

***Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Information Needs and Data Exchange Subcommittee***
DRAFT Meeting Summary for February 6, 2020

1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Tyler Schroeder called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. in the Whatcom County Courthouse Conference Room 514, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham.

Members Present: Ryan Anderson, Brenda Beeman, Caleb Erickson, Wendy Jones, Jon'ese Pearson, Dave Reynolds, Perry Rice, Tyler Schroeder, Kathy Smith, Bruce Van Glubt

Members Absent: Erin Herschlip, Amy Hockenberry, Marty Mulholland

2. 2020 Priorities: Data Benchmarks and Trend Analysis

Schroeder reported on the request from the Steering Committee to engage set data benchmarks and trend analysis and the role of the INDEX Committee to be a more technical group instead of a policy group. He referenced and read from the meeting summary from the January 23 Steering Committee, including a request for specific data trends to track:

- How many people are being booked on violation of controlled substance use charges.
- Average length of stay for folks involved in property crimes due to substance use disorder and mental health issues. INDEX Committee members discussed the difficulty of connecting average length of stay for those with property crimes with whether or not the crime was a result of substance use disorder and mental health issues, and the difference between correlation and causation.
- Whether there are reductions due to the new pretrial services unit. INDEX Committee members discussed the difficulty of knowing the impact of the program, given concurrent impacts from booking restrictions, not knowing whether those in the program would have been sent to jail instead, and other variables.

The committee members discussed the variables that impact the jail system and jail population, including a shift in arrest decisions of law enforcement and prosecutors, jail restrictions, and other factors; INDEX Committee response to the IPRTF and community questions in 2020 about what resources the community needs to look at data benchmarks and trend analysis; County Council hiring a contractor to do a needs assessment of the criminal justice system; working with Dr. Andrew Peterson with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) on data for the pretrial services unit; identifying the specific data points that can answer the policy questions; and using grant money for free bus passes to get clients to court and other appointments.

3. Other Business

Erickson reported on his presentation of the jail database website to the full Incarceration Prevention & Reduction Task Force on February 2:

- The differences between the old and new systems
- The updating and conversion process

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- There was discussion with the Task Force members on the next steps and INDEX Committee plans moving forward, generating and storing data outside of the Sheriff's Office records management system, whether it's possible to allow the public to data mine the information on the website, providing greater transparency to the public,

The committee members discussed providing data on where inmates are housed, the process of getting feedback and making changes after a new system is deployed,

Schroeder reported there is some interest from State Representatives Shewmake and Goodman on data and trends. State funding may become available.

The committee members discussed the possibility of surveying jail inmates to gather information.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.