

Incarceration Task Force Minutes
June 4, 2008
Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office

Present:

Grayson Robinson (Chair)
Michelle Sykes (TFL)
Tony Carochi, Deputy Director of Prisons
Norm Mueller, Defense Attorney
Pam Clifton, CCJRC
Glenn Tapia, DCJ
Shelby McKinzy, CU graduate student
Christine Adams, Facilitator
Germaine Miera, staff
Bill Lovingier, Denver jail
Gary Golder, DOC
Martin Stuart, CCDB
John Suthers, Attorney General
Kim English, DCJ

Absent:

Debbie Zwirn, Logan County Commissioner
Rhonda Johnson, Victim advocate

Data:

Discussion Topics:

Welcome/Introductions

Presentation on Arapahoe County jail programs (Grayson)

- Each county is different, some have lots of programs, others not so many
- For example, El Paso County has some major budget constraints
- What an inmate gets depends often on where they are housed
- Avg. LOS at Arapahoe is 42 days.. limit is 2 years
- Programs are a unique challenge for county jails

Pre-release programs include:

- Life skills, preparing for a job, balancing a checkbook, typical AA/NA, domestic violence
- Cognitive restructuring is difficult in local jails
- GED programs offered
 - Those w/out a GED are 42% more likely to recidivate
- It would be great if we could “sentence people to accomplishments rather than time served”. For example “Once you obtain your GED you can be released”.
- Arapahoe County jail has 11 teachers, 2 paid and 9 volunteers
- Religious programming offered
- The jail houses a large population of FTA’s and Failure to pay fines
- The jail has started a court notification program similar to Jeff Co.
- The program operates in County Court B and has reduced FTA’s from 23% to 7%. This saves both law enforcement resources AND jail space.
- There is an aftercare program for inmates with Mental Health challenges
- Program called ADMIT – A diversion program for those with mental health issues. Selected inmates go to court, get deferred judgment if they participate in ADMIT (day reporting, treatment, medication). ADMIT is a bit of a replica of the PACE program in Boulder. The jail applied for a SAMSHA grant to run the program, got denied and is funding it through the jail commissary fund and jail industries fund
- A-Step is a jail industries programming working with private sector firms. Takes place in the jail. Partner with Norgren (?) in Littleton manufacturing vacuum pumps, seal pumps, etc. Inmates in this program are very protective of their program
- 21% of the inmates in A-Step go to work for the firms after they get out.
- Female empowerment group/female population is growing/first come first serve on this group
- Alternative sentencing-home detention, GPS monitoring, capacity for 64 work release

Kim asks- What are your assessments?

Grayson says there is an initial classification and a variety of other evaluations

Kim asks-Is there a way to track those who recidivate?

Grayson says no good research at the moment but they're trying to collect the data now.

Grayson says there is a jail expansion down the road and that of the 68-70% recidivism rate the lion's share are those with mental health issues.

Recidivism and crowding is largely driven by Mental Health issues

Presentation on DOC programs (Tony)

Tony passed around the catalog of programs sponsored through DOC
Tony presented an in-depth power point on the educational programs available through DOC. This power point is available from Germaine.

Question – Are there separate recidivism stats on those who complete programs?

Answer – Gary says not really

Question – How do you manage inmate movement and participation in the educational programs?

Answer – It is largely dictated by custody issues. If disciplinary issues exist than that prevails

Question – Do you find MH #'s are the same in DOC as in the jail?

Answer- around 30% for both, but for female inmates that number is larger (in the 40% range).

Question – Are you satisfied that people are getting the programming they need?

Answer – No, more treatment is needed than the resources that are available. Hard to coordinate programs with parole dates and release dates.

Question – why don't your program completion certifications work outside of the prison?

Answer- Our program elements aren't often the same as what's required on other certifications.

Discussion of Expectations list and narrowing of top issues

Assessment

The question is raised about what assessments are given in DOC and how does DOC determine who goes to which program?

Gary says they are given an initial needs assessment which shows their category of needs. He says it is updated as the offender moves through the system. He says that process is also reviewed at their completion of the program.

Gary says the DCIS data system is not kept well at all.

Kim responds saying that “The ability to open up that black box could jive well with the task force. This could be an opportunity to figure out what resources DOC needs to get assessments done accurately at DRDC”.

Glenn says from his research the DRDC folks say they don't have time to do a good assessment. The CM doesn't have time to do the assessment well. The initial assessment that follows them throughout the system isn't done correctly to begin with. Inmates go through DOC, go through programs and are never getting the appropriate services from the start because the needs are never assessed properly in the beginning (Kim and Glenn). If the data don't exist for evaluation purposes how can that be working for DOC?

Per Gary - DCIS was developed way back in the day. Very old system with lots of data fields but very limited with pulling data.

Gary says DOC dollars are huge but they only have 20% of the criminal population. Kim says – “you are the place where success starts and it is critical for you to assess and deliver programs that are appropriate with risk/need”.

Discussion of Accreditation Standards of Detention Facilities

Grayson says we as a task force need to have an understanding of and at least have some knowledge of accreditation standards. Grayson says they have 6 accreditations in the jail and 5 are internationally recognized. He states that WE need to be aware of standards and strive to meet them as close as we can.

In Colorado most county jails are run with ACA standards. For the most part we're pretty fortunate that our county jails are run with ACA standards in mind. Smaller jails have a harder time.

John Suthers- no argument there

Grayson mentions again ACA, NCCH and COLEA standards.

Question - Does being accredited reduce recidivism? (Kim)

Good question, probably no data available. Being accredited has a huge impact on our litigation. John says it has a huge impact on employee and inmate safety. John Suthers guesses it's a net gain in savings.

Question – Is there any way to check with ACA to see if certification reduces recidivism.

Accreditation should take into account performance-based standards. Gary says “ If we're doing a GED class at Sterling that's different from somewhere else, then it brings an outside set of eyes.”

Glenn says Comm. Corr. is prioritizing their standards to get programs to think about prioritizing standards for what is most important when it comes to inmate success. For example Programming standards should rank higher than standards regarding inmate's having flame retardant pillows.

Grayson says be careful about the accrediting agency that you decide to align yourself with.

Discussion of the Task Force Process – How do we reach our end product

How do we stay on task with our charter and drill down on the key issues.

Christine goes over action items from the last meeting and asks for priorities.

Priorities

- Successful re-entry begins with entry (Suthers). While incarcerated we need to do the very best job we can to prepare the inmate to go into parole or whatever and maximum their chances.

Driving principle – Successful reentry begins with entry

Recommendations should pertain to local jails AND at state level..
recommendations in different domains

- Assessment. Unless you've got a great assessment instrument in the beginning you're spinning your wheels. The state needs to invest in a better initial assessment instrument at DRDC. Parole officers are making decisions off of DRDC assessments which were never good to begin with.

Gary says assessments are done every 6 months at DOC. Kim clarifies that the LSI is NOT done every 6 months, just the DOC assessment.

If you don't treat correctly, it feeds the population that doesn't succeed and comes back in.

Footnote issue. Everything is progressive until you hit community and then it's regressive.

Grayson –

Good time/Earned time.

Is it a good idea for this group to look at earned time? Those are some specific statutory changes we could look at? Do we want to look at all these “time issues”. State statute says summons are to be the preferred method for class felonies? Do we want to look at that. It has to do with pre-sentence folks that are crowding your jails.

If we separate Jail from DOC, let’s look at specificity of statutes. If you’re in jail and convicted you will get a longer sentence than if you’re on bond when sentenced.

Grayson says that there are two interpretations of ‘good time.’

A standard that meets everyone’s need and is generic across the state.

No authority by jails to look at incentive programs with earned time/good time. You have to work with courts and judges around this.

Punitive perspective on the change of the interpretation of the statute. Some people said why would you want that person out of jail sooner than what the judge says?

Bill – the court looks at a one year sentence and says you can take 10-days off per month. Rub comes on shorter sentence. 30 days

Good time disparity based on when you come in during the month. 7 days of statutory good time per month.

Shouldn’t it be the same for every county jail? Martin

Statutory good time 2 days per month. Trustee can earn an additional 10 days. Some sheriff’s only give statutory good time. Trustee status is discretionary.

Pam – is there an incentive to add educational earned time? Yes, agreed by group we should talk about this.

Grayson – currently no good time earned for reaching an accomplishment.

Kim – positive incentive stuff is pretty clear, if you can do that by statute and make it consistent, AND it's evidence based. If you create a system that lets them out too soon that could be a problem, too.

Norm – If we advocate a real performance based incentive based system.

We need to have this driven by statute.

Bill – be cautious about approaches that are net-widening. Bill, craft a system for domestic violence programming. If we can.

Incarceration only. Glenn – for the purposes for the scope of our work, keeping in mind that we are a subcommittee of sub of task force. What we should do here should be from day one of incarceration to last day. Let's stick with what's going on INSIDE only. Let's address topics in our scope with greatest likelihood to reduce recidivism and reduce growth. What is the framework to pick whatever topics we're going to address.

Grayson – true. And our charters are in phases. Phase one is targeted on that 20 August report we have to be prepared for.

Kim – take Glenn's framework and break it down between state and local level.

Grayson would rather pay the bond personally as it would save money.

Bond Issue.

Getting the size of the population down to a manageable level. I.e. take on the bond issue will reduce the 'Incarceration' population.

Pam talks about getting your plan systematically ready to get back out.

Bond Reform.

Grayson – Bond reform has a huge impact on incarceration. If you have a bond reform it will impact incarceration.

Goal is recidivism reduction.

What are the top tasks that we are going to go after

Top three? Top Five?

What do we want to recommend? What is the goal of our group? We can have lots of recommendations? Put into subcategories. How do you prioritize under your goal? We are the only group where it starts day one. What does day one need to look like

Bond Issues

Assessment and Re-assessment

Programming/Service delivery

Mentally Ill programming is a special problem for institutions – medications.

What is the gap in movement between jails/doc/Comm. Corr.

Good time and earned time

Release planning

Identify

Review

Analyze

Compare

5 general topics we will kick around and put those into a format and get them out so that the next several days we can get it out and get broad-brush general topics out to group and add sub-topics. Use Glenn's framework as criteria. Will help us deal with the agenda items

Take notes from phase one out for Grayson.

Kim – get data on all of this.

Define the problem

Make recommendations

Items with and without cost implications

MACC group – Bill Lovingier.

Out of top 5 flows gaping problems, mentally ill, etc. data systems, etc. spend time between now and the next meeting take on and identify problems.

5 general broad brush, me, Grayson, Christine – come back with strong recommendation and prepare for next meeting that we take on the first two priorities. Additional bullets, and parking lot to look at other concerns (homelessness).

What statutes need to be changed and how. How does this translate into priorities, data, and issues. First two priorities are that the only focus for the meeting on the 18th this is data this is recs.

DON'T LOSE COMM CORR PIECE

Legislation:

Next Agenda:

Next meeting at Norm Mueller's law office / 150 E. 10th Ave.

Have people bring ideas about sub-topics for top five issues.

Norm, Martin, Pam – Discuss/Present on bond issues

Miscellaneous: