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RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

First Meeting-The Funding Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

Place: Hampden County Sheriff's Department
627 Randall Road
Ludlow MA 01056

Date and Time: July 22, 2019 from 11:30AM-1:00PM

1. Call to Order

Monica Dominique called the meeting to order at 11:40am.

Voting Members

Erin Freeborn (C4RJ), Scott Taberner (EOHHS), Susan Jeghelian (MOPC), Sheriff
Nicholas Cocchi (HCSD)

Absent

Allison Cartwright (CPCS)

Others in attendance

Anjeza Xhemollari (EOPSS), Michaela Martini (EOPSS), Monica Dominique (HCSD),
John D'Angelo (HCSD), Mary Quinn (HCSD) and MaryKate Moriarty (HCSD)

2. Welcome

Members gave a short introduction about themselves.

3. Discuss our charge

Monica Dominique began by questioning what the charge of the committee was and what the committee would try to establish regarding funding. Susan proposed a two-prong approach for funding. The first prong would be used by the committee to begin research and build a foundation to be built off of. The other prong of the funding would be designated to

implementing the programs the committee proposes after carrying out research. Scott proposed creating a three to four year vision in order to organize these funding goals. In doing so, the committee would be able to establish what exactly will be asked for in both the 2020 budget as well as for the 2021 fiscal year. Scott also proposed the committee tries to solidify funding plans and attempt to get this to the House for 2021.

4. Determine how much funding is needed

2020 Funding: Susan asked what the timing for the 2020 supplemental budget was, and Scott explained summer and early fall. He suggested talking to EOPSS and see if they can provide funding for this year. There also may be an opportunity to gain funding through the House of Corrections, potentially as a sponsor. In order to implement any programs, Monica emphasized the importance of solidifying a scope for the research in order for the institutions of higher education to agree to take on the project and potentially fund and help the committee. Susan suggested that in order to get this support from higher educational institutes, the committee should work further on the exact funding of the RJAC and the various recommendations that come up through that process. Anjeza added that there was no confirmed budget from A&F at this time. Susan brought up the Crime Bill which the committee was established through, and suggested the idea that maybe it will be renewed, and if so, if it may be a place the committee can look to for funding.

5. Discuss Options for Funding

Involvement of Higher Educational Institutes: Susan explained a realistic budget for a study to be conducted would be around \$80,000- \$90,000. She clarified that if the committee was able to obtain \$50,000, then it would be possible to conduct some pilot studies in order to gather evidence to support a proposal. Susan and Caroline are working on the scope of what the higher educational institutes may be capable of. They suggested working on an inventory of what Massachusetts institutes are doing and what is working in other areas. This inventory would allow the committee to gather support as well as map the current system. An institute of higher education would be able to help with this by monitoring community restorative centers; however some information is better collected through government agencies, as well as the public. It still needs to be determined what specific data the research will focus on, as well as the importance of receiving proper support to carry this out.

Colorado's System: Erin reiterated the foundational step that mapping provides in conducting good research, and that the committee can look to Colorado as a possible model for the programs that they have already established there. In Colorado, there are several Restorative Justice Committees which have passed seven legislations and mapped the entire state, also creating a grant. The state utilizes a \$10 court fee which is assessed to some convictions to help fund their programs. Over time, the committees in the state have gathered a pool of around a million dollars and also have established an administrator of

grants. Susan mentioned in a Community Mediation study of other states funding, there is a filing add-on fee, but Massachusetts is not in favor of implementing this. She then raised the question of whether or not a new fee should be implemented. Concluding, she suggested asking for foundational funding for the RJAC from the legislature with the intent to match it in the future.

Use of Other Advocacy Groups: Scott suggested reaching out to other advocacy groups across the state to help the committee and also identify funding. He mentioned CFJJ as a potential group to get in touch with. He thought it would be a good idea to think through different avenues, including youthful offenders through DYS, which would help bring young adults into the group of concern. If the committee is able to get a plan in place to think about Restorative Justice on a statewide scale, it may be useful to contact CFJJ, because they are an advocacy group on behalf of progressive justice. She highlighted the importance of gathering data and building relationships as the RJAC begins to create a foundation. Gathering data may include exploratory work which will occur prior to the committee making any recommendations. At this phase, building relationships is important in order to try and obtain funding.

Relating the Two-Prong Approach: Scott related the proposed funding ideas to the two-prong approach. For the first-prong, which would be administrative funding, he suggested the committee establish groups which would band together for the first round of research. If the committee does bring in outside funding, they may consider asking the state to match it. The initial funding could be seen as a “challenge grant.” He stated that submitting a 2021 budget request is crucial, as well as getting the committee some established entity. He suggested Ed Dolan at probation, the DA’s Association, the Sheriff’s Association and DYS as potential organizations to help with this. Scott mentioned including a multi-year proposal, with the idea that growing the committee over several years will help secure funding. He also proposed some sort of state or government function to support Restorative Justice. Susan added that the agencies with jurisdictions that would benefit should weigh in, thinking maybe the courts or DOC. The groups mentioned for the committee to consider contacting included DYS, DA’s Association, Sheriff’s Association, Probation, Parole Board, EOPSS and ECPS.

Challenges in Support and Building Standards: Issues in the committee gaining support have come up due to some individuals and programs uncertainty in how far they should go in supporting Restorative Justice. Erin brought up the National Restorative Justice Conference held in Colorado. She reported that as they went through phase funding pilots, they were not determined to make the programs identical across the state. She proposed a future conference call with Colorado once the committee decides on certain questions (especially if the committee goes forth with implementing a court fee). She emphasized that in order for people to not resist Restorative Justice programming, it is necessary to develop

different models. Susan shared that for community mediation; they established a set of standards to strengthen their centers. Each center implements these standards in their own way. The centers do not compete in grants, rather they are meant to be more resilient by using these standards. Scott added that on the behavioral health side, there is a specific model that must be adhered to, as consistency is important in providing the best practice.

Administrative Funding: To begin work, Scott explained the committee needs to put together an application to gain administrative money (first-prong funding). The committee also needs to find at least one institution of higher education to assist in research, as well as some additional resources nationally that the committee could look to use in future years (2022, 2023) for second-prong funding. Erin added that their first objective is to get college research, and this may be easier due to the statewide committee, so more data can be gathered and a state dollar tag can be used. The committee should aim to solidify plans to make it into a report by EOPSS, which will help with communication and give a deadline to the plans.

Office: Erin brought up that in the bill that created the RJAC, there was an office included for Restorative Justice, but it was removed because of the funding associated with it. It may be useful to discuss with Senator Eldridge the value in finding an office, as without infrastructure there are some organizational aspects that are made difficult. Now that there is an established committee and legislation has been passed, it may be a good time to discuss an office being created for Restorative Justice. Susan suggested that the committee gets feedback on their ideas via a proposal, even without specific offices. Through this, the committee would be able to support Restorative Justice funding. She also explained that MOPC began as a state agency under A&F in 1990 but moved to UMass Boston in 2006. In doing this, the program can be contracted without procurement. Susan also went into some of the other benefits of infrastructure, stating it provides a hub. Many entities can have a piece of it, but no single entity owns it. An office would also prevent money from being diverted elsewhere, because the office would be focused on Restorative Justice only. If the committee was to go forward with infrastructure, it may be possible to put this under A&F, due to the office serving the Judicial and Executive branch. The new office would allow different agencies to work together in a collaborative way, which would assist in gaining political support especially regarding the budget.

Restorative Justice Certification Process: Erin brought up that a big certification process would not be practical for Restorative Justice Practitioners. She suggested that the “12- point model” that Susan mentioned, or setting standards, might be a direction the committee should go in. Susan explained that her panel is all trained and meet the same standards. Scott related this to Behavioral Health, explaining that each behavioral coach meets a certain set of standards. He found it interesting to have a universal position in Restorative Justice, in which there is no certification procedure. He also explained that on the mental health side,

for individuals with lived experience or mental health issues, the concept of having a peer work with them is highly accepted. Services that are not regarded as medical benefit are now looked at as connected to behavioral health services, so it becomes a paraprofessional working in other environments, which parallels what is happening with Restorative Justice. Mary brought up the indigenous roots of Restorative Justice, and the fact that it is set in the community. With this in mind, Susan mentioned the scope again, inquiring if the research should be broader before it can be narrowed down. She stated that it is better to be broader at the beginning so no undue harm is done.

Assigning a Position: Sheriff Cocchi proposed that the committee consider creating a position dedicated to Restorative Justice. This individual, in an entry level position, would do research, make phone calls, and help to run meetings. It would be helpful to have an individual dedicated to this project once an institute of higher education gets involved.

6. Public Comment and Open Session for Topics not Reasonably Anticipated within 48 hours of the Meeting

N/A

7. Other Matters

Updates by End of Meeting July 22: Sheriff Cocchi updated that he met with Congressman Neal to see if he would be able to help the committee. He will see if Amy Hall is on grant committee for the House, to help designate ways for the committee to craft grants and proposals to see where the money is, and to be able to take money for designated programs. He asked John to make a priority to talk about Restorative Justice with Ms. Hall, in efforts to find grant money for the victim as well as the individual who is in the Criminal Justice system. Also, he should emphasize that this committee is for the commonwealth.

Using a core group, Sheriff Cocchi believes that the committee can accomplish a lot of good work. In regards to criminal justice reform, these committees may help accurately depict what is going on in our entire community. Sheriff Cocchi used the example of individuals held for 45 days without hearing from CPCS. These individuals are then released into the community, where there are victims. If these individuals are released, there needs to be a plan in place so they do not go back to harmful situations. He suggested partnering with Prison Legal Services to help come up with solutions to reform.

Sheriff Cocchi agreed that infrastructure would be helpful in getting the committee started, and he also proposed asking the other Sheriff's if they would give the committee a bump in budget. Sheriff Cocchi shared about the PSA's in place on aftercare center, explaining that if they are able to give \$10,000 it is then matched. These are especially useful in getting

information to the community. He concluded by reminding the committee that Restorative Justice means two different things to the victim and to someone in the Criminal Justice system.

For Next Meeting: In August, funding needs to be shared. Anjeza should reach out to Senator Eldridge and see if he would like to come to the meeting. It is imperative that the committee is prepared with a plan or framework at their next meeting. In a timeline of two to three years, the committee should aim to have the two-prong approach finalized. This should include a vision for the initial grant making. Scott thought the committee should contact Ed Dolan at probation as well as the Sheriff's Association. He also suggested potentially using a strategy from CFJJ, and having the committee decide on several priorities for a two to three year period. The finalized proposal will likely take over several months to put forth. Anjeza reported that through a call with Spencer Lord, there was nothing through EOPSS, but an item from the Commissioner of Probation for \$350,000. Susan pointed out this may be a grant program that they are already doing, and not specifically for the committee, however it does specifically mention Restorative Justice. It may be meant for the Commissioner of Probation to implement and give out the money.

When the scope committee meets, they will reach an agreement on a study looking at Restorative Justice Programs before and after. This meeting will take place on Monday July 29, 2019. If the scope is agreed upon, the committee will move forward. The committee also needs to hire institutes of higher education to do an inventory, which gets Restorative Justice programs involved. Sheriff Cocchi also advised that at the main meeting, someone must be commissioned to do the study. He suggested maybe dividing this between Hampden County, Middlesex and Suffolk. At a MASA meeting, the possibility of dividing money needs to be explored. In September, both subcommittees will present to the entire committee. Erin suggested that the committee has someone in place to do the study by the next legislative report. Again, this study is crucial, as a line item can be created for the scope of the committee's goals. Establishing funding is an important step in getting pilots and other programs started.

Vote on the Two- Prong Funding Approach by Scott Taberner

1. The first prong seeks funds for administrative funding of the advisory council.
2. The second-prong is dedicated to future funding initiatives for the commonwealth recommended by the supervisory committee.

The motion was second by Erin Freeborn and passed unanimously

Next Meeting: August 13th at 11:30 A.M. or August 19th at 11:30 A.M.

Submitted by: MaryKate Moriarty