

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force

Meeting Summary for March 21, 2022

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1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Jack Hovenier called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The meeting was held via remote-only Zoom Webinar.

Members Present: Barry Buchanan, Doug Chadwick (proxy for Bill Elfo), Arlene Feld, Heather Flaherty, Stephen Gockley, Dan Hammill, Jack Hovenier, Scott Korthuis, Jenn Lockwood, Rhyan Lopez, Perry Mowery, Eric Petersen, Darlene Peterson, Dave Reynolds, Eric Richey, Donnell Tanksley, Greg Winter

Members Absent: Seth Fleetwood, David Freeman, Deborah Hawley, Mike Hilley, Raylene King, Jason McGill, Tyler Schroeder, Flo Simon, Bruce Van Glubt, Maia Vanyo

2. [Legislative Updates \(00:01:06\)](#)

Senator Simon Sefzik and Representatives Alex Ramel and Sharon Shewmake from the State Legislature gave the committee members an overview of the 2022 legislative session. Legislation discussed included:

- Bills passed this session to address and clarify bills passed in last year's session, including legislation allowing less-lethal use of force, clarifying law enforcement's ability to use force, further defining use of force, and re-establishing the probable cause standard.
- Legislation increasing funding for training of new law enforcement recruits, increasing salaries of State Patrol employees and increasing benefits for other first responders.
- A bill regarding law enforcement's ability to engage in vehicular pursuits, which did not pass.

Committee members and legislators discussed the legislation related to law enforcement. Chadwick, Tanksley, and Richey spoke to the helpfulness of the legislation that passed. They also expressed disappointment that the bill regarding vehicular pursuit did not pass and explained the impacts they see from that. They agreed that they are seeing more brazen criminals because of the limited ability of law enforcement to apprehend suspects.

Whatcom County Executive, Satpal Sidhu, said that the perspective he is seeing from citizens is that crime is increasing, regardless of what is happening at the legislative level. Gockley pointed out that this is a balancing act, as the initial reform bills were enacted as a response to lack of trust in law enforcement. Feld spoke further to that point.

Hammill asked what the plan was to address behavioral health issues at the state level. Representative Shewmake summarized some of the work already done and funds possibly available for the future. Senator Sefzik agreed that this was an important issue and emphasized the importance of supporting law enforcement. Representative Ramel added an overview of money allocated in the budget this year for behavioral health needs. Executive Sidhu brought up the Alternative Response Team and its importance in addressing these issues. Committee members discussed the impact of the Alternative Response Team and the work that still needs to be done.

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3. Justice Project Needs Assessment (00:56:00)

Buchanan gave an overview of what the Justice Project is currently working on and the upcoming meetings. He asked committee members to send him any ideas on the best ways to incorporate the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) members into the IPRTF meetings and committee meetings.

4. Implementation of the GARE Toolkit (01:02:00)

Gockley summarized the concerns regarding the lack of implementation of the resources provided by the Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE) so far. He said that the Committee Chairs would like to establish the six questions posed by GARE as a framework for discussion and decision making within the Task Force.

Hammill expressed dismay that they have not yet implemented the toolkit and emphasized that it is essential to apply an equity lens to all of the Task Force's work.

Committee members discussed what the best way to go about implementing GARE. Ideas included:

- Reaching out to others in the community to invite them in to give feedback.
- Considering what the purpose of the Task Force is and being intentional about applying the questions posed by GARE during discussions and recommendations.
- Including the framework questions in the packet of each meeting and including the notes on those questions in the record of the meeting.
- Utilizing the assistance of the Racial Equity Commission, which is currently being formed.

5. Sequential Intercept Service Inventory Update (01:21:30)

Mowery gave an overview of the Sequential Intercept Model (SIM), its history, and how it's used. He said that the Behavioral Health Gap Analysis group was recently established as a small group of individuals who are tasked with updating the SIM. He explained how the model would be updated, including estimating costs of program implementation.

Hammill brought up the need to add steps before step zero to the model and to think about how far upstream they wanted to go.

6. Committee Updates (01:28:50)

Buchanan reported on the Steering Committee: Everything discussed in Steering had already been covered earlier in the meeting.

Hammill and Feld reported on the joint meeting of the Behavioral Health Committee and the Legal & Justice Committee: Many SAC members joined as attendees to learn more about current issues related to behavioral health and how it relates to a new justice facility. They summarized the discussion on communication, competency determination and restoration, services available, and post-release services. There will be another joint meeting to address the agenda items that they did not get to.

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7. Other Business

There was no other business.

8. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:51 A.M.