



Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Meeting Minutes
May 23, 2023, 4:15 pm
Law and Justice Center, Atrium Conference Room, First Floor

Mission: Lewis and Clark County’s Criminal Justice Coordinating Council exists to improve the safety of the citizens of Lewis and Clark County and ensure the equitable and efficient treatment of defendants, offenders, and victims.

1. Call to Order & Reading of the Mission

Chief Petty called the meeting to order. Chief Sanders read the mission statement.

2. Introductions

- Members Present: Brett Petty, Billie Reich (proxy for Sue Podruzny), Morgan Davis (proxy for Suzanne Seburn), Tom Cordingley, Mike Sanders, Leah Lindgren, Kevin Downs, Leo Dutton, Andy Hunthausen, Drenda Niemanm, Gina Boesdorfer
- Members Absent: Andy Shirliff, Mike Menahan, Mark Piskolich, Anne Peterson
- Staff Present: Kellie McBride, Bri Lake, Jillian Danesi, Alexia Clark
- Guests Present: Melinda Reed, Will Janiseh, Brad Bragg

3. Action Item: Approval of Meeting Minutes - Brett Petty

March 28, 2023 – Minutes were approved.

4. Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Update – Tom Cordingley

Tom reviewed the most recent CAC meetings including discussion of emergency staffing levels at the Detention Center and questions about reopening the Journey Home.

5. Bylaws Approval – Brett Petty

Edits to the bylaws that were reviewed in the March CJCC meeting were approved by consensus.

6. Opioid Overdose Response – Will Janiseh, MT DOJ, and Melinda Reed, MT DPHHS

Melinda and Will presented on Montana’s opioid overdose data and response strategies. In reviewing the overdose data, the presenters cited the OD map, a nationwide program that facilitates data sharing and collaboration about where opioid overdoses, both fatal and nonfatal, allowing public health and law enforcement officials to report opioid overdoses and track when and where spikes of overdose incidents occur.

The data indicates that opioid overdoses in Montana have increased substantially in the last year. Most overdoses involve the intentional use of fentanyl but with an unexpectedly high dose. There is no pattern for location in Montana. Overdoses occur all over the state. In addition, xylazine, or horse tranquilizer, is increasingly being mixed with opioids, resulting in necrotic-level sores and disfigurements.

One contributing factor for the increased spread is that prices for opioids are higher in Montana compared to other regions.

Brad asked if Will was working with Canada officials along with border states, and Will confirmed that he has contacts in Canada and notify each other about overdose spikes on the border. Kellie asked what the CJCC can do to support their efforts. Melinda stated that increased Naloxone distribution, the normalization of Narcan, and fentanyl strips are the best harm-reduction tools right now. Will advised that every person who leave the jail should have a box of Narcan, citing data that people right out of jail are at an increased likelihood of overdose. Education to kids and parents is also a priority.

7. Journey Home Presentation and Discussion – Drenda Niemann

Drenda reviewed the current status of the contract negotiations with Many Rivers Whole Health to reopen the Journey Home, an 8-bed crisis stabilization facility in Helena which closed in December 2019. The goal date to complete negotiations is July 2023, but the opening date of the Journey Home is yet unknown. Also unknown is how the facility will be structured with regards to voluntary versus involuntary commitments and how referrals will be handled.

The biggest barrier facing the reopening of the Journey Home is workforce issues. Previously, the Journey Home did not have the proper staff to handle both secure and nonsecure sides. Commissioner Hunthausen noted that 24/7 staffing anywhere is very challenging.

Drenda will provide ongoing updates of the Journey Home at CJCC meetings.

8. Data Initiative – Bri Lake

Bri stated that the RFP for a combined jail management and case management system closed without an award. Moving forward, CJS and the Detention Center intend to separate and submit separate RFPs.

9. Criminal Justice Services Update – Kellie McBride

- a) Annual Report – Scheduled to release in July.
- b) Pretrial Services Accreditation – In fiscal year 2024, CJS will be preparing to seek accreditation for the Pretrial Services program through the National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies (NAPSA). Accreditation would award national recognition to the program.

10. Non-Agenda Items

No old or new business for discussion.

11. Public Comment

No public comment.

12. Next CJCC Meeting: July 25, 2023, 4:15 pm

13. Adjourn