



## **Citizen's Jail Committee**

Thursday, November 13, 2007 – 5:30 p.m.  
800 Livingston Blvd, Multi-Purpose Room  
Gaylord, MI 49735

### **MINUTES**

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

Members Present: Don Koeppen, Mary Sanders, Daphne Cousineau, Diane Franckowiak, Bob Mammel, Mike McCarthy, Brian Morgan, Nancy Morgridge, Jack Thompson, Don Tober, Gary Waldo

Members Excused: Alma Harrison, Norm Brecheisen, Chuck Berlin, Diane Fisher, Bill Giles, Elizabeth Haus, Vern Kassuba, Pastor Jim Mathis, Todd Sharrard, Ron Skoglund, Tom Wagar

Others Present: Marie Frick, Ken Glasser, Cathy Landry, Rudi Edel, Judge Pat Morse, Sheriff Jim McBride, Erma Backenstose

## **II. Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Morgan, seconded by Cousineau, to “approve the minutes of September 25, 2007 as presented.” Motion Carried.

## **III. Old Business**

### **A. NIC Study Update**

Burt updated the Committee on the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Study. The NIC sent a list of consultants for the Sheriff to choose from to conduct the study. The list was comprised of three teams of two. After consulting with the Court and Administration, the Sheriff chose the team of Kevin Warwick and Gary Waller due to their experience with substance abuse programs, offender work programs, and prisoner reentry/transition programs. The Committee asked Sheriff McBride whether the software glitch, which did not allow adequate data reporting, has been fixed. Sheriff McBride responded that it has been fixed and that the NIC consultants will have good data to work with. Burt indicated that he would notify the Committee members once he finds out the timeline.

### **B. Transition House Update**

The Committee discussed the closure of the Goodwill Transition House. The County has agreed to pay \$14,000 to keep the Transition House open through the end of the year. The County is looking at doing a day work release program using the Transition House facility. The offenders would be required to participate as part of their probation. Community Corrections would continue to recommend referrals as they have for the Transition House. The offenders would report in the morning, take drug tests and either go to their jobs or work on a County work crew. Correction officers would occasionally check that people did show up for work at their jobs. After working, the offenders would report back to have dinner and to participate in counseling and educational programs. The Jail Technical Committee met today and recommended that the County keep the Transition House open through the end of January, while the County sets up the new program.

Waldo asked whether offenders who break the rules would be sent immediately to jail. Judge Morse responded that since these are not inmates they would be entitled to a hearing first, but that would be scheduled right away.

Edel asked Nancy Morgridge whether Catholic Human Services if they can come to the work release center facility to provide services. Morgridge responded that it will depend on how many nights per week it would involve. She will work with Marie Frick to find out more details about the level of need and then will respond with an answer to the Committee.

Edel asked Jack Thompson whether GED programs could be given at the facility, if we purchased a few computers. Thompson responded that we would need a fiber line and to purchase an additional software license for around \$2,500. There is a possibility that the fiber going to the old Prosecutors Office, which passes right by this facility, could be used. Edel will work with Empiric Solutions to find out whether that is possible.

Mammel asked whether participants would get time served credit than those who are sentenced to jail. Burt responded that the Jail Technical Committee discussed that issue as a possibility. It is up to the discretion of the judges.

Burt informed the Committee that Marie Frick, Rudi Edel and Brian Webber will be visiting Houghton to find out more details about the work camp there is operated.

#### **IV. New Business**

##### **A. Court Update – Judge Morse & Rudi Edel**

Judge Morse reported that they are working on setting up a Drug Court and plan on having it start in January. Offenders would get intensive interaction for a period of 18 months. The program will be focused on users of hard drugs. The participants will receive support and encouragement to help them stay clean. The Court will also solicit donations for use as prizes for successful participation in the program. Morse reported that the Prosecutor has control over who enters this program.

Edel reported that having the magistrate in the jail in the mornings is going very well. The jail population is in the 40s right now, but would be in the 50s without this program.

##### **B. Community Corrections FY 2007 Report**

Marie Frick went over the Community Corrections FY 2007 Report. Frick reported that over 3,557 jail bed days have been saved in FY 2007 by using jail alternatives, with an associated cost savings of \$172,258 for the Jail.

Mammel reported that when he reviewed sentences given by Circuit and District Court it appeared there was a pattern. He noted that if a person could, for example, either serve 30 days in jail or pay \$300. It appeared that you could buy your way out of jail for \$10 per day. Mammel asked whether this was a way of buying your way out of jail. Edel responded that it is really the reverse. It is a collections tool. If you refuse to pay your fines/costs then you have to do jail time. It is often the only way to get offenders to pay their debts to the victims and the Court. Morgan noted that the issue is much more complicated than articles he has read in the newspaper make it out to be.

The Committee discussed the issue of the mentally ill in the jail. Sheriff McBride reported that there are many inmates who should not be in jail, but the State guidelines do not allow them to be placed in alternative care facilities. The problem is often that the inmate does not have enough money for needed medications, so they self-medicate with drugs or alcohol. Frick informed the Committee that Community Corrections has a contract for a counselor to come to the jail to counsel people. Burt stated that this issue should be brought up when the NIC consultants come to do the study.

### **C. Next Meeting**

The Committee decided to cancel the December meeting. The next meeting will be Thursday, January 17, 2008 at 5:30 pm in the Multi-Purpose Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM.