount of \$1,500 per year, which will work with the Odyssey program
- Two PSU staff are hired
- Services will focus on reporting in and providing information on voluntary services
- Data gathering and monitoring by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) will continue to determine program success

The Committee members discussed the threshold for release versus non-release, timeline for implementing the assessment, and whether the Arnold Foundation statistics will be specific to Whatcom County.

**3. Update on presentation of annual plan to County Council**

Gockley reported on the presentation to the County Council and Bellingham City Council. Both councils were pleased with the reports. Bellingham City Council had a keen interest in data gathering.

**4. Assign programs to custom IPRTF Strategic Plan program inventory**

Committee members discussed the space and staff resource shortages for the inmate worker programs and GED preparation and tutoring; identifying who is in the jail and why; average length of stay trends; as the lower level offenders are released or assigned to alternative programs as much as

***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force***  
***Legal & Justice Systems Subcommittee***  
**Meeting Summary for August 13, 2019**

---

possible, the jail behavioral health acuity level is increasing; program capacity in the jail versus in the community; developing intensive case management to make the more acute inmates more manageable for community providers; the jail serves as a law and justice service, but it also serves a purpose for critically acute behavioral health problems; the need for short- and long-term medical hospitalization for critically acute persons who act out violently; the objective of *Trueblood et al v. Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)* to get people out of hospitals; determining whether the community wants the jail to continue to be the social safety net for the community or aspiring to something that doesn't criminalize people who need acute psychiatric care; reentry transition from incarceration in various facilities into the community, including a supply of necessary medication; the need for reentry navigators and reentry services from jail contractors; and the need for better communication from the Yakima jail about when they will drop off inmates who are released; reentry services as a best practice.

**5. Next Steps**

The committee concurred to invite to the next meeting:

- The specialized behavioral health law enforcement officers and deputies to ask how can the Committee and IPR Task Force support their work
- The jail's reentry specialist to discuss their work
- Continue discussing reentry services and gaps as a next big project for the committee

**6. Other Business**

The committee members discussed the possibility of working with David Goldman to create and conduct an inmate survey to gather information the Task Force and its committees may need. A recent inmate survey done for the thesis of a master's degree candidate will be also be available in the next few months.

Gockley stated the Information Needs and Data Exchange (INDEX) Committee would like information on the data-related questions and answers that this committee needs to do its work. During the strategic plan inventory agenda item, committee members discussed inmate statistics necessary to answer key questions:

- Identify who is in the jail and why
- Average length of jail stay for different categories of inmates and offenses
- The number of people who are out on bail, commit new crimes, and end up in jail again within a certain timeframe
- The need for an electronic medical system that will talk to the Spillman system
- How many individuals in the jail are waiting for a competency review or need a competency review that hasn't been done

The Committee members also discussed the process for competency reviews; the difference between competency evaluations for the legal purpose of attending court and for the health purpose of getting appropriate rehabilitation; and the status of contracts for services at the Yakima jail.

***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force  
Legal & Justice Systems Subcommittee  
Meeting Summary for August 13, 2019***

---

**7. Public Comment**

Irene Morgan spoke about funding the Restorative Community Coalition, interviewing system users, and jail trauma.

**9. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.