

## Post Sentencing and Reentry Subcommittee Meeting 3/18/22

### Notes

#### Attendees:

Natalie Holbrook (Co-Chair)  
Lawanda Hollister (Co-chair)  
Annie Somerville  
Dennis Schrantz  
Katherine Layton  
Frances Walters  
Bob Gillett  
Donnell Wyche  
Mitzi Talon  
Tara Dhanraj  
Alma Wheeler Smith  
Natasha Abner  
Angie Carpio (Vera)  
Alex Roth (Vera)

#### Agenda

1. Welcome, grounding & introduction of New Members 10 min
2. Review WEP research priorities 15 min
  - What are the primary drivers of racial disparities within and upstream of the criminal legal system and how can they be intervened on?
  - What do county residents need to thrive and feel safe, and are government agencies and other service providers delivering those needs?
  - What gaps exist in access to community resources/services
  - What opportunities exist to increase the use of non-punitive alternatives and to move problems outside of the criminal legal system?
  - What are strategies to increase transparency around racial disparities in the criminal legal system?
  - What are strategies to increase accountability around racial disparities in the criminal legal system?
3. Set subcommittee's research priorities and direction discussion\* 45-60 min
4. Any other business and questions 5 min
5. Adjourn

#### Review Priorities of WEP

- 6 Research Priorities that WEP working group voted to approve, for overall project.
- Subcommittees should refer to these when thinking of their own priorities to see how they fit.

1. What are the primary drivers of racial disparities within and upstream of the criminal legal system and how can they be intervened on?
2. What do county residents need to thrive and feel safe, and are government agencies and other service providers delivering those needs?
3. What gaps exist in access to community resources/services?
4. What opportunities exist to increase the use of non-punitive alternatives and to move problems outside of the criminal legal system?
5. What are strategies to increase transparency around racial disparities in the criminal legal system?
6. What are strategies to increase accountability around racial disparities in the criminal legal system?

### **General Notes**

- Taking into account conditions of confinement into post-conviction and re-entry. Can't discuss re-entry without understanding conditions of confinement.
- Member - CCAB (Community Corrections Advisory Board) - Under Public Act 511 Sheriff has to participate in a public board, by law an open meeting.
  - Board's purpose is to increase diversions, decrease use of local jails.
  - Unsure of level of activity but it is required to meet in order to get annual funding.
  - Members of this subcommittee could go to those meetings and get points across that way.
  - Need to discuss with WEP chair if this is something we could/should do.
- JPIS (Jail Population Information System) is required to be participated by every sheriff in the state, which is an arsenal of data.

### **Brainstorming Prompts**

1. In one year, what do you hope this subcommittee will have produced or accomplished?
  - a. An understanding of:
    - a. What exists in terms of reentry, programming in both prisons and jails, on probation (mental health treatment and programs).
    - b. Who are the people that we are feeding through these systems? Zip codes/race/age/gender
    - c. Who is cycling back in the system?
    - d. Decrease in representation and population of behavioral health concerns, underlying trauma, substance use disorders.
      - i. How are these problems impacting the citizens of Washtenaw?
    - e. How do you support the community before they enter the jail system?
    - f. What is being funded within the jail and what is being funded in the community?

- g. Who handles reentry? Are there bridge programs that receive folks and work with them to do the next steps. Is there a coordinated place?
    - i. Understanding the difference between jail re-entry and prison re-entry.
    - ii. A strong reentry, housing-first model did exist but was almost entirely defunded by MDOC.
    - iii. Could this be a recommendation?
  - h. What does strong re-entry look like?
  - i. What is the make-up of who has re-entry supports and are there racial disparities there?
  - j. The makeup of those with behavioral health concerns and what resources exist.
  - k. Information on the long-term population; 20-30+ years
  - l. What are innovations out there on reentry? What are other places doing that is working well?
  - m. What are people being violated for? What are the technical violations and new offenses?
  - n. What is the level of racial disparity at each step of the criminal justice system?
- b. Landscape Analysis
    - a. Access to housing
      - i. Friendly/non-friendly landlords
    - b. Mental Health Resources
    - c. Food resources/SNAP
    - d. Other jurisdictions that have strong reentry programs
    - e. Programs that support relationship building/healing
- c. Recommend a dashboard for the public to see what is happening within the jail system using publicly available data.
    - a. A dashboard is in the works that shows prosecutorial data
2. What specific problems within the criminal legal system does this subcommittee need to address to achieve its goals?
    - a. Jail being used as an intervention. The way that the jail system works overall and especially in Washtenaw it is often used as a mental health intervention. Other resources don't exist, and judges will send people to jail because they do not know what else to do.
    - b. Access to housing
      - i. There is nowhere for someone to go if they have no housing
      - ii. Risk of losing section 8 voucher if you are incarcerated
      - iii. Can't tether to shelter or use as address
      - iv. Who are the experts?
- a. How would solving these problems help identify and/or eliminate racial disparities in Washtenaw's criminal legal system?
  - b. Which problems seem the most urgent to you?
3. What do you already know about these problems?
    - a. 70% of warrants are held by black men in the county but are only 4-7% of the county.
  4. What additional knowledge does the subcommittee need in order to form recommendations to address these problems?
    - a. More information on housing, would like experts to come in to speak to subcommittee

- b. Experts to potentially bring in:
    - a. LSSCM (Callie Dendrinis?)
    - b. MI Poverty Law Program
    - c. Sheri @ Peace House
    - d. Warming Center
    - e. Aubrey Patino, Avalon
    - f. CMH and alternatives to CMH
    - g. Wayne State Center for Behavioral Health and Justice
    - h. Other jurisdictions
5. What research activities would help the subcommittee gain that additional knowledge (think about examples of analyzing administrative data, collecting data through surveys/interviews/focus groups, learning from other jurisdictions, etc.)?
  - a. Focus Group with folks returning to community to inquire what the pressing needs are.
6. What research activities do you think are feasible for the subcommittee to complete in one year?
  - a. Establish a racial disparity index to understand how racially disparate the system is

**Questions:**

Why isn't sheriff's office represented in this space? He was involved with the proposal of project and early planning, then decided he didn't want to be involved any more. Raised concerns on capacity and methodologies although the latter can't be determined until we know what we intend to research so there is some question whether the methodology concern is real.

Some initial participants have dropped out since the planning phase due to schedules, covid and other reasons. Others have joined since the planning phase.

What is the timeline?

April 7th meeting

April 19th mtg with subcommittee co-chairs to go over what work they have been doing.

Subcommittees will then spend summer doing the work - research, building recs.

Mid-September to have recommendations together.

Vera will then put together final report.

Mechanics of work - who does research?

Vera's role is to help find data sources, set things up, but subcommittee will synthesize the data into recommendations

**Action Items**

- Vera to follow up on CCAB; details, & is this a space subcommittee members should enter?
- Co-chairs to work with Vera to put together survey to ensure input from all subcommittee members.