

Washtenaw Equity Partnership Working Group Meeting December 12, 2022, 6-8pm

Attendees:

Alma Wheeler Smith
Ariana Gonzalez
MaryAnn Sarosi
Joy Gaines
Eli Savit
Belinda Dulin
Peri Stone Palmquist
Mark Creekmore
Deb Labelle
Lawanda Hollister
Alex Roth
Tara Dhanraj Roden
Angie Carpio
Ashley Demyan
Jen Peirce

- Chair asked working group about creating implementation team after report is released. Implementation team would have about ten people appointed by Chair.
 - No quorum so the group was unable to vote.
 - Vera staff member suggested to add this to the recommendation voting system.
- Recommendations facilitated by Vera staff member
 - Context setting for meeting today – Vera staff member discussed considerations for working group members to think about while reviewing recommendations.
 - The working group will reference previously distributed materials and a Jamboard.
 - Strategy 1 – Invest in Community, Prevention & Infrastructure
 - Concern expressed about recommendation 3B
 - 3A and 3B are recommendations of the CZB Report – do we need to pull something out specifically? Can we remove 3A and 3B so it's just recommendation 3 without A and B. Could add in more generalized subpoints. Agreement to take out CZB recommendations and add in more generalized subpoints.
 - Recommendation 7 calls for allocating money for people facing evictions. Is it evidence based, how is it tied to criminal legal system? Should we delete it? Reframe it to support community for safer communities.
 - The Findings document does include barriers people named and housing stability and cost/access to housing – isn't specifically about evictions.
 - If there is a research link to recommendation than the link needs to be strengthened.
 - Recommendation 11 – how do we advocate for harm reduction in schools?

- Washtenaw is doing better with harm reduction than the state but there is still room to do better.
 - Preference for recommendation that assumes problem rather than “improving”
 - Recommendation 12-14 – improving coordination and treatment
 - Question about merging /blending these recommendations
 - Chair agrees with blending/merging
 - One stop info hub, service providers being clear among themselves, outreach – suggested umbrella phrasing for the three sections
 - Members agreed to this
 - Recommendation 17b – speaking to partnering with EMU
 - Question – remembering from county commission meeting that some restriction on CMH paying more- need to look into. Supportive of recommendation but question about federal restrictions.
 - Unarmed response recommendation
 - Discussion about funding and effort to get people to call another number. How will the costs be calculated down the road.
 - The group discussed whether the Working Group or the Chair’s Bridge Team will address prioritizing the recommendations. One way to prioritize is by cost, if something costs a lot of money, should they be looking at lower hanging fruit first.
 - Co- chair comment that if there are recommendations that will take large expenditures, then they can try pilot programs. Also, it’s good to have some aspirational recommendations.
 - Clarification around 911 and that it’s not a new number to call but rather it is an additional unit for 911 to dispatch too
 - Rephrase 18 to be more collaborative
 - Recommendation 24
 - Dept of Transportation – Washtenaw does not have such a department
 - Not sure if legal under state law
 - Other things to include here? Like other ideas, vouchers for light repairs, reducing pretextual stops- concern is about having a civilian led unit – in order to effectuate stop, have to be peace officer in MI – need to look into this.
- Strategy 2
 - Titles around reducing / improving – please suggest if there are better titles.
 - Recommendation 25
 - Actors involved – statutory – it would take legislative change.
 - Recommendation 36 – both court process and post sentencing – they decided to use different language.
 - Is this in lieu of other mitigating factors for PSI – no – idea is there is not enough focus on mitigation and understanding peoples experiences and a separate report would do a better job of that. One member noted some concern about unintended consequences with having a separate report done by another entity. Does it set up an adversarial system? Would this incentivize probation to

bolster non mitigating factors in report knowing there is a separate advocacy report – and who knows what judges will do? Flagging concern.

- Question if it has to be separate report or can be an addition? Question for implementation team
- Could work differently depending on different judges
- What types of mitigating factors aren't reflective in PSI – more about going into more detail than most probation officers have time to do in completing presentence reports.
- Other PSI recommendation 38 and then several in data section
- Vera did not have access to sample of PSIs
- Can someone team up with probation to augment this process
- Parallel report and other recommendation – what do we want to say about PSIs or is the decision not to include the recommendations
 - One person would be supportive at looking more at PSIs – good place to start ; if there is mitigating info being missed, it's good to know and determine way to incorporate but not sure how to do this without robust study of PSI
- If people agree that recommendation for parallel report is premature, then we should reject that and then try and include content relevant in another recommendation about analysis.
- Blend specialty court recommendations 33 and 34
- Strategy 3
 - Recommendation 40 – case management support from who? Some orgs are banned and can't access clients
 - Recommendation is about expanding and to use CBOs and not staff internal to jail
 - Question about subcommittee looking at reducing solitary confinement in the jail? No
 - Title for recommendation 46 – don't need to frame parole completion as a positive thing – so can take comment from jamboard to improve.
 - Recommendation 43 – allow self-referral for OS reentry – is this statutory? Are referrals statutorily referred by parole agents? do not believe so
- Strategy 4
 - Recommendation 48 – Member suggested considering the elimination for all status offenses (covers all status offenses plus marijuana)
 - Recommendation 49
 - Consider more detailed language - it's bland in the rationale and could point to existing recommendations in the diversion act – that gives implementation team meat to grab onto
 - Strengthen this by looking at recommendations from Michigan JJ Reform taskforce report
 - Should shy away from mentioning JJ recommendations because no one will look at them- should drop language in that we want to see happen
 - Others think it was a good addition

- Recommendation 52 – JJ taskforce recommendations 4-11 that can be piloted in Washtenaw – if we wanted to be more specific could consider
- Recommendation for 49 B – create oversight board with diversion. We don't have data on what youth get diversion – made suggestion to use ongoing oversight board to do that/look at information on diversion approaches in courts – getting specific at what the oversight board can look at. Should this recommendation be moved to the data section in Strategy 5?
- Strategy 5
 - Recommendation 60
 - Do the findings support a whole new software? Agreement to delete this recommendation and add to data warehouse?
 - Can be a part of checklist/roadmap for planning process to create data warehouse
 - Other commentary provided prior to meeting added into chat

Next Steps

- Draft findings that were sent to the Working Group will be shortened
 - Right now looking for big edits, not currently asking for copy edits
 - Let Vera know if organizations are not included that should be, etc.
- Voting
 - Vera will be sending the group a link to vote and there will be one week to vote for all recommendations. Email will have instructions for voting.
- Next steps
 - January meeting – members to respond to Doodle.
 - Final report will be sent first week of January
- For people not here, Vera will send out doodle poll and links to jamboard and other materials