

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Steering Committee
Meeting Summary for January 18, 2017

1. Call To Order

Committee Member Tyler Schroeder called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. in the County Council Conference Room, 311 Grand Avenue, Suite 105, Bellingham.

Members Present: Jill Bernstein, Barry Buchanan, Todd Donovan, Stephen Gockley, Jack Hovenier, Tyler Schroeder, Anne Deacon, Chris Phillips

Members Absent: None

2. New Year Business

Bernstein welcomed Todd Donovan and Barry Buchanan and explained the function of the Steering Committee.

Committee members discussed the Steering Committee purpose and history; the Task Force expenditure policy; the source of the Task Force funds for 2018; the requirements of the Steering Committee chair; the Steering Committee meeting schedule in 2018; finding someone to write the Task Force's annual report, which is due in June 2018;

The members concurred to schedule quarterly meetings on Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., with a meeting in May to coordinate the annual report and September to discuss the County's budget process.

Bernstein moved to appoint Todd Donovan as the Steering Committee Chair. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

The Committee reviewed the December meeting summary. There were no changes.

3. January 8 Task Force Work Session

Committee members discussed forming a fourth subcommittee to address the criminal justice data needs, to be called the Information Needs and Data Exchange (INDEX) Committee, including:

- Current data sources from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) Odyssey case management system and the Sheriff's Spillman system.
- Potential goals of the INDEX Committee:
 - Bring all the stakeholders to the table to support the continuation of Odyssey for the court systems
 - Identify the ideal data, whether or not it's available currently, that the Task Force needs to look at on a regular basis to understand the issues and identify possible future paths
 - Create consistent language of terms for the Task Force
 - Create a universal data set and agreed-upon set of facts to give credibility to the data

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- Create information that is easy for the public to understand, yet technical enough to involve the exchange of systems
 - Identify system needs for long-term data exchange and integration among the courts, jail, attorney offices, and behavioral health system
 - Identify the data they have currently and the data gaps
 - Start with the information they already have that can be consolidated, and identify what other information the Task Force needs to produce a quarterly report. Also technical people to work on record management system on how to continue to collect data and integrate data systems.
 - Identify for the public the type of data that doesn't exist.
 - Connecting with the Health Department's Ground-level Response and Coordinated Engagement (GRACE) project.
- The County's past effort at data coordination through WENET, the Prosecutor's record management system.
- Potential members if the INDEX Committee including Task Force and non-Task Force members:
 - Tyler Schroeder, County Executive's Office and Task Force Member
 - Raylene King, Blaine Municipal Court Administrator and Task Force Member
 - Darlene Peterson, Bellingham Municipal Court Administrator and Task Force Member
 - Bruce Van Glubt, District Court Administrator
 - Dave Reynolds, Superior Court Administrator
 - Lt. Caleb Erickson, Sheriff's Office
 - A representative from the Prosecutor's Office
 - A representative from the Public Defender's Office
 - A representative from the Lummi Nation
 - A representative from the Health Department

Committee members discussed transitioning the Triage Facility Committee from review of construction to operations to incorporate behavioral health services, including the front door and back door services.

Committee members also discussed the results of the January 8 Task Force planning meeting, including:

- The Legal and Justice Systems Committee priority for creating a pretrial risk assessment and pretrial services unit.
- They process of completing a survey in preparation for the planning meeting
- How the Task Force or County Council will prioritize which new programs to fund
- Engaging in cost-benefit analyses
- The procedure for creating and assigning members to the committees
- The process for developing the 18-month work plan
- Whether the Behavioral Health Subcommittee is working on the GRACE Project
- The benefit of a citizen task force when creating a program

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- Having a discussion at the Steering Committee after the March meeting to consider whether they need restructure the committees.

The Committee concurred to amend the Conclusion and Next Steps section of the draft planning summary:

“The Steering Committee was charged with the responsibility of developing a recommendation for the Task Force for how to proceed. In developing a recommendation, the Steering Committee will consult with key informants familiar with current data collection activities. ~~Tyler Schroeder offered to help lead this effort, with Joy Gilfillan and Irene Morgan expressed strong interest in assisting.~~

The group thanked Ken Mann for his service, and the Co-chairs and facilitator for organizing the planning session. Next steps will include:

- ✓ Facilitator will prepare Report from today's session
- ✓ The Steering Committee will use this report along with reports from Committees to propose a work plan for approval at an upcoming regular meeting.
- ✓ Committees shall use this report, review their charges as outlined in their statements of work, and review their current goals in submitting their proposed work plan and goals to the Steering Committee.
- ✓ ~~Steering Committee will use this Report to prepare an 18 month Plan for approval at February Meeting, in close communication with Committees.~~
- ✓ ~~Committees will refine their work plans and bring back to Task Force for approval Mar/April”~~

Hovenier moved to recommend approval of the Planning Summary as amended to the full Task Force. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

4. Task Force responsibilities going forward

The Committee discussed having the Task Force committees review their statements of work at their February meetings and revise according to the planning session results. Committees shall incorporate any other priorities not included in the Vera Institute report. The Task Force will review the revised statements of work and proposed work plans in March. After the March Task Force meeting, the Steering Committee will meet to finalize the 18-month work plan, considering budget needs and requirements, an annual plan, and an 18-month plan.

The Committee discussed identifying someone to work with the Task Force to write the annual report.

5. Other Business

Hovenier reported on Task Force member requests for clarifying the process by which their proxies participate in meetings.

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Committee members discussed amending the Rules of Order:

- Define when proxies can participate
- Allow Task Force members to participate in multiple committee assignments through assigning proxies to be independent members of the committees.
- Differentiating between stakeholders and those with technical expertise

Hovenier moved to recommend that the Task Force amend the Task Force Rules of Order, “Any Task Force member is encouraged to choose a proxy to represent them for any regular or special full Task Force or committee meeting. Proxies shall not represent any Task Force member if the Task Force member is present. Any Task Force member may request that the Task Force approve a proxy to permanently represent them on a subcommittee to which they are not assigned.” Councilmember Donovan may refine the language of the motion as necessary. The motion was approved by general consent.

6. Next Steps: Ideas & Further Information

Bernstein stated she would like to add a regular agenda item to the Task Force agenda for reports on status and success. Two recent successes include the hiring of a half-time employee for Drug Court at the urging of the Task Force and the hiring of a mental health specialist deputy in the Sheriff’s Office.

Assignments include the formation of the new committee and reaching out to Mark Gardner, City of Bellingham, to possible author the annual report.

Committee members discussed the efforts to create a consumer focus group and a victim focus group:

- There hasn’t been agreement on the cost of a focus group and how formal and technical the focus group would be.
- Current consumer representatives in the form of the Public Defender’s Office representative, Ms. Bernstein as a former criminal attorney, and the two consumer representative positions on the Task Force.
- Defining what would be gained from the focus groups in order to decide what type of focus group would be useful.
- Focus groups not receiving a high rating in the planning meeting.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:13 p.m.