



Durham County Criminal Justice Advisory Committee

June 25, 2013

Committee Members Present: Brian Jones (sitting in for Judge Stanbeck), Osborne A. Clayton, Judge Jim Hardin, Brenda Howerton, Judge Nancy Gordon, Judge Marcia Morey, Ann Oshel, Jovetta Whitfield

Committee Members Absent: Jackie Brown, Sharon Elliott-Bynum, Gayle Harris, DeWarren Langley, Marcia Owen, Larry Parker, Antonia Pedroza, Kristen Rosselli, Lao Rubert, Douglas Scott, Diane Smith, Tony Taylor, Marcus Weeks, Ellen Whelan-Wuest, Gilda Womble, Gudrun Parmer

Staff: Peter Baker, Celia Jefferson, Roshanna Parker

Guests: Lauren Buchner, Division of Workforce Solutions, Beth Caldwell-MDC

Welcome and Introductions

Judge Morey opened the meeting with a welcome and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Critical Points from Made in Durham (MDC) Presentation

Judge Morey commented on the meeting held in April when Julie Mooney and Beth Caldwell presented. She asked the committee to take a look at the valuable background information in the minutes. This information is an eye opener and is important to what this committee is charged to do. We should look at the disconnected youth in the Triangle, the disproportionate minority school dropouts, unemployment insurance, and the Prison probation total is looking bleak. The economy job numbers have gone up, and the people in Durham who have been counted as working have declined. A great analysis was done in Durham on who was really disconnected; fifteen percent of the youth and young adults in our population are disconnected by having a hard time getting in the work force and pursuing education. These are the people whom we are really focusing our attention. The goals of this committee seem to be the same as MDC. During the meeting, we will talk about setting up sub-committees on how to transition especially people in the criminal justice system into employment opportunities and furthering their education.

Approval of Minutes

After reviewing the minutes, Judge Morey motion that the minutes be adopted as presented.
Action: Seconded and Approved.

Subcommittees

Judge Morey stated that we have talked about setting up subcommittees and focusing on specific areas of your expertise or where you are most interested. "If the subcommittees can meet on the opposite months of this meeting and then report back in", would be helpful. We have a broad

range of concerns and places where we need to work. What are some of the concerns we can focus on now and discuss recommendations at the meeting. Judge Morey stated that this committee is authorized by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), and we need to make sure that we are following their goals and objectives and finding the goals and the gaps of the people in the criminal justice system. Some suggestions for subcommittees are Veterans Court, Raise the Age, Pipeline to Employment, and Substance Abuse Treatment. She asked the committee if they had any further ideas for subcommittees, no response. Judge Morey asked Judge Gordon to talk about the Veterans Court.

Veterans Court: Judge Gordon stated that a meeting will be held to talk about what we can and cannot do at 8:00am on July 10 with people from Judge Stanback office and others. To a great extent this type of court requires the DA to decide what they want the veterans court to be, a diversion or non diversion court. Once that is decided, we can begin setting up a team and searching for funding, and possibly get assistance from someone who knows about writing grants. There are trainings for veteran's court that the team can attend, but will need funding to get there. She stated that since the County has a veteran court, she will talk to someone at the County to see if they would be willing to partner with us, perhaps with the Criminal Justice Resource Center (CJRC) to be the backbone of the court. She will need to hear from Judge Stanback about what he is going to do and with an election year coming up someone in the DA office will need to make a political decision. She mentioned on Friday, a Drug Treatment Court graduation will be held in the traffic court room, located on the 3rd floor. She invited everyone to attend.

Raise the Age: Judge Morey stated that raise the age is another great idea for a subcommittee. The Youth Offenders Rehabilitation Act (HB 725), passed through the NC House in the Judiciary A subcommittee to raise the age of juvenile jurisdiction from 16 up to 18 only for misdemeanors and to phase it in over a two year period in six months increments. The bill is now in the Appropriations Committee. NC and NY are the only states that have 16 as an age of adult jurisdiction for any offense. NY has pilots throughout their judiciary connecting 16 and 17 year olds into a youth offender program. Lao and Judge Morey talked about meeting with law enforcement, the sheriff and police department to see if there might be a pilot that we can do a civil citation or a citation process for 16 & 17 non violent misdemeanors to see how the process work. Judge Morey agreed to chair this subcommittee.

Pipeline to Employment is another subcommittee idea. Judge Morey asked how we can get more opportunities for people on probation or people that are back from a facility and get them on track for employment which is MDC main goal. What are the barriers, and why does Duke say no we won't, and the county is so readily able to accept hiring ex-offenders, and the city has done a good job in accepting them in the system. Jackie Brown informed the committee that Durham Job Link Career Center held a Job Fair for Ex-Offenders on Monday June 10 and Thursday June 13. Some businesses did not want to confirm their attendance. The issue then becomes, who wants to be the leading company or organization for hiring ex-offenders. Ann shared that some of the youth with BECOMING that had been through the criminal justice system did not want to attend the employment fair because they felt that they were being signal out. They feel as though they have a double problem, no educational credential, a double life they were leading, and they felt as though no one would even offer them a job. Also, some felt

they rather make \$200 on the street instead of working for minimal wages at McDonald. There were three people at the end of the week that got jobs from the job fair. They want the employers to come to them.

Roshanna stated that CJRC partnered in the job fair. Twenty employers were invited and confirmed their attendance but did not show. She stated the problem; we do not have a buy in from employers and they do not know the importance of this issue. Some people did not want to attend the job fair because they did not want to be labeled. Others were looking forward to finding employment and were very disappointed because employers turned their backs on them as a group. There were 400 people registered for Monday. On Thursday, there were over 200 people who attended. Roshanna mentioned that there are incentives for businesses to hire ex-offenders. Then the issue becomes, do I really want an ex-offender to work in my home, in my school, cleaning at my church etc. Judge Morey suggested that we should start approaching this issue with employers on a one on one instead of a public job fair. Mom and Pops businesses are the one who are willing to hire ex-offenders and they do a lot of mentoring with them. Roshanna commented that a strategy is needed that will hold large businesses accountable for the revenue, tax breaks, and incentives they get for being in the area.

Beth prospective indicated a higher level of planning with this group will be useful, and we should start thinking about a system wide employment engagement strategy that is for the most excelled students in Durham, as well as the most disadvantaged students. The more we can hear from people who are practitioners working with this population will be useful. The place that this committee should be coming from has to be a value proposition to lawyers and also start thinking about education and skills to make ex-offenders a more valuable employee. We need to understand more about the pipeline as it exist for people that travel through the criminal justice system and how it differs from youth and adults and how education falls in that process.

Peter informed the committee that the Employment Security Commission has one designated person who only worked with ex-offenders in finding work. He is sure that there is something to be learned from that process. Lauren from the Division of workforce solutions stated that there are two programs where she works. Courtney McCullan through the city works with the ex-offender program in her office. Robert Carter has just been hired to head the former offender program that takes care of Courtney folks and ones that had a felon in the last two years or had been released in the last year. Brenda was suggested as one to chair this subcommittee.

Mental Health/Mental Illness Gaps in Services is another idea for a subcommittee. A Substance Abuse subcommittee was first thought of, but it was decided that a Mental Health/Mental Illness Gaps in Services subcommittee is a much bigger issue. Diane Smith is a committee member, and she does all the TASC evaluations and referrals. She could present periodic updates of the continuum we have with substance abuse and offenders at some of our meetings. Ann Oshel agreed that Mental Health is a much bigger issue than drug treatment court. We have almost three times the national average of people with diagnosed mental health clients sitting in jail. Most clients are uninsured, and we do not have a public mental health or substance abuse system that houses people, give them the length of treatment that use evidence based practices or have access to medication. Ann Oshel and Kristen Rosselli were suggested for this subcommittee.

Judge Morey asked the committee to think about what subcommittee they are interested in joining. Our next meeting is August 27th at 4pm at the same place.

With no other business, meeting adjourned at 5:20pm.