



Jail & Huber Utilization Committee

Thursday, January 14, 2021, at 8:30 AM, via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Tom Reed, Jeanne Geraci, Stephanie Garbo, Susan Eckhart, Rose Stietz, Sara Carpenter, Chantell Jewel, William Duckert, Liz Schwartz, Aaron Dobson, Pete Koneazny, Susan Fischer, Nathan Jussila, Adam Oldenburg, Jamie Scheiber, Paulita Payton-Murphy, Erin King, Steven Johnson, Joe Riepenhoff, Brandon Hutchins, Sheldyn Himle, Robert Glowacki, Angelique Richards, Nelson Phillips, Doug Hinton, Lottie Mitchell

Staff Present: Mandy Potapenko, Erin Perkins, Alyssa Doman

1) Introductions and Call Meeting to Order – Chair Reed called the meeting to order at 8:32. The committee proceeded with roll call and introductions.

2) Jail Population Update and Trends –

- Inspector Aaron Dobson began by providing an update on the Milwaukee County Jail. As of this date there were 671 individuals in-custody at the CJF, which is a continued increase over last month's report. Inspector Dobson shared there has been a good working relationship between the CJF and HOC to balance populations and share resources. COVID cases for persons in-custody, and for staff, has been trending downward. Regular testing and quarantining will continue to limit exposure and spread. Inspector Dobson indicated there are currently over 200 individuals in County custody awaiting transfer to the State prison system, DAI. This backlog has been growing due to limited admissions and an increasing number of individuals being sentenced, as well as being revoked from DCC supervision. MCSO will continue to work with DOC/DAI to increase and expedite transfers. Lastly, Inspector Dobson indicated, at the request of justice system partners, they continue to report out on the number of individuals in-custody with pending homicide-related charges; there are currently 166 individuals who meet this criteria in-custody.
- Superintendent Chantell Jewell provided an update on the House of Correction. On this date, the HOC's population was 789, with 69 individuals out on electronic monitoring. There were zero active cases of COVID-19 and the Alternative Care Facility (ACF) remains closed. Regular, facility-wide testing is currently underway. Programming remains limited.
- Neither the Jail nor HOC are seeing any changing special population trends, ie. mental illness, substance use, etc. 35% of all persons in-custody at the CJF, and 15% at the HOC have a mental health diagnosis. There are currently three women in the CJF who are pregnant.
- Steven Johnson, Warden at MSDF, provided an update on their facility. MSDF's population remains lower than pre-COVID days, at 590. COVID-19 cases have been trending downward. Warden Johnson indicated there are 19 individuals in the special needs unit (SMU), no notable trends to report. Zero pregnant persons at MSDF. MSDF went away from providing in-custody ATR (alternatives to revocations) programming last spring and reallocated staff to the Division of Community Corrections so they can provide additional ATR programming in the community. Warden Johnson indicated DCC continues to work through logistics and will report out once they have the program finalized. MSDF continues to offer limited in-house programming. Lastly, Warden Johnson shared, in celebration, that MSDF completed their year-long construction project, which added 20 windows to allow for addition daylight into the facility and its recreation rooms. Warden Johnson commended his team for their work and creativity to get this project done without jeopardizing the integrity of the structure or architecture of the building.
- In response to a question regarding the impact of COVID-19 policies, Inspector Dobson shared with the 26% reduction in CJF population, there has been a 40% reduction in use of force incidents, 30% reduction in inmate on

staff assaults, 69% reduction in inmate fights, 49% reduction in inmate refusals to lock-in, and a 40% reduction in mental health emergencies. From an operations perspective, Inspector Dobson indicated there has certainly been a positive impact on having a lower population.

3) Update on Programming in the Jail and House of Correction –

- Captain Hutchins reported on the current programming offered at the House of Correction. While there has been a scaling back of in-house programming due to the pandemic, the HOC created a “programming” housing unit to allow for individuals to attend programming outside of the facility at agencies like the Joseph Project, Partners in Hope, and the Benedict Center for those eligible for electronic monitoring. 11 individuals are also enrolled in Franklin Schools. The purpose for creating the single housing unit is to be able to isolate those who are going in-and-out to limit the possible spread of COVID-19. Given the increased of pretrial status individuals at the HOC, Captain Hutchins stated they are looking to identify ways they can adjust programming to allow for those individuals to participate.
- The HOC has resumed on-site chaplain services on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sundays. To support incarcerated persons connections to family during the holidays, HOC staff coordinated an art and painting event with a local company so that individuals could create paintings for their loved ones. HOC staff delivered and/or mailed the paintings to family members and found the event to be very rewarding for all involved. Additionally, the HOC hosted a Christmas event for those with children. A local church donated gifts and video visiting was arranged so individuals could watch their children open their gifts. Captain Hutchins reported the staff working hard to utilize technology to continue to support positive activities for those at the HOC.
- MSDF maintains virtual GED testing through Windows to Work. They, too, are working to be creative and do what they can to offer safe programming opportunities.

4) Other Agency/Partner Updates – Community Corrections, WCS, Day Reporting Center, Benedict Center, and JusticePoint provided updates.

- Angelique Richards, Assistant Chief with DCC, shared DOC’s new violations and revocations response policies went into effect Monday, January 11, 2021. More information can be found [here](#).
- Paulita Payton-Murphy announced that Wisconsin Community Services (WCS) recently received a “Treatment Alternative Program” grant through WI DHS, which will provide extra support and services for those with substance use and/or mental health needs who may not be eligible for programs or services otherwise. More information will be shared as the program formally launches. Director Potapenko will distribute materials related to the program with the meeting minutes.
- Sarah Carpenter, WCS, noted they will now be receiving referrals from the WI Department of Corrections to the Day Reporting Center as an alternative to revocation. All documents and contracts have been executed; Nathan Jussila and his team are ready and excited to receive referrals.
- Jeanne Geraci, Executive Director of the Benedict Center, reported looking forward to meeting with the new Superintendent soon to further discussion on how they can support women at the HOC and upon return to the community. Despite the pandemic’s limitations, Jeanne reported they were able to connect and serve 215 individual women last year (2020). Jeanne also noted the MPOWER project in partnership with Milwaukee County Housing Division continues. This Bureau of Justice Assistance funded project creates a pre-arrest diversion program that includes housing for women in the street-based sex trade, with special focus on adults who use opioids and other drugs. In 2020, around 47 women received housing navigation services through the grant; the goal is creating a comprehensive continuum of services for women to access. The Neighborhood News Services recently featured an article on the project, which Jeanne shared in the chat ([here](#)). Jeanne also welcomed anyone from the committee to join the stakeholder meetings.
- Erin King, JusticePoint, reported that their pretrial census continues to be (around 300) over their contracted amount, supervising 1808 individuals on pretrial release. They are also supervising 99 individuals on GPS and 96 on OWI supervision. As previously discussed, CARES Act Funding allowed for additional funds to hire additional staff, but that expired on 12/31/20. JusticePoint plans to absorb the positions through attrition and will continue



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to work with the courts to develop solutions. Stephanie Garbo shared several ways the courts are working to review cases and address the census challenges.

- 5) **Other Business/Partner Updates/Announcements/Requests for Discussion** – Tom Reed shared thoughts and concerns related to case processing challenges afoot and in the future. Tom encouraged members of the group to submit agenda items to Director Potapenko for future meetings. Pete Koneazny requested a future report on how forecasting is being done to anticipate what the jail population will look like once the court system is up and running again post-pandemic. Tom Reed responded to Pete’s initial request by sharing some data analysis work that is already underway in analyzing whether there have been any public safety implications as a result of the COVID-19 early releases and deflections.
- 6) **Adjourn** – The meeting adjourned at 9:47 am. The committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 8:30 am via Zoom.