

Jackson County Jail Task Force

June 12, 2018 at 1:30pm
Union Station

Attendees:

John Fierro, Co-Chair
Dr. Gayle Holliday, Co-Chair
Dr. Karen Curls, Committee Member
Niki Lee Donawa, Committee Member
Alvin Brooks, Committee Member
Ralph Monaco, Committee Member
Brandon Ellington, Committee Member
Gary Panetheire, Chief Operating Officer
Mark Trosen, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Diana Turner, Director of Jackson County Corrections
Brian Johnson, Department of Corrections
Ben Kenney, Sherriff Department
Marshanna Hester, Jackson County Public Information Officer
Steve Davis, Shive Hattery
David Bostwick, HDR

Regrets:

Scott Burnett, Committee Member
Alissia Canady, Committee Member
Carol Coe, Committee Member
Joseph Megerman, Committee Member
Brent Morris, Committee Member
Capt. Doug Niemeier, Committee Member
Lisa Pelofsky, Committee Member
Donna Maize, Committee Member
Judge John Torrence, Committee Member

Meeting was called to order by Co-Chairs John Fierro and Dr. Gayle Holliday.

Approval of the agenda. Motion was made by Alvin Brooks. Motion was seconded by Dr. Karen Curls. All in favor for approval.

Approval of the minutes from the April meeting. Motion was made by Ralph Monaco. Motion was seconded by Gary Panethiere. All in favor for approval.

The consultants for the Master Plan gave an update on their work. On June 11th there was a public forum that provided good discussion. The week prior the entire team came to Kansas City and was here for 4 days conducting over 50 different interviews with stake holders ranging from legislators, prosecutors, defenders, department of corrections staff, and law enforcement agencies. The consultants

are wanting to get a broad range of individuals that either have an impact or have thoughts and opinions regarding what is going on at the Jackson County Jail.

David Bostwick from HDR stated that when you look at a jail it doesn't just happen in a vacuum but responds to what is happening in the community, and what is going on with law enforcement. A jail isn't the major driver, but instead responds to what's occurring around it. There are two main things the consultants wanted to look at in this assessment. The first, what are the drivers for admission in the jail? Second, what are the drivers for the length of stay in the jail? The length of stay is what drives jail population more than anything.

Over the course of the last month, the consultant team has been trying to figure out who is in the jail and why? What is their length of stay? Are there ruts in the system that could be slowing down the case processing speed which would increase the length of stay and then the capacity demands of the jail? The consultants are also taking a look at what is happening in Jackson County in terms of mental health, because nationally 30%-40% of people who go into jail have some sort of mental illness. Along with wanting to take a look at what's occurring in the jail in terms of the mental health they also looking at what is happening the community in regards to mental health. Are there programs available out there that the county could use to provide an inmate with care after his release? The consultants are trying to identify opportunities to stop recidivism.

The consultant team is looking at different alternatives there may be to incarceration that are currently being deployed in the county. Currently the prosecutor's office has some specialty courts, such as drug court, or veterans' court, but the consultants want to see if there are other opportunities such as cite and release? Are there opportunities to do diversion? They are looking at multiple options in hopes of reducing admissions into the facility.

Representative Ellington asked when the task force will receive the data the consultant team is currently collecting. David Bostwick informed the task force that the data sources that are available in Jackson County are limited, but the team is currently assembling the numbers, and still collecting data. The consultant team will be presenting the data on July 16th.

Representative Ellington also inquired about the increase of health services to the jail by \$1 million, and what the services that were funded are. Brian Johnson explained that the increase of the \$1 million was to expand the initial screening to everyone who goes through the jail.

The consultants then went on to discuss the emerging themes they are seeing in the interviews and talk about the data they have collected so far. The consulting team is currently looking at the data they have collected so far and questioning the reliability of the data. There are a couple issues with the data which includes input issues and about the legitimacy of the data going into the system. The other issue is that the current system makes it difficult to extract that data, because the current system isn't set up to run reports. All the reports have to be extracted manually. The team is working with the County's IT department to test the data and see if they can use it for planning purpose, because if you don't have good data it's hard to use it for planning purposes. The consulting team is also beginning to collect inmate snapshots of who's in the jail, what their legal status is, and what their charge is on a weekly basis so that they can begin to create their own data base that they can begin to supplement anything that they can get from other sources.

Alvin Brooks would like to know what the current status is of the contract between the County and the city of Kansas City. Gary Panethiere explained that the contract still exists and that either party would have to give a year's notice for the contract to change. They are currently reviewing the contract. The consultants have looked at the cost and the city is currently paying us about half of what it costs the county per day, which causes a substantial gap in funding.

John and Gayle have spoken with the Executive staff about the next steps of the jail task force and transitioning the team's works to conclude in August so that the task force can go in conjunction with the consultant firm for a joint statement and joint recommendations.

Dr. Karen Curls stated that because the jail task force is a group of community members in Kansas City and many have an institutionalized history of the city there may be gap between the task force and the consultants. As it relates to our community and looking at the optics from the public forum it appeared from the public sitting there that the volunteers and those being paid were sitting on opposite sides of the stage, and members of the community wanting to know if the consultant firms have minority representation, and are they doing it out of the care of the community? What was shared with Dr. Karen Curls by members of the community here is another example on the professional level of African Americans not participating. They're argument is that the consultants are paid and there is no one that looks like them at the table being paid.

In regards to the first point about making sure that the subcommittees and consultants are on the same page, John Fierro, agrees with Dr. Curls. However, the consultants have spoken with the sub-committee chairs and they need to have follow up conversations with the subcommittee chairs and be a system of support for the subcommittees.

Dr. Gayle Holliday responded to second part of the statement that this task force did not employ the task force, but the county did. Gayle has done her research and they should have 19% of minority and female representation. Steve Davis from Shive Hattery, let the group know that part of the RFP required that there was women or minority owned business as part of the project. From a woman owned business stand point the team has Further the Work which is owned by Rebecca Brown, Dr. Elizabeth Falcon with the minority business enterprise.

Brandon Ellington has concerns regarding the consulting firm, and would like to know what the job of the consulting group is? What is the function of the task force?

Dr. Gayle Holliday that the jail task force and the consulting team will be meeting in July on multiple occasions to work together and exchange information that the two groups have and put the information they have together. The research that the subcommittees have gathered should be shared with the consultants, because we do have work that has been done over the last several months, but it would be ludicrous to share the recommendations from the task force and they are farfetched from the recommendations of the consulting firm. The co-chairs anticipate with a great deal of hope that the meetings John has gone through will put the data, previous research, and the work of the consultants together. Would like to have a comprehensive report to give to the Legislature and the County Executive that includes both the work of the task force and the consultants.

Alvin Brooks wonders if it is it realistic that we can come up with a broad base report by August. Can the consultants come up with a broad based report by August?

Dr. Gayle Holliday reminded the group that the work of the task force is not solely dependent on the consulting firm, and that the task force agreed to do a job and their mission has not changed. The jail task force needs to carry on and work until August to come out with a report that can be shared with the consultant. Subcommittee chairs should begin working on their recommendations now based on what they have and what information they may continue to request. The task force will produce an independent report.

John asks that the task force allow the co-chairs to take back their feedback to the consultants and come back with definitive answers.

The Co-Chairs asked for updates from the sub-committees.

Population Control Committee: Would like to admit that the committee has gotten smaller. Wants to have the consultants help to set up interviews with groups or stake holders before July.

Intergovernmental Concerns: No report today.

Offender Housing-No report today. Dr. Karen Curls wants to make sure we complete our task, but also have a responsibility to our community.

Meeting adjourned.