

Criminal Justice Advisory Group - CJAG
February 18, 2014
MINUTES

HANDOUTS

- Meeting Agenda
- FY 2014 2Q Jail Population Report
- Minutes (Draft) January 21, 2014

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 8:40am

Welcome

Chris Peek opened the meeting introducing himself and Carol Hickey. As a result of organizational restructuring, Peek and Hickey are assuming oversight of CJAG from Michelle Lancaster. Hickey will facilitate future meetings. Peek took time to recognize the leadership and contributions of Lancaster.

February minutes were approved by consensus.

Announcements/Open Items

Mauro Messina presented the quarterly jail report which examines the characteristics of the jail population in general and provides comparative data from the previous quarter and year. The jail population continued to decline during the second quarter of FY14, averaging 1900 inmates per day; down 6 percent from the previous year and 27 percent lower than the peak in FY07. The population remained 16 percent below functional capacity. Gender and racial characteristics remained constant. The most prominent change was observed in custody status; the percentage of pretrial inmates declined about 4 percent from same period last year to 62 percent of the population. During the same period, the federal inmate population increased to 31 percent of the population, 11 percent above FY12 levels.

Booking and release numbers are in decline. Intake of state inmates was down 9 percent from previous year, averaging about 2400 bookings per month. On average, about 2500 state inmates were released each month of the quarter. Changes were observed in the average length of stay (ALOS) for select groups. However, with the exception of one group, the range of fluctuation was consistent with previous quarters. Inmates released to other jurisdictions recorded a 20 percent decline in their average (to 78 days). The jail population is projected to experience a seasonal increase over the several months, reaching just under 2000 in June 2014.

Charge Bundling Initiative

Robin Withrow advised the initiative to develop a framework for bundling charges in NCAWARE has concluded. After studying the question for several months, stakeholders determined the effort required to work within or to change the existing arrest processing system exceeded the potential gains of bundling. Withrow thanked all participants for their contribution to the project.

Justice Reinvestment

Countywide Citation Policy

Richard Stroker briefly reviewed the Justice Reinvestment Initiatives underway in the county, noting a county-wide citation policy had been approved by CJAG. The next step in this area is to develop and deliver training to law enforcement agencies.

To move forward, budgets for each of the initiatives must be constructed and submitted to the Bureau of Justice Assistance for funding. In addition, CJAG will need to document how the savings realized from implementation of the initiatives will be reinvested in other areas of the criminal justice system. This discussion should begin at the April meeting. Stoker also noted that Mecklenburg County was emerging as a national example for effective Justice Reinvestment efforts.

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License Restoration Program

Mauro Messina updated members regarding the Driver's License Restoration Clinic. Training of the law students who will analyze driving records and construct recovery plans will begin in early March. Service is expected to begin by mid-April.

Reentry Program

Hope Marshall updated members regarding the reentry program. Of the 55 "high-risk" referrals received to date, 29 have enrolled to receive services. Six have completed the program, 3 are in a networking group and meeting with prospective employers. One participant has started his own janitorial service. A luncheon held in November to recruit additional employers willing to hire former offenders was successful; of the 15 attending, 3 have already agreed to participate. Staff have been coordinating with various correctional facilities as persons are preparing to leave the custody of the state and return to the county. The program will soon begin receiving referrals from Brown Creek and Piedmont. In addition, referrals will be received from the Center for Women. Finally, representatives from the federal prisons and half-way houses will join the local reentry council in March.

Juvenile Diversion Program & Gang of One

Pete Davis, Dave Scheppegrell, and Cara Evans-Patterson spoke about CMPD's efforts to divert juvenile from the criminal justice system. CMPD is encouraging officers to exercise discretion in situations where alternatives to arrest may exist. The jail diversion program permits school resources officers to file incident reports for juveniles involved in situations (e.g. fights or disorderly conduct) that in the past may have resulted in arrest. The reports remain within the police department and juveniles are encouraged to participate in programming. The availability of a variety of programs allows officers to avoid contributing to a "school to prison pipeline." Programming involves both child and parent and addresses life skills, academic and substance abuse needs. To date, CMPD has referred 708 juveniles. If the juvenile completes the assigned programs there is no arrest history. Where arrests are made, CMPD is asking the court to order programming.

Open Discussion

Members did not raise any topics for open discussion.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:38am.

