

Washtenaw Equity Partnership (WEP) Court Process Subcommittee

November 16, 2022 5:00 – 6:30pm

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Judge Kuhnke (co-chair)

Deb Labelle (co-chair)

Ted Heaton

Bonsitu Kitaba

Joe Summers

Alex Roth (Vera)

Tara Dhanraj Roden (Vera)

- Goal of meeting is to go on implementation document to confirm recommendation language and correct any information in action steps.
- Implementation document
 - Recommendation 1: suggestion to merge first part of co-chair's recommendation with the previous version.
 - Members decide to go with co-chair's suggestion.
 - Suggestion to edit "shall" to "should."
 - Vera staff reiteration that we will do our best to keep recommendation language as is, but they will need to be edited across all subcommittees for consistency and language may change.
 - No comments on action steps
 - Recommendation 2: Vera staff suggestion to remove DRC reference in co-chair's recommendation language.
 - Subcommittee member comment that there is increased interest in DRC to look at these types of cases.
 - Co-chair thinks it make sense to include DRC
 - Subcommittee would like recommendation language to follow revised language.
 - Include judges or chief judge in key actors.
 - Suggestion to add bar association to key actors for awareness – co-chair does not think bar association has anything to offer.
 - Co-chair doesn't think community members make sense for creating guidelines – thinks trial courts work on guidelines with peacemaking courts.
 - Recommendation 3: Vera staff suggestion to remove recommendation.
 - Co-chair suggestion to combine recommendation 3 and 4.
 - Can't combine 3 and 4 because one is about RJ and other is about specialty courts
 - Subcommittee members thinks this is an important topic/recommendation to keep.
 - Prefer co-chair's language for recommendation but Vera staff person stated assaultive offenses are not excluded so this line should be removed.
 - Subcommittee members say domestic violence is excluded.
 - Change language from include to expand assaultive offenses.
 - Question about who decides which cases are eligible for specialty courts

- Recommendation 3 and 4 could be combined but difference is specialty court and restorative justice
 - Recommendation 4: Vera staff member thinks this is important but could consider removing recommendation because it is outside of county's control.
 - Subcommittee says it is being discussed at legislative level so it should be included.
 - Preference for co-chair's language
 - Removed portion of steps and added in advocacy groups.
 - Recommendation 5:
 - Subcommittee members want recommendation to say increase referrals
 - Remove "outcomes" from the recommendation, and add in increase referrals
 - Co-chair does not think 14B (funded by fines and fees) will put money into this, but the County might
 - Add county commissioners in key actors
 - Discussion between saying people of color and Black people and African American – need to determine what other subcommittees/working group is using for consistency
 - Recommendation 6: no comments
 - Recommendation 7: keep co-chair's language and edit to equity in participation.
 - Recommendation 8: subcommittee member suggestion to remove because they don't understand what it means –
 - Subcommittee member suggested taking out word "natural"
 - Decision to remove recommendation
 - Recommendation 9: Co-chair could not find settlement agreement in 36th district court case
 - Vera staff member and other Co-chair shared more information about the agreement.
 - Suggestion to remove this recommendation and keeping 10 – agreement from the subcommittee.
 - Recommendation 10:
 - Co-chair likes this recommendation better than 9.
 - Itemizing concerns with current system is important even if it will be sunset.
 - Preference for Co-chair's language.
- Meeting at time – group quickly reviews a few items
 - Vera staff member shared some changes from Post-Sentencing on similar recommendations
 - Recommendation 12: Co-chair would like to keep their language and not adopt post-sentencing's subcommittee recommendation; open to pilot program though
 - Recommendation 13 – Post sentencing subcommittee decided to remove this recommendation – others from this subcommittee ok with dropping this recommendation.