

Minutes

Jail Huber Meeting

November 18, 2013

Attendance:

Tom Reed, Chair

Sue Eckhart, Justice 2000 (seckhart@justice-2000.org)

Pete Koneazny, Legal Aid Society

Kit McNally, Executive Committee

Capt. Tom Meverden, MSO

Eilleen O'Connor, WCS

Nick Sayner, JusticePoint

Holly Szablewski, Courts

Angie Turner, Center for Self-Sufficiency

Mike Williams, DOC

1) Report on Executive Committee discussion of jail population (Tom Reed).

Discussion of concern for rising population numbers and possible reasons therefore.

Increase has been up 10% on pretrial side (80-100 ADP estimated increase)

- No one sure why numbers have been going up.
- Need data.
- Number of cases coming into system has not gone up, so it is unclear why the population has risen.
- One question was rise in number of VOP holds – Mike W. says that is not the case to his knowledge.
- Capt. Meverden raised the question of whether ALOS has risen.
- Holly did a snapshot of population from a recent day that NIC – she will analyze.
- One hypothesis is that some high risk people may be identified by screening and being kept in, when they otherwise may have gotten out.
- Tom R. emphasized the importance of getting our data system where it needs to be so we can do ongoing population analysis.
- Another hypothesis is the changeover of court commissioners has changed the praxis “over-ride” rate.
- Holly explained that there were some data issues, and that w/ correction it appears over-rides were not an issue.
- Holly has looked at screening numbers and has question about levels of serious charges at admission. Is the population different than it was a year ago?

- Lots of anecdotal theories e.g. “we feel like there may be more d.v. cases...” This is a concern because we should be able to identify why population is changing.
- Has “Time to Disposition changed?”
- Possible change in HOC releases? Different counting of release time?
- Mike W. asked whether we could build in some automatic alert to rising population signs so that that trends could be addressed.
- Holly can’t monitor case processing time because she doesn’t have access to all the data.
- Question whether there is any issue w/ MSDF?
- GPS has been “closed” (i.e. not taking new people) because it is full (about two weeks), this has resulted in some being held because of higher bail imposed if GPS isn’t available.
- Perception is that GPS is not being over-used (not a lot of people w/ GPS as just an extra precaution). GPS has not included misdemeanor defendants.
- Awaiting transfers has been a higher number than in the past.
- 180 beds are VOP only (DOC inmates). Misdemeanor is about ½ and that seems high to Mike W.
- Mallory is working hard on “data hub” – we may soon have better data knowledge to do more useful analysis.
- The core Jail and HOC populations - pretrial and sentenced – constitute only about 1800 of the 2700 total in the system (others are VOP, awaiting sentencing, awaiting transfer, etc.)
- One move in the past was to push pretrial hearings on misdemeanors to be within a week after intake, so there would be less lag before a case was assessed.
- Some judges have guilty plea dates pushed out six months. Question was raised about whether there is a racial disparity with that type of judicial behavior (i.e. disregard for disparate racial impact). FTA rates go up w/ longer lag times – FTA equal higher bail, more jail time, rising population numbers.
- Other issues in progress – early interventions are one facet that can assist w/ better outcomes for individuals and population trends.

2) Discussion of County Budget impact on Jail and HOC.

- Budget included cuts to the jail budget, but it is not clear how that will be implemented.
- Releases time has been worked on. There are still some late night releases.
- Vetoes would happen this week, overrides would be next week.

3) Discussion of Armor and Mental Health

- Capt. Meverden thinks they have been better off under Armor compared to the recent pre-Armor past.
- Dr. Theresa Boswell is the relatively recent addition to Armor – she is the administrator of the Mental Health program.
- Capt. M. thinks her impact has been significant. The mental health staff is more of a presence and more assertive in advocating for inmates with mental illness.

- Tom R reported that the NIC grant project includes working to implement the Houston “chronic consumers” model.
- Tom Reed and ADA Kent Lovern have had their staffs focus on mental health cases and the courts have been willing to try to give specific attention to mental health-connected defendants.
- Q as to whether BHD system has any or adequate linkage w/ law enforcement. Answer is that it is an imperfect system. The police code probable mental health issues involved in a police contact and enter it into their system, but this does not automatically involve connecting w/ mental health system

4) Discussion of reports/work at UWM on racially skewed incarceration rates.

- The report indicates extreme racial differences in incarceration.
- Suggestion made that we re-invite MPD to Jail/Huber meeting.
- Chief Flynn emphasizes crime in the inner city and N.W. corridor.
- MPD arrests result in jail, but some are not, in some people’s opinion, appropriate and necessary arrests, in light of the impact the arrest pattern has on imprisonment rate and on particular neighborhoods.
- Kit mentioned good work in Dist 3 and community prosecution model. New Captain resulted in more arrests and more problems.

5) New Business

- Mike W. recommended that executive committee consider a conference focusing on impact of race and poverty.
- This would help us, as a community, address the issues of race and the “subculture of violence.”
- Tom mentioned that NIC grant includes a presentation November 25th that will address the disconnect between law enforcement interventions and public health interventions. Coordination of poverty-related interventions.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15

Next meeting December 16, 2013 8:00 a.m.