

Community Corrections Response & Services Town Hall Notes

May 18, 2020 4 – 5 p.m.

Participants: 55

Attendee names:

Pedro Bustamante, YMCA School Success
Mariah Wilberg, MN Dept of Human Services
Jennifer Miller, MN Care Partner
Kim Stubblefield, Ramsey County Corrections
Susan O'Neil, UMN
Ryan Possert, People Inc
Nick Muhammad,
Nway Lin
Gail Moerke, Ramsey County Corrections
Grace Mativo, HWAD, Ramsey County
Laura LaBlanc,
Kaziah Josiah

Questions:

1. How well SPPS and corrections were functioning in partnership to serve the educational continuity for youth in JDC. With the COVID Public Health crisis, I understand we had more problems since teachers can't work face to face with students. Have the technology barriers been addressed? Do students have structured opportunity for credit audits, access the right courses for their graduation plan, and face to face access to teachers?
 - One of the things we have tried to maintain is particularly our youth at the JDC. We work with the SPPS schools year-round for the JDC. It provides youth to catch up on their credits. Fortunately, we have made some progress with the schools. The teachers were on strike before this happened. Then this hit and we scrambled to get information to the kids and protect them. No visiting allowed. Out in the community, people were getting iPads from the school. This was not happening to us. The IT and WIFI for Schoology- were they able to deliver it to the kids so they don't go on social media sites. We worked with Dan Murphy, principal here and acquired large monitors in each pod. The teachers sent link of their lessons and the kids go through it, the teachers send a video with current events. The video gets played on the pod on 72 inch and they get the worksheet. The tutors go through the sheets with the kids. Google Meet was another platform we don't have and SPPS was using. That's how the teachers meet with our staff. It got down to WIFI, we got 3 stations with google meets. We're acquiring WIFI so we can establish google meets with teachers. Twice a week with the worksheets, we do conference calls with the teachers every day, the principal will collect the worksheets twice a week to teachers and get new worksheets.
2. Can you say more about public safety? It continues to protect whites from people of color when it should be the other way around. That's why we have disparities in people of color in the correction system.
 - The disparities are very apparent. We know that and we try to work on them. In corrections system, it's some of the reform work we shared earlier. Some other areas we're looking at were things like revocation reductions, shorter probation sentences, lowering the amount of conditions someone has to complete, moving upstream from there, we are trying to keep

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- people out of the system. We have a lot of people on administrative supervision for various things that we do not want to spend a lot of time with them to disrupt their lives, create more barriers for them. For those in the system, the reform work that we're doing must include all of the others in the system. It's Corrections, our law enforcement folks, the County Attorney's Office, including community members.
- I think it's something we are trying to look at our system through a racial equity lens in all of our systems from Ryan O'Connor to Sara Hollie, whether it be policies or procedures, and also informally.
 - We've been pushing towards EJJ (extended juvenile jurisdiction) reform via JDAI and community work. That's all been done with the help of community. It's basically where a juvenile gets adult time placed on their head and it was initially seen as an alternative to try a young person as an adult.
3. Since the distance practices is working, will they continue even after COVID is past?
- Yes, we will continue to do this type of interaction throughout the summer and beyond that. We are trying to keep everyone safe. This crisis is not long from over. We are working with public health to be safe.
 - We still have requirements we still have to meet. We need to adapt to the population we're serving. Our population may not have transportation or childcare. How can we still meet requirements but adapt to the changes?
4. Can you talk more about how you've adjusted drug & alcohol testing during COVID? I appreciated hearing about this in the CAB and think it is worth talking about it here. I think dialing back/ being more focused on testing can increase success, reduce revocations and save money without harming public safety.
- We are looking at the drug testing procedures, and how to change things going forward. We have reduced the amount of drug testing, don't want people to come in close risk. There are still people addicted and we have done some testing. Some people have called us to get a test so it gets on their record, a chance to prove they are working hard to stay off those chemicals. This is an important topic, and we don't want to overburden people to have to come and get these tests.
 - The reason for drug testing is to help the person work through their drug issue and help them. The main concern now is public safety, so anyone who needed a test was done so, but now we have opened it a little more for people who want to get tested, to help them. Although this pandemic has sent us into crisis mode, it has made us analyze what to do across the board. A lot of the changes have been reported on our website too.
5. Most of the people who are in the juvenile system typically come from impoverished neighborhoods, is there any way that you can partner up with organizations in the trade fields, to make sure that those that are in juvenile justice will get education so when they go back to their community they are not in poverty?
- This is an opportunity for us to look at things differently. We are looking at this broadly. The partnerships with community providers, with mentors is so important and we need to continue to strengthen it.
 - Gail Moerke- I provide transition services in the facility for youth 24 and under who will be homeless when they leave. We have a housing program we started with the department of Human Services and they have a homelessness worker in the building. The worker helps

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- them to get into housing, to get stuff ready for when they leave. Working with partners like Goodwill Easter sale, Dakota Institute, and Career Force. We are trying to get these youth connected with organizations in the community that can train them so they have a way to earn a career and a skill.
6. Have the courts adapted to the work that you all are doing? What are some of the changes you have seen the courts done to assist you with the work that you do?
 - They have been a great partner to us, provided tremendous support during this process. Whether it was through some administrative court orders that were issued that allowed us to move more people out of the correctional facilities safely back into the community, They've helped us rearrange schedules in working together with them and allowed flexibility.
 - Gwen Upton- there was a review of all partners- attorneys worked together and we developed parameters for early release and for early release of home confinement.
 - Judge Joy Bartscher- We've been releasing people early, worked with people from workhouse, jail to release people early from custody or not take them into custody for offenses that would just be arrests. We're talking about resuming operations potentially for folks that are currently out of custody and one of our concerns is how do we get ahold of folks who are homeless or not in a stable home. The direction we got from our Supreme Court and from the state court administrators office is that we are supposed to do as many hearings as we can remotely. One of the things Gwen did was been in touch with ACLU and NAACP to contact people to set up ways so people don't have to come to courthouse and do it virtually by going to community centers. We want to have access for people to be able to call virtually with internet from home, and we're developing a process for that.
 7. Will the courts be comparing the outcomes of people released early due to the COVID pandemic compared to outcomes of people pre-COVID? If there is no negative impact to public safety with these lighter sentences or other diversions, will you consider making these changes a part of the new normal?
 - We will look at that and see how people respond to that. It's not something that will happen overnight. We have changed the way we've looked at things. We are talking about resuming jury trial as early as June 8th. We will be piloting one trial to be fair to all community members and to the people working at courthouse.
 - There was a number of committees looking at how we released people at Ramsey County prior to the COVID pandemic hitting and we already have some baseline for where we're going.
 8. With the continuity of meds, people are saying they cannot bring their loved ones their medications, particularly in JDC or the RCCF. Can you speak to this?
 - There shouldn't be any difficulty getting their medications if we can verify with the pharmacy that the person goes to that the prescription is valid. We can get the medication from our backup pharmacy if they have a verifiable prescription. The problem we see is if they have very old medications that they might want to get back on while they're in the facility and then this takes some time and would require a provider visit before that prescription would get started.
 9. How has COVID effected bail reform?

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- We are looking at bail reform. The Sheriff's office, and County Attorney's office have received a grant to help the Arnold Ventures group. There's going to be some significant that's going to continue throughout the summer looking at bail reform pretrial. There will be more to come. We will not stop our reform work with COVID to address the racial inequity issues.
- Make sure you stay cognizance of the bail reform tool because it may create more barrier and still create bias instead of pushing to get rid of the bail system.

From Sara Hollie to Everyone:

Good afternoon! Please share your name, community you are representing and/or agency and email address if comfortable

From Pedro Bustamante to Everyone:

Pedro Bustamante YMCA School Success pedro.bustamante@ymcamn.org

From Mariah Wilberg to Everyone:

Mariah Wilberg, formerly incarcerated person and current corrections advisory board member. Wilberg.mariah@gmail.com Day job: Statewide HIV Strategy and Services Coordinator, MN Dept. of Human Services

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From [Sara Hollie](#) to [Everyone](#):
Welcome Pedro and Mariah

From [Mariah Wilberg](#) to [Everyone](#):
Thanks Sara

From [Pedro Bustamante](#) to [Everyone](#):
Thanks for doing this meeting Sara

From [Sara Hollie](#) to [Everyone](#):
You are welcome!

From [JenMiller](#) to [Everyone](#):
Jennifer Miller Minnesota CarePartner.

From [Kimberly Stubblefield](#) to [Everyone](#):
Kim Stubblefield

From [JenMiller](#) to [Everyone](#):
jenmiller@mncarepartner.com

From [Kimberly Stubblefield](#) to [Everyone](#):
Kim Stubblefield Corrections

From [Susan O'Neil](#) to [Everyone](#):
Susan O'Neil Institute on Community Integration UMN oneil001@umn.edu,

From [Ryan P](#) to [Everyone](#):
Ryan Possert
People Inc.

From [Sara Hollie](#) to [Everyone](#):
Please put any question you have here
*questions

04:07 PM

From [Sara Hollie](#) to [Everyone](#):
If you have questions for John and his team please put them here in the chat box

04:14 PM

From [Laura LaBlanc](#) laura@oyatehotanin.org to [Everyone](#):

04:15 PM

There were questions about how well SPPS and Corrections were functioning in partnership to serve the educational continuity for youth in JDC. With the COVID public health crisis I understand we had more problems since teachers can't work face to face with students. Have the technology barriers been addressed? Do students have structured opportunity for credit audits, access to the right courses for their graduation plan, and face to face access to teachers?

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From Susan O'Nell to Everyone:

Since the distance practices are working (per Monica's discussion), will they continue after COVID is past?

From Tamara Mattison to Everyone:

Can you say more about public safety? Public safety had been and continues to protect whites from people of color however it should be the other way around! That's why we have disparities in people of color in the correction system.

From Sara Hollie to Everyone:

turning off video for everyone to help with the reception on the call
Transcripts have been changed to read SPPS Downtown
Feel free to put more questions here community.

From Tamara Mattison to Everyone:

yes we want to see public safety to include our safety

From Sara Hollie to Everyone:

In the process of reforming EJJ via JDAI and community

From Mariah Wilberg to Everyone:

John, can you talk more about how you've adjusted drug/alcohol testing during COVID? I appreciated hearing about that in the CAB and I think it is worth discussing here. I think dialing back/being more focused on testing can increase success, reduce revocations, and save money without harming public safety.

RE: virtual visits. Any change that increases access and increases client contact is a good change. I hope it's permanent.

From Sara Hollie to Everyone:

Please continue to put your questions and comments here.
Note: Share CC Service Redesign Form Link

From Tamara Mattison to Everyone:

Kudos to Gail!!!!!!

From Sara Hollie to Everyone:

Q: How have the courts responded to community during this time?

From Mariah Wilberg to Everyone:

Will the courts be comparing the outcomes of people released early due to COVID compared to outcomes of people pre-COVID? If there is no negative impact to public safety with these lighter sentences or other diversions, will you consider making these changes a part of the new normal?

04:49 P

From [Laura LaBlanc laura@oyatehotanin.org](mailto:laura@oyatehotanin.org) to Everyone:
how has COVID affected our bail reform?
thank you

From [Nick Muhammad \(BCN\) to Everyone:](mailto:info@blackcivicnetwork.org)
Nick Muhammad
info@blackcivicnetwork.org

From [nway.linn to Everyone:](mailto:Nway.Linn@wilder.org)
Nway Linn, Nway.Linn@wilder.org

From [Gail Moerke to Everyone:](mailto:gail.moerke@ramsey.co.mn.us)
Gail Moerke, Ramsey County Correctional Facility. gail.moerke@ramsey.co.mn.us

From [From \[Laura LaBlanc laura@oyatehotanin.org\]\(mailto:laura@oyatehotanin.org\) to Everyone:
Laura LaBlanc - inequality.mn@gmail.com](mailto:Grace.Mativo to Everyone:
Grace Mativo - HWAD- Ramsey County</p></div><div data-bbox=)

From [Kaziah Josiah to Everyone:](mailto:Kaziah.Josiah@ci.stpaul.mn.us)
Kaziah Josiah, Kaziah.Josiah@ci.stpaul.mn.us

From Mariah Wilberg to Everyone:

COVID is giving us a unique opportunity to embrace a lot of changes and reforms that can help address mass incarceration in the long term. I don't we should hurry to go back to "normal" after the pandemic. We should embrace all of the reforms and build upon them for our new normal.

05:00 PM

From karen.sattis to Everyone:

Thanks all for participating!

05:01 PM

From [From \[Ramsey County Community Corrections\]\(mailto:Rich... to Everyone:
Thank you...</p></div><div data-bbox=\)](mailto:Gail Moerke to Everyone:
There is a resource list that we have been working on with the DOC. Email me, I will send it to you.</p></div><div data-bbox=)