

**Hamilton County Community Corrections
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2020**

The following members were present: Bob Bragg, George Buskirk, Honorable Richard Campbell, Roger Drayer, Honorable Paul Felix, Susan Ferguson, Stephanie Gookins, Steve Schwartz, R. Dan Stevens, Kylene Toney, and Amy Wilson.

A quorum was present. Ralph Watson, Kevin Mulroony, Tom Gehlhausen, and Jennifer Armstrong were also in attendance.

Steve Schwartz called the meeting to order.

Steve Schwartz called for the approval of the January meeting minutes. Stephanie Gookins made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Bob Bragg seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Following a brief summary by Mr. Watson, Steve Schwartz called for approval of the final fiscal report for the 6-month grant extension ending December 31, 2019, as well as the January and February reports. Susan Ferguson made a motion to approve the reports as presented. Roger Drayer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Director's Report

A written report was submitted and reviewed by the Executive Director.

Old Business

There was no old business on the agenda.

New Business

Mr. Watson distributed a handout with the summary for Fiscal Year 2018-2019 that included the 6-month extension period. He noted that the agency exceeded Project Income revenue projections by \$13,362.54. He also noted that we ended the 18-month period under budget. It appears that the agency will need to return \$22,284.18 to the Indiana Department of Corrections (IDOC) as that was the amount remaining in the grant allocation. This will need to be verified during the next IDOC fiscal audit.

The IDOC is requiring that all Community Corrections programs submit 5 performance metrics by March 31st. The metrics will be used to measure progress throughout the year. They must be approved by the Advisory Board and is required for all entities receiving funding. Our agency is experiencing challenges extracting desired baseline data from the state's case management software and the IDOC has approved an extension for us to submit our metrics. Mr. Watson plans to present proposed metrics for approval at the April Board meeting. Stephanie Ruggles, Director of Pretrial Services, provided a handout containing proposed metrics for her agency. They were previously approved by her local stakeholder team as well. Susan Ferguson made a motion to approve the Pretrial performance metrics as presented. Bob Bragg seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Watson noted that the IDOC is emphasizing the need for Community Corrections agencies to have Memorandums of Understandings (MOU) with entities in which they are partnering to provide services. An MOU with Pretrial Services, prepared by Ms. Ruggles, was presented for consideration. Mr. Watson reported that he had reviewed the MOU and had no concerns with the content. It does not contain anything that is not already being done. Roger Dryer made a motion to approve the MOU as presented. Honorable Paul Felix seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Over the past several months there has been discussion about expanding the current room used by the Board for monthly meetings. Mr. Watson explained that there was a need for a larger room to accommodate visitors and the Board, which has grown since the original design. He shared a sample drawing of how the room might be expanded. Mr. Watson asked if there was a consensus to continue with the exploration of expanding the space. Roger Dryer inquired about possible funding and from where it might come. Mr. Watson noted that funding possibilities would need to be discussed at some point, but we would first need to explore possible costs. George Buskirk made a motion to proceed with obtaining preliminary estimates. Amy Wilson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Watson provided a handout containing a summary of the status of proposed legislation being considered in the current General Assembly. They include as follows:

- SB 216 - It would amend the public records act and has been assigned to a conference committee.
- HEA 1047 - It has passed. The legislation adds members to the Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council, as well as expands the scope of the Council's mission.
- HEA 1094 – It has passed. It requires the Executive Director of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute to work with local coordinating councils and other stakeholders when implementing certain recommendations concerning substance use and substance use disorders.
- HB 1120 – The proposed legislation would make changes to education credit time for individuals incarcerated at the IDOC. An inmate sentenced to the IDOC would receive a time cut for achieving an individual case plan.
- HEA 1346 – It has passed. It eliminates the Jail Overcrowding Task Force and their duties. It assigns the duties to the Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council.

Roger Drayer inquired about the increase of participants in our Residential Level of Supervision that had been projected with the change to sentencing options for Level 6 felons. Mr. Watson explained that we saw a small influx, but it was less than anticipated. It appears that a number of Level 6 felony offenders were being sentenced to the Hamilton County Jail as opposed to Community Corrections. Stephanie Gookins noted that her experience has been that many of the individuals sentenced for a Level 6 felony appeared to rather accept a shorter period of incarceration in jail than serve a longer time in Community Corrections. Honorable Richard Campbell noted that many of the individuals do not qualify for Community Corrections. Roger Drayer asked if anything needs to be changed on our end and Honorable Richard Campbell said many of the individuals had previously violated Community Corrections placement, so it was no longer an appropriate option.

Stephanie Gookins noted that it appeared that fewer individuals sentenced as an open placement were having their supervision reduced than was expected. Mr. Watson said in many instances individuals eligible for reduced supervision had experienced technical violations or had fee arrearages. He noted that the agency is examining the number of technical violations. Honorable Richard Campbell noted that the number of low risk individuals in the Residential Level of Supervision is high. Mr. Watson said it has been a concern for some time but appears to be improving. Honorable Paul Felix thought that one reason

could be due to an individual appearing low risk based on the Indiana Risk Assessment System (IRAS) but might be high risk based on the results of other assessments.

Honorable Richard Campbell expressed concern about the backlog for screening appointments. Mr. Watson explained that the agency had recently hired a new employee and they were already IRAS certified, so the hope is on-boarding can be expedited. Mr. Mulroony said we are currently scheduling screenings for Mid-April. Mr. Watson noted the average length of wait from referral to decision is 7-10 days. Bob Bragg asked if the agency needed to hire a third screening analyst. Mr. Watson said the issue appears to be intermittent. Honorable Richard Campbell asked if there is someone sitting in Jail that needs a screening what should he do. Mr. Watson responded the defense council would note that in a referral and those individuals in Jail receive prioritization. Stephanie Gookins and George Buskirk mentioned maybe a shared calendar database would be something to explore for screening appointments. Honorable Paul Felix expressed some concerns about the option. Mr. Watson said he is exploring possibilities with Information System Services (ISS).

There was no further business to be presented and Steve Schwartz adjourned the meeting. The next meeting will be **April 2nd at noon.**