

Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board
Minutes of the Meeting of August 10, 2021

Time: 11:00 a.m.

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

Present

Holly Leahy, MH/ID/EI Administrator and CJAB Vice-Chair; Bruce Klingler, Sheriff; Audrey Rakow, Director of Probation Services; Stephanie Axarlis, Court Administrator; Tina Litz, LCCF Warden; Jamie Wolgemuth, County Administrator; James Donmoyer, Director of Drug and Alcohol Commission; LeAnne Burchik, Executive Director of Domestic Violence Intervention; and, John P. Shott, CJAB Planner.

Absent

Pier Hess Graf, District Attorney and CJAB Chair; Honorable John C. Tylwalk, President Judge; Karen Hess, Director of Domestic Relations; Robert J. Phillips, County Commissioner; Brian Deiderick, Chief Public Defender; Erin Moyer, Director of Children and Youth; Carla Cyr, Veterans Justice Outreach; Jon Hess, County Police Chiefs Representative; and, Kim Mackey, PCCD Regional Representative

Guest

Mr. Nathan Lytle, Caron Foundation

CJAB Vice-Chair Holly Leahy called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

Minutes of 06/08/2021 CJAB Meeting—Approved on a motion by Mr. Donmoyer, seconded by Ms. Rakow.

Ms. Leahy welcomed today's guest, Mr. Nathan Lytle, a behavioral health technician at the Caron Foundation, who is attending the meeting as an observer to learn more about the work of our CJAB. He is also a certified peer support specialist. Self-introductions by the CJAB members. Discussion ensued regarding services for those with mental-health needs as well as those with drug/alcohol addictions. Ongoing concern about the lack of resources, housing in particular, for the County's forensic population. Staffing at facilities offering such services is often inadequate. The demand for workers in almost all sectors is high, and organizations, including the County, are not able to fill positions as quickly as needed. Mr. Lytle is interested in participating in Team M.I.S.A.

Ms. Leahy announced that Board member Karen Hess is retiring from her position as Director of Domestic Relations on September 1. The members wished Karen well in this next chapter of life and thanked her for her service on the CJAB.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- **D.U.I. Court**—At present, 33 offenders are participating in the program, with three set to graduate this month.
- **Renaissance-Crossroads--** Current number of participants is 11. PA Counseling recently removed three offenders from the program for various violations. Census remains low. The program, which PCCD funds through State IP-Treatment grants, finished FY 2020-2021 \$72,000 under budget, prompting concern that continued low numbers could jeopardize future funding levels. The Crossroads Advisory Team, in response to the need to increase the number of participants, is considering revamping the long-term track and

shortening the amount of time needed to complete this phase of the program. A major factor necessitating this alteration is that the PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) is requiring programs like Crossroads to provide more therapy/counseling than is now offered. Under the new treatment criteria, Crossroads participants must receive a minimum amount of therapeutic programming, including group therapy, per day. This will be a difficult requirement to meet for participants who are working or engaged in community service. One possible approach is to end the work-requirement phase of Crossroads and transition certain clients into the Day Reporting Center. PA Counseling has until the end of 2021 to implement these new mandates.

- **Prison Reduction**—Average Daily Population (ADP) at the LCCF was 291 at the end of July. Warden Litz submitted a grant application to PCCD for federal Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) funding to continue the vivitrol program at the LCCF. The application is currently under review by PCCD. Representatives of the N.A.A.C.P recently participated in a ZOOM session to reach out and discuss issues pertaining to the inmate population. The LCCF faces a staff shortage, currently down at least 20 corrections officers. Officers on staff are working a great deal of overtime, raising stress levels. The retention rate among officers is low, and officials are finding it difficult to fill existing vacancies. Concern about low morale. Despite the challenges, members of the corrections staff are performing their duties as best they can, as noted by Mr. Wolgemuth.
- **Mental Health**—TEAM M.I.S.A. (Mental Illness and Substance Abuse) continues to meet monthly, with high attendance rates. To date, the team has discussed the cases of ten individuals. MH/ID/EI is very encouraged by the work performed by the members.

Number of reported suicides in the county, to date, remains at seven. Statistical breakdown: four male, three female; average age of 51.4; four suicides by firearm; one veteran; four victims known by MH/ID/EI; two known to have had drug/alcohol issues.

- **Veterans Court**—Current number of participants is 20, with a possible referral from the D.U.I. Court program.

CJAB DEPARTMENTS: REPORTS AND ISSUES OF INTEREST

Day Reporting Center—Current number of active participants is 35, representing a downward trend. Ms. Rakow noted that the recent PA Superior Court recent ruling in *Commonwealth v. Koger* has had an impact on Probation's ability to utilize the DRC as an alternative to incarceration/sentencing prior to scheduling offenders for court. In this case, the Superior Court ruled that courts must advise an offender of the rules and conditions of probation at the time of sentencing, or the defendant cannot be charge with a technical violation for failing to comply with these rules and conditions.

Heroin Task Force—Number of confirmed overdose deaths through June is 19. Statistical breakdown: 12 male, seven female; 14 involved fentanyl to some degree; 14 white, five Hispanic. The number for 2020 was 39.

Upcoming events sponsored by Stronger Together:

Aug. 31—Overdose Awareness Vigil & Recovery Celebration, 6:30 p.m., County Courthouse
Sept. 25—Recovery Day, 3-5 p.m., Monument Park, 755 Lehman Street, Lebanon

Offender Reentry Coalition—No report. Members agreed that the County need a Reentry Coordinator to reenergize the Offender Reentry Coalition, which has been inactive since Sam Ortiz resigned as Reentry Coordinator to assume leadership of Community Action Partnership in December 2019.

Other Updates from CJAB Departments—

Intermediate Punishment (IP) Funding for FY 2021-2022 (\$500,000)—PCCD awarded the County \$500,000 in State IP-Treatment funding to continue the Renaissance-Crossroads program for another year. Possibility that the County will have to submit a project modification request to PCCD to gain approval of the plans to shorten the long-term track.

CJAB “Mini-Grant” for 2021—PCCD and the County Commissioners Association of PA (CCAP) have approved our CJAB’s application for \$2,000 to support the ongoing suicide-prevention campaign in the County. The County must expend the funds by the end of September.

ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- ***CJAB Strategic Planning and CJAB Standards***—PCCD intends to release another round of Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funding in January. PCCD will link counties’ eligibility to apply for these funds to the Strategic Plans developed by their local CJABs, with emphasis on how the plans align with the priorities set forth by PCCD. Two of the main areas of emphasis by PCCD will be offender reentry and trauma-informed care. The LCCJAB should move forward with the planning process, identifying priorities for a 2022-2023 Strategic Plan. Suggestion that members consider priorities for the new plan at the October meeting, then approve the document in December. Adhering to this timeframe will ensure that the LCCJAB meets the State’s Minimum Operating Standards. Between now and the October meeting, Mr. Shott will survey members about their thoughts on priorities and areas of emphasis. Some possible priorities: reinvigorating the Reentry Coalition, continuing the work of Team M.I.S.A., maintaining the viability of the County’s specialty courts, and providing viable housing for the forensic population.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business to come before the Board.

ADJOURNMENT—With no further business to conduct, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Axarlis, seconded by Ms. Rakow

NEXT CJAB MEETING: Tuesday, October 12, 2021, 11:00 a.m., MH/ID/EI