

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force: Legal and Justice Systems Committee

Meeting Summary for May 10, 2022

Agenda item links to YouTube video are functional at the time this meeting summary was created, however, YouTube links may change. Links in this document will not be updated. Please refer to the time notation on each agenda item.

1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Raylene King called the meeting to order at 11:30 A.M. The meeting was held via remote-only Zoom Webinar.

Members Present: Arlene Feld, Stephen Gockley, Deborah Hawley, Raylene King, Jackie Mitchell, Eric Richey, Donnell Tanksley, Bruce Van Glubt, Maia Vanyo

Members Absent: Doug Chadwick, David Freeman, Darlene Peterson, Flo Simon,

2. [Committee regular meeting length \(00:1:00\)](#)

King said the idea had been presented that the meeting length should be extended because the meetings often run over time. However, she added that there were also concerns about extending the length as members had other commitments. King brought up the idea of not reading the Land Acknowledgment statement at the beginning of the meetings, Tanksley and Vanyo objected to this idea.

3. [2022 Annual Report to County Council & County Executive \(00:05:07\)](#)

King asked members if there was anything they wanted to change or add in the draft of the Legal and Justice Systems section of the report. Members discussed various elements of the report, including:

- Reentry: Feld said that she was working on the reentry section, which included many suggestions of things to implement in the future.
- Mitchell pointed out that LifelineConnections was the behavioral health reentry contractor and did not provide broader reentry services. Committee members discussed how substance use disorder (SUD) treatment and reentry is addressed.
- “Next steps” section. Suggestions included:
 - Adequate support for psychiatric evaluations and community resources needed for the mental health sentencing alternative
 - Funding for public defenders, social workers, and behavioral health specialists

King asked if there was a way to expedite cases after restoration had been achieved. Vanyo stated that the mental health sentencing alternative could be a useful tool and explained the barriers to utilizing it. Committee members discussed what was needed after restoration, such as intensive case management.

Mitchell requested that a presentation be given to the Committee on the mental health sentencing alternative. Vanyo and Richey agreed to put a presentation together at the joint meeting with the Behavioral Health Committee on June 14.

4. [Pretrial Processes Workgroup \(00:18:57\)](#)

Retired Judge Deborra Garrett gave background on how and why the Pretrial Processes Workgroup was established. She explained the impacts of COVID on the courts, including that it was nearly impossible to conduct jury trials during the height of the pandemic. She went on to say that the bottleneck of jury trials is now easing, as the courts start to resume more normal operations. She summarized where the

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force: Legal and Justice Systems Committee

Meeting Summary for May 10, 2022

Agenda item links to YouTube video are functional at the time this meeting summary was created, however, YouTube links may change. Links in this document will not be updated. Please refer to the time notation on each agenda item.

courts are now in terms of operations and the purpose of the pre-trial services unit. She said that the next step was gathering and evaluating data including:

- How many have been released
- Of those released, how many have re-offended or failed to appear
- Criteria of those who commit new crimes after release

Gockley added that Dr. Damani Johnson and Adam Fryer have agreed to work with them on data evaluation from a racial equity standpoint.

King asked if they were tracking re-offense for people who might be on conditions from one court to the felony level. Garrett responded that she thought they were, but would check to be sure.

Garrett said that they were meant to share data with the INDEX Committee, however the data gathered so far are not reflective of normal times, so it is of limited usefulness.

5. [Behavioral health and law enforcement co-response in the county \(00:33:37\)](#)

The Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) received the following question from a member:

RE: Undersheriff Doug Chadwick spoke about responding to 9-1-1 mental crisis calls with a co-response consisting of a deputy and a behavioral health specialist because mental crisis calls can escalate fast. He also stated without co-response, if a behavioral health specialist or social worker needed law enforcement assistance there would be a significant time delay due to geographical obstacles reaching remote areas (Maple Falls, etc).

Question: Would WA State HB1310 & HB1054 need to be revised to allow safety for social workers/behavioral health workers to have co-response with law enforcement as Undersheriff Chadwick outlined? If so, how can the revision of the House Bill laws be made to make co-response possible to ensure safety for all is paramount?

Richey responded to this inquiry, saying that he did not believe the new bills need to be changed in order to establish an alternative response team for the Sheriff's Office.

Tanksley added that Senate Bill 5644 has now gone into effect, and that it may provide some clarity on best practices for behavioral health co-response.

Gockley asked about a pilot project co-responder model in Skagit County and if there were any discussions about piloting that here. Richey and Tanksley said that there were not. Gockley asked that Chadwick provide an update at the next meeting. Mitchell added that she would see what she could find out from the Response Systems Division as well.

6. [GARE/Racial Equity implementation in legal and justice systems \(00:38:48\)](#)

King asked how committee members are using the Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE) toolkit or addressing racial equity issues within their agency.

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force: Legal and Justice Systems Committee

Meeting Summary for May 10, 2022

Agenda item links to YouTube video are functional at the time this meeting summary was created, however, YouTube links may change. Links in this document will not be updated. Please refer to the time notation on each agenda item.

Tanksley said that the City of Blaine has not adopted GARE, but the police department does abide by some of the principles of GARE.

Vanyo said that she does not look closely at the GARE toolkit questions and that she does not feel that there is any meaningful implementation of the toolkit in her department. She expressed a desire for more guidance on how to use the toolkit.

Richey agreed that there was not yet a good implementation method for GARE. He went on to outline the changes that his office has made to improve racial equity outcomes.

Gockley summarized Executive Sidhu's explanation of County-level GARE implementation, which Executive Sidhu had presented at the last Steering Committee meeting. Gockley said that he believes the Task Force needs to take steps to implement the toolkit now, regardless of the County's timeline.

King brought up the idea of providing childcare for those attending court. Richey said that he does see people bringing children to court. Vanyo said that it didn't happen that often in Superior Court, especially now that remote appearances are possible. Richey emphasized the importance of allowing those remote appearances to continue, as they allow for greater access to justice. Gockley pointed out that we likely do not have data on the link between childcare issues in court and racial equity.

In response to a comment from Vanyo, Legislative Coordinator, Jill Nixon, summarized her knowledge of the current internal process at the County and other boards and commissions for GARE implementation.

7. [Justice Project data workgroup \(00:55:06\)](#)

King asked if there was data being gathered that the Committee could help with. Gockley said that there are two data tracks going on for the SAC. The first set of data is criminal/legal, the other is behavioral health. Mitchell said that the Behavioral Health Gap Analysis group would report to the SAC later this summer.

8. [Agenda Items for June joint meeting with Behavioral Health Committee \(01:01:24\)](#)

This item was not discussed.

9. Other Business

There was no other business.

10. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:32 P.M.