



## **Criminal Justice Advisory Committee**

Tuesday September 22, 2015

**Committee Members Present:** Gilda Womble, Gudrun Parmer, Lawrence M. Campbell, Marcia Owen, Clarence Birkhead, Brenda Howerton, Jackie Brown, R. A. Aleem, Spencer Noble, Candace Rashada, Ann Oshel

**Committee Members Absent:** Kristen Rosselli, Clarence Maynor, Jeffery Clark, Anthony R. Marsh, Sr., Damion Moore, Roger Echols, Gayle Harris, Celeste Kelly, Michael A. Becketts, Shannon McCabe, Judge Morey, Lao Rubert, Sherry Honeycutt

**Guests:** Sybil Bond Dorsey, Vernon O'Mar Taylor, Umar Muhammad

**Staff:** Celia Jefferson, Peter Baker, Roshanna Parker

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Chairman Lawrence M. Campbell opened the meeting with a welcome and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

### **Review and Approve July Minutes**

Mr. Campbell asked the committee to review the minutes. Marcia Owen moved that the minutes be accepted as presented. Minutes were Seconded and Approved.

### **Presentation – NC Works Career Center**

Sybil Dorsey, Engagement Specialist and Board Treasurer of Network for Justice Involved Individuals (NJII) was the presenter for the meeting. She reported that the NJII involved individuals, formerly known as the (Workforce Development Network for Former Offenders) is designed to assist justice involved job seekers by highlighting information and practical skills needed to apply for, obtain and retain a job. NJII provides a comprehensive approach to assessing and addressing the needs of each participant. This program is through NC Works Career Center located at Northgate Mall (1058 W. Club Blvd). The program meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday from 5pm to 7pm. The program is open to anyone involved with the justice system.

Ms. Dorsey invites motivational speakers to share information with individuals to help them overcome barriers. Their goal is to keep people engaged in the process after hearing the word “No” so many times. They work with people until they are ready to close the deal. Their next step is to help them maintain employment. She indicated that entrepreneurship should also be an option for people.

The program addresses creating a marketable resume, and how to figure out their skills. Ms. Dorsey gets people to open up and talk about the many skills they have in working on different jobs. Looking at their

title is not an effective way to know what peoples' skills are. Some may know safety rules and regulations, some may pay attention to details, analytical skill, customer service skills, or good at using a cash register. She lets them know that their resume has to open the door for them. Mr. Campbell thanked Ms. Dorsey for the detailed information she shared regarding her program.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

*Domestic Violence (DV)* – Gudrun Parmer, Director of CJRC, reported that the DV provider for Durham has lost their funding and there are concerns regarding the number of services such as treatment programs for batterers. The level of service on protection orders is also a huge concern. In surrounding counties 95-100% of protection orders are served. In Durham County, it appears to be much lower. DV providers are hoping to get a joined space similar to a one stop shop in Greenville, NC. She shared that a regular meeting is held in the court house where provider groups and law enforcement meet to talk about DV.

*Stepping Up Initiative* - Peter Baker, CJRC Assistant Director for Jail and Court Services, reported that at the last Stepping Up Initiative meeting, they talked about creating a subcommittee that would be publicly supported by the Durham County Commissioners, through the National Association of Counties (NACo). The Stepping Up Initiative is a national effort to divert people with mental illness from jails and into treatment. He noted that in Durham they see about 20% of the population who are on medication due to being mentally ill or severely mentally ill. Peter Baker and Commissioner Fred Foster will chair the subcommittee. They will look at addressing gaps, and creating more opportunities. The Stepping Up Initiative has a website that people can access to find out what is happening on the national level with this initiative. NACo has laid out a plan on how to use the Consequential Intercept Model to map out what services they already have in order to see where the gaps are. The Model also suggests that the subcommittee collect and review the data. They are working to get handle on the data by using two Masters level social work students and a person from the County Managers office to analyze the data from the jail.

Ann Oshel, Alliance Behavior Health, asked if a database was going to be built. If so, she noted that Alliance was awarded a state grant to try and import mental health data into CJ LEADS. They would be able to run queries statewide based on CJ LEADS and filter through for the ones that have mental issues. She shared that she has money in her budget this year to hire a consultant to help build a database.

### **Appointment of Committee Members**

Roshanna Parker, CJRC Assistant Director for Community Based Corrections, asked Umar Muhammad, Community Organizer for the Southern Coalition for Social Justice, and Vernon O'Mar Taylor, Founder of Just A Clean House (JACH), to introduce themselves.

- Umar shared that he works around issues like Ban the Box, and he has been doing well to get a lot of active members in Durham to participate with this issue. Also, encouraging people who have been formerly incarcerated and still incarcerated to be their own state for change. The Center for Community Change on a national scale allows them to be more involved with what is happening in their life and their community. He noted that he takes pride in working with his peers.
- O'Mar shared that he came to Durham with the hope of starting a Harm Reduction House. He found out that in Durham it was either you use drugs, or you don't. There were no in-between,

but he wondered how he could help people and the community at the same time. So he started a recovery house and over time, it turned into something bigger than he had ever expected. He is now serving registered sex offenders, working with TROSA and Alliance where people are coming directly out of jail with mental issues. He is also working with CJRC where people are coming directly to his program from prison.

Roshanna informed the group that a proposed slate/ballot for additional members to be appointed by the CJAC committee has been distributed to each committee member. She asked that the committee vote yes or no to appoint Umar, and O'Mar as a member of the committee. All ballots were given to Celia Jefferson, CJAC Staff to tally. Mr. Campbell announced that the votes were unanimous for Umar and O'Mar.

### **Reentry**

Roshanna Parker reported that CJAC has created a reentry subcommittee in response to the State's interest in creating local reentry councils across the state. The first meeting was held on August 26. It was decided at the meeting that Lao Rubert, Director at Carolina Justice Policy Center and Roshanna would be co-chairs for that subcommittee. They indicated that the NC Department of Public Safety (NCDPS) had given CJAC an affiliate letter which meant we are on the right track and will soon be able to apply for funding for a local reentry council. She noted that at the last meeting, Lao took the lead and brought a lot of data. They wanted to look at the data and see what we have in Durham to serve the population returning from prison. They were looking at services that are available in certain resource categories such as employment and training, faith based, housing, mental health, substance abuse, services for sex offenders and wrap around services as it relates to the Department of Social Services, (i.e. the ability to get assistance to pay bills, get food,) transportation, victim services, domestic violence, health care, life skill, anger and financial management. They also want to submit a data request to NCDPS to find out who is returning to Durham and what their needs are. Are we looking at the right services for the individuals that are being returned to Durham? The next meeting is scheduled on October 8<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm.

### **Comments**

Gudrun Parmer noted that some may have missed an announcement regarding the Adult Misdemeanor Diversion program that will start on October 1<sup>st</sup>. It is modeled after the 16 and 17 year olds Misdemeanor Diversion program. It is law enforcement driven and targets 18 to 21 year olds who have no criminal record. Only misdemeanor charges are eligible, sex offenses, traffic violations and offenses involving guns are excluded. Individuals will go through a brief program and the charge will not be prosecuted. She shared that Kelly Andrews has trained all law enforcement officers in the Police Department and the Sheriff's Office.

**Meeting adjourned.**

*The next meeting will be held on Tuesday December 1<sup>st</sup>.*