



Citizen's Jail Committee

Thursday, June 19, 2008 – 5:30 p.m.
800 Livingston Blvd, Multi-Purpose Room
Gaylord, MI 49735

MINUTES

Don Koeppen called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Members Present: Don Koeppen, Mary Sanders, Daphne Cousineau, Diane Franckowiak, Alma Harrison, Bob Mammel, Vern Kassuba, Brian Morgan, Don Tober, Jack Thompson, Scott Johnston

Members Excused: Chuck Berlin, Mike McCarthy, Norm Brecheisen, Bill Giles, Pastor Jim Mathis, Todd Sharrard, Ron Skoglund, Tom Wagar, Nancy Morgridge, Gary Waldo, Elizabeth Haus, Diane Fisher

Others Present: Ken Glasser, Mike Turnbull

Note: There was not a quorum for this meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Sanders, seconded by Thompson, to “approve the minutes of February 21, 2008 as presented.” Motion Carried.

III. Old Business

A. Community Corrections Master Plan

Mr. Burt updated the Committee on the status of the Community Corrections Master Plan. An early draft version of several chapters had been previously distributed to Committee members. Burt asked for any recommendations for changes or corrections. Thompson pointed out that the majority of the funding for the GED Jail program comes from the University Center. Mammel indicated that he had heard a complaint about the Work Camp being used instead of tether at a greater cost, and that the Work Camp was taking jobs away from residents of Otsego County. Mammel indicated that he believed this should be addressed in the Master Plan. Burt also provided an updated version of Chapter 9 concerning jail operations. The Committee recommended trying to contact either Meijers or Wal-Mart to obtain more up-to-date population information, but otherwise use the existing information.

IV. New Business

A. Probation Department Presentation

Mike Turnbull updated the Committee members on philosophical changes happening at the State level concerning parole. Mr. Turnbull is a Field Supervisor for the Michigan Department of Corrections, Probation and Parole Department. He oversees five counties including Otsego, Crawford, Cheboygan, Emmett, and Presque Isle.

Mr. Mammel asked whether the State's tether program is underutilized. Mr. Turnbull replied it used to be utilized more until the changes with the truth in sentencing laws required more time spent in jail. Part of the issue with the tether program is that it requires intensive supervision by Probation Officers. He further added that it serves no rehabilitative purpose. His philosophy is that if a person is trustworthy enough to be among the citizens, then there is not likely a need to put them on tether. The State is now using SCRAM units to test for alcohol in the sweat, and using GPS units with sex offenders. Mr. Turnbull indicated that the system is available to the County for a cost of approximately \$7 to \$10 per day. Counties usually also add a fee of around \$15 per day on to tether users to cover their costs.

Mr. Turnbull's office prepares evaluations of offenders for the Circuit Court. These reports contain things like background, employment history, criminal history, and sentencing guidelines. They tell the judge what is appropriate sentencing and whether they can be placed in the community.

Mr. Turnbull explained that the current philosophy is shifting from a hard on crime philosophy to a more positive approach. The shift is partially caused by the \$2 billion dollar budget for State Corrections. The State is looking more at evidence based practices to find out statistically what works to reduce recidivism. They are trying to be more supportive of offenders in obtaining treatment, education and changing their lifestyle. They are also using a program called the Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative to revise risk assessments on people coming out of prison, and to foster a collaborative effort among multiple agencies to provide services for the parolee.

Almost 80% of the people supervised by Mr. Turnbull's office are County probationers. The State is next going to look at extending programs to cover probationers.

Mr. Mammel indicated that believes the number one way that the system breaks down is the lack of work. Mr. Turnbull replied that they have three criteria for parolees including having a safe place to stay, finding employment, and effective medical care if needed. He indicated that the Office of Michigan Works provides subsidies to employers for hiring these people.

Mr. Turnbull indicated that every recommendation in the Counties that he supervises is approved by him. If he recommends that a person get prison, it means that they are a danger to society and need to be in prison. The MDOC guidelines call for the least restrictive approach.

Mr. Turnbull informed the group that there is no one person that he has every been unable to get drug treatment for, but they have to want to get treatment in order for it to work.

B. Next Meeting

The Citizen Committee will likely meet next on August 21st.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.