

Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board
Minutes of the Meeting of August 11, 2020

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Place: Second Floor Conference Room, MH/ID/EI, 220 East Lehman St., Lebanon (via ZOOM)

Present

Pier Hess Graf, District Attorney and CJAB Chair; Holly Leahy, MH/ID/EI Administrator and CJAB Vice Chair; Stephanie Axarlis, Court Administrator; Audrey Rakow, Acting Director of Probation Services; Erin Moyer, Director of Children and Youth; Jamie Wolgemuth, County Administrator; Robert J. Phillips, County Commissioner; James Donmoyer, Director of Drug and Alcohol Commission; Daniel Wright, Police Chiefs Representative; Brian L. Deiderick, Chief Public Defender; Bruce Klingler, Sheriff; Kim Mackey, PCCD Regional Representative; and, John P. Shott, CJAB Planner.

Absent

Honorable John C. Tylwalk, President Judge; Karen Hess, Director of Domestic Relations; Robert Karnes, Warden; Carla Cyr, Veterans Justice Outreach

District Attorney and CJAB Chair Pier Hess Graf called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. ***Presence of a quorum noted.***

Minutes of 02/18/20 CJAB Meeting—Approved on a motion by Ms. Leahy, seconded by Sheriff Klingler.

Audrey Rakow, Acting Director of Probation Services, and Kasey Felty of MH/ID/IE made a power point presentation regarding Team MISA (Mental Illness and Substance Abuse) and the feasibility of establishing a version of this program in Lebanon County. Ms. Kasey has visited Lehigh County and Ms. Rakow has visited Dauphin County to get a firsthand view of how Team MISA functions in those two counties. According to PrimeCare, which provides medical services at the Correctional Facility, Lehigh and Dauphin counties have two of the better models of Team MISA in this area of the Commonwealth. The purpose of Team MISA is “to develop intervention strategies and individualized actions plans from the disposition of criminal cases and safe reentry into our community for selected special needs of defendants.” Team MISA is designed to divert low-risk offenders with mental illness and other special needs from prison. It is also focused on expanding community treatment options and increasing early diversion for drug/alcohol and MH/ID defendants. Any MISA team must consist of representatives from criminal justice departments. Teams will engage in rapid dialogue about identified individuals and develop treatment plans to bring before the court. Implementing Team MISA in Lebanon County would not require additional funding from the County budget and is viewed as an effective, workable alternative to “Adult CASSP,” which has not met with much success. ***(A copy of the power point was made available to all CJAB members and will be posted on the CJAB webpage.)***

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- **D.U.I. Court**—At present, 45 offenders are participating in the program, with three pending.
- **Renaissance-Crossroads**-- Current number of offenders in the long-term program is nine, with three potential participants. No one is in the short-term component at this time. President Judge Tylwalk is holding Crossroads Court today and is unable to attend the CJAB meeting.
- **Veterans Court**—Current number of participants is 23, with one pending. Program is still in need of mentors as the number of participants increases. A veteran of the armed forces who is interested in

becoming a mentor is encouraged to contact Michael Chabitnoy of MidPenn Legal Services. Mr. Chabitnoy serves as the coordinator for the mentoring program.

- **Prison Reduction**--No official report.
- **Mental Health**--Number of confirmed suicides through mid-March was four. Due to the pandemic, updated information has not been available. Mr. Leahy hopes to have a more comprehensive report at the October CJAB meeting.

Members agreed that the “Adult CASSP” program has not worked the way planners had envisioned and that an alternative, such as Team MISA, is warranted. On a motion by Mr. Deiderick, seconded by Mr. Donmoyer, the CJAB adopted a resolution calling for the discontinuation of “Adult CASSP” in the county and taking steps to implement Team MISA in Lebanon County.

CJAB DEPARTMENTS: REPORTS AND ISSUES OF INTEREST

Day Reporting Center—Current census is 42, with three pending. However, six of the 42 participants are absconders who have not been attending, as mandated, and are most likely in violation of their probation. Drop-off in the number of participants since the pandemic. In recent weeks, as many as six staff members, including the director, have left the DRC for various reasons, creating a disruption in the program.

Offender Reentry Coalition—Community Action Partnership has submitted a proposal to subcontract management of the position of Offender Reentry Coordinator to F.O.R.E. This is tentative, and no hiring decision has been made.

Heroin Task Force—Task Force held a meeting via ZOOM on August 8th. The annual Recovery Day scheduled for September in Lebanon’s Monument Park has been canceled because of the pandemic. However, the Overdose Awareness Vigil will be held on August 31st at 6:30 p.m. in front of the Courthouse. The number of overdose deaths is not encouraging. In January and February, the number of recorded deaths was 7, with no deaths in March. However, for the April-June period, the number was 14, bringing the total, to date, to 21. If this trend continues, the number of overdose deaths for 2020 is projected to be in the 40-45 range. In comparison, the number of such deaths in 2019 was 28. The Commonwealth is now looking closely at Lebanon County’s statistics, requesting additional information from the Drug and Alcohol Commission. It should be noted that 15 of the 21 deaths involved fentanyl. Mr. Donmoyer reported that the number of overdose-related visits to the E.R. has also increased dramatically. Prior to June, the average number of such visits was five. However, the number of overdose survivors in the E.R. in June soared to 54; the figure for July could be just as high. Mayor Sherry Capello and Mr. Donmoyer will be issuing a joint press release today reminding the public about the dangers of drug abuse and, in particular, the increased danger of fentanyl mixed with other drugs.

Other Updates from CJAB Departments—

IP Funding for FY 2020-2021—Mr. Shott submitted an application to PCCD on July 30th for \$500,000 to continue the county’s IP-Crossroads program. Approval of the application might not come until the PCCD Board meets in early September, though payments will be retroactive to July 1st. Thanks to all CJAB members for voicing their support of the application via email and for authorizing the officers to sign a letter of support on their behalf. A record of the emails as well as the letter of support were attached to the application, as required.

Coronavirus Supplemental Funding—Mr. Shott also submitted an application to PCCD on July 20th for \$74,630 in Coronavirus funding for law enforcement in the county. (The original deadline had been July 6th.) No word from PCCD on the status of the application. As with the IP grant, a thank-you to Board members for giving their approval of the grant and for authorizing a letter of support signed by the officers. A record of the emails from CJAB members and the letter of support were attached to the application, as required.

ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Nothing to report or discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

Time and Location of October CJAB Meeting—The conference room at MH/ID/EI is not available for the October 13 meeting. Members discussed either conducting another session via ZOOM or holding an in-person meeting in the Municipal Building Auditorium, which is set up for social distancing. A Sheriff's sale is taking place in the Auditorium that day, beginning at 10, though Sheriff Klingler anticipates that the sale would end around 10:45. Officers will make a decision closer to the October meeting date.

ADJOURNMENT—The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m. on a motion by Sheriff Klingler, seconded by Ms. Axarlis.

NEXT CJAB MEETING: Tuesday, October 13, 2020, 11:00 a.m., at a location to be determined.