

COMMUNITY JUSTICE TASK FORCE MINUTES

Monday, July 2, 2012 – 6pm

Shields Meeting Room, Brookens Admin. Center

1776 E. Washington, Urbana, IL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bennett, Branham, Driscoll, Ferguson, Rappaport, Rollins-Gay, Sullivan, Richards

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kilgore

OTHERS PRESENT: Pattsie Petrie, Ralph Langenheim, Pius Weibel (County Board members), Deb Busey (County Administrator), Sargeel Risbee (McLean County), Chris Evans, other members of the public

Call to Order

Chair Richards called the meeting to order at 6:09pm.

Roll Call

A roll call was taken and one member was absent.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Sullivan to approve the agenda for the meeting; seconded by Ferguson. **Motion carried.**

Public Participation

Pattsie Petrie thanked members of task force who were able to come on June 26 to hear presentations from the four firms. She also wanted to let everyone know that Channel 5 will be showing that meeting at 7pm on July 7th, but warned that it is a 4 hour 23 minute meeting.

Chris Evans presented statistics regarding Champaign County's success with alternatives to incarceration rates measured against the total number of arrests & prosecutions. He said he is hoping that this group, in asking the right questions as to how we can expand alternatives to incarceration, can get going on how we can better use our public dollar to more effectively reduce crime.

Sullivan asked that Mr. Evans's information be made part of the public record. Mr. Evans agreed to supply websites and the numbers that he recited.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Rappaport to approve the minutes of June 4, 2012, as presented; seconded by Driscoll. Bennet noted that on line 186 under the State's Attorney adult diversion program, he wasn't speaking about the adult diversion program which already existed, he was speaking about the new program called the second chance program and the difference isn't so much that its geared toward people 18 or older, but geared toward felony offences not misdemeanor offenses. Felt line 184 should read State's Attorney Second Chance Program, and on line 187 should read 17 or older. **Motion** by Bennett to amend minutes. Seconded by Ferguson. **Amended motion carried.**

Presentation: McLean County Pre-Trial Services Program

Sargeel Risbee stated that he was hired in 2007 as McLean County's Pre-Trial Coordinator. The pre-trial team was formulated by key stakeholders including the Chief Judge, State's Attorney, Public Defender and others with the main issue of addressing jail overcrowding. The County currently has an 85% success rate of individuals released on bond who are supervised as an alternative to incarceration.

Pre-Trial Services is a program that provides the court with verified criminal and social history of individuals who've been charged with an offense, with the goal of shortening the length of time between the charges and the bond hearing. Pre-Trial Services assists those that can't afford bail with the assertion that an individual shouldn't be incarcerated because they don't have enough money to post bond and also provides supervision of those individuals until the trial. Individuals who are a flight risk or pose a danger to the community or themselves should be incarcerated. Mr. Risbee noted that Pre-Trial Services has not solved the jail overcrowding issue completely.

Benefits to judges and the State's Attorney are they are provided with information about the individual that may have been previously overlooked. Pre-Trial Services helps the Public Defender with expediting the cases thru the courts. The question was posed as to how flight risk or threat is determined. Mr. Risbee answered that a validated risk assessment that has been approved by the IL Supervisory Court, the Bar Association, National Pre-Trial Services Association, the Pre-Trial Justice Institute and the National Institute of Correction is used. He stated that about 60% of the cases screened are recommended for non-release.

The question was asked about how many cases are handled, how many staff, what training is like and the approximate cost to the County. Mr. Risbee said they currently have 2 offices, one who mainly does screening and one who mainly does supervision. Some supervision duties of lower risk individuals are also handled by the person doing the screening. The question was asked if bracelet monitoring was used and who paid for it. Mr. Risbee answered that yes, it is used but sparingly, and it is an offender based pay program.

Mr. Risbee noted that there are benefits to Probation as well. Once an individual is sentenced to probation, the officer will already have the information on the individual from Pre-Trial Services. Discussion continued.

Question was asked how many IL counties have Pre-Trial Services. Mr. Risbee responded that they did a survey a while back that was sent to every county and they got 35 responses back. He noted that some counties don't have Pre-Trial Services per se but do perform some of the same tasks. He also noted that Pre-Trial Services is growing and other counties have expressed an interest.

Discussion continued about Pre-Trial Services duties, the courts, the department of corrections, mentally ill inmates, cost benefits and more. Mr. Risbee stated that Pre-Trial Services isn't just about getting the individual thru the court system faster, but to make them a productive member of society.

Review of Task Force Purpose:

Committee is to do a report, which can be fairly narrow or fairly broad, to give to the County Board for guidance and suggestions on how to improve things and directions to take.

Discussion – Next Steps

Chairman Richard asked the committee if there is anyone they would like to talk to about the services currently provided. Ms. Ferguson mentioned that a tour of the Satellite Jail had been requested. Ms. Busey stated that the committee had decided against a tour in conjunction with a meeting, noting that the Sheriff would be happy to schedule a tour individually, or a time could be set to tour as a group. If tour is set

up as a group it needs to be published. One member stated that a group tour would allow each member to hear others questions and discussion during the tour. It was suggested a tour be set for July 16 at 6:00pm.

Member suggested talking to State's Attorney as a future agenda item. Another member suggested talking to Joe Gordon in Probation as well as about substance abuse. Member stated would like to have more concrete information about what Champaign County currently does and to look at what gaps may exist. One member suggested looking at what jobs programs are currently in place

The entire process from beginning to end was explained by Julia Reitz. One member asked for clarification that Champaign County is already doing a sort of pre-trial service and that the system is working well to keep jail population lower. Ms. Reitz said that yes, they do everything they can to make sure that the right people are in custody and to move cases.

Mr. Driscoll stated the committee has the October meeting to finalize report for County Board, stating that leaves August and September for meetings. Richards says that is the current operation of authority. There have talks and with needs assessment the Board will want to talk to task force and that none of the RFP's will be done by the time this committee is supposed to be wrapping up. Chairman Richards noted there is the possibility to extend this committee and feels it makes sense to extend at least one more month. Mr. Weibel stated he put the deadline at October because the last meeting for this County Board is in November and the issue could get shelved until the new Board comes in.

Member stated use August meeting to get input from Court Services, State's attorney, etc, and the September meeting to start looking at community resources regarding employment, domestic violence, housing, substance abuse, etc. From there start identifying gaps and then report. Discussion continued.

Chairman Richards felt schedule Mr. Driscoll suggested makes the most sense. Member asked if Public Defender could come as well. Member suggested getting more information on vendors before making decision. Discussion continued.

Other Business

Update was given on Mental Health Board and Sheriff's office partnering for MRT and other training. Three Mental Health Board members, two mental health staff at the jail and a number of officers were trained.

Richards noted that next meeting is Monday, August 6 at 6:00 pm and the visit to the Satellite Jail is July 16 at 6:00 pm with everyone meeting in the lobby of the jail.

Adjournment

Richards declared the meeting adjourned at 8:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ranae Wolken
Recording Secretary