

**Knox County Jail Study Committee
December 11, 2006 Meeting Minutes
Knox County Court House
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I. Meeting convened at 4:30p.m.

Committee members present: Don Choquette, Todd Butler, Tammy Swasey-Ballou, Pastor John Durgin, Chip Laite, Mark Jensen, DO and Geoffrey Rushlau

Ex-Officio members present: Anne-Beebe-Center, Sheriff Dan Davey, Major John Hinkley, Chris Rector, William Packard, Lawrence Nash

Shirley McAfee represented Maine Pretrial Services, Inc. -----Ernie McIntosh represented Donna Dennison

II. Letter of recommendations to commissioners was reviewed/revised and unanimously approved. Final copy is attached as Exhibit 1.

III. Review SMRT's Briefing Paper dated December 10, 2006--complete copy is attached as Exhibit 2

The briefing paper included 15 pages of information so there was an approximately five minute pause so that each person present could at least scan the paper.

Comments of major interest from the briefing paper include:

1. Rod Miller's opening comment: "my thoughts and suggestions, but the recommendations must be tempered by the sensibilities of the Committee. I am not a local taxpayer, nor am I an official or employee who works daily in the system. Ultimately, the Committee must determine what is reasonable, practical and feasible for Knox County."

2. "There are many criminal justice system improvements that would benefit Knox County, but some of these would not yield significant results in terms of jail population reduction. Because new programs and services require additional expenditures, it is important to focus on activities that hold the most promise for reducing the number of secure jail beds that are needed."

3. Inmate length of stay that requires most attention: the inmates that spend 91 to 365 days in jail--this inmate population segment accounted for 56.9% of bed used in 2005. A total of 105 inmates accounted for the 56.9% bed usage. Stated in another way, this inmate segment accounted for 36.4 beds out of a daily average population usage of 64 in 2005!! When Rod Miller superimposed the impact of these inmates on future jail projections, these inmates represent 47.2 of the 83.1 inmates on an average day. The 83.1 inmates represents the Average Daily Population (ADP) projection for 2020--we must remember that to move from ADP to Number of Bed Needed, the ADP must be multiplied by a peaking factor and a classification factor---these two factors add 21.4% to total bed space projections.

4. The potential impact of alternate actions-----accurate financial assessments are not possible because of the small Knox County data base available to work with. An evaluation can be made based on certain assumptions and this is what Rod Miller has done

If we can reduce the number of inmates who spend over 90 days in our jail, the impact would be as follows:

	ADP	Reduction In Number of Beds Needed in 2020
Memo: Total Jail Population	83.1	100.9
10% Reduction	5	6
20% Reduction	10	12
30% Reduction	15	18

Rod Miller quote:

“It is my professional opinion that it is reasonable for Knox County to expect to achieve at least a 20% reduction in the target population within two years, and that an even higher impact is possible. Achieving these results requires the investing of program funds immediately and expanding programs based on evaluation until the maximum impact is achieved.

I have no doubt that Knox County will have a choice of qualified service providers, should you decide to increase funding for alternative programs.”

5. Cost and Benefits:

We presently contract with Maine Pretrial services, Inc (MPS) for a full-time manager and support services for less than \$70,000 annually. If we had two full-time managers we could expand our client case load by 25 to 35. How we define program content etc. will determine outcome benefits---detailed on page 6 of report.

Quote from present MPS proposal with Knox County---each case manager handles case loads between 25-35 clients. The target population consists of adult pretrial detainees, adult probation violators, and adult inmates eligible for post conviction bail, and individuals sentenced for Class C, D and E crimes who have satisfactorily served the first third of their sentence---

Ms. Simoni handles contracts for Maine Pretrial Services out of Augusta, Maine. Some comments made at meeting on April 28, 2004 at special meeting of Knox County Commissioners:

- * **Maine Pretrial is a private, non-profit agency, started in Cumberland County about 25 years ago**
- * **Mission and goal of agency is to provide an alternative to bail**
- * **Agency notifies proper authorities when bail is violated**
- * **Offer Day Reporting---which they offer in Androscoggin County**
- * **Agency is not comfortable with seeing high - risk offenders only 2 or 3 times a week**
- * **In York County they had a mobile unit to drive around and visit clients**
- * **Agency employees only meet with clients in public places**
- * **Agency even does home visits without law enforcement accompaniment**
- * **Psychological evaluations are done of each client**
- * **A strict verification process is followed--type of home environment client would be subject to**
- * **Any refusal to participate in the process and to answer questions honestly disqualifies client**
- * **Agency’s purpose is to make sure each client meets bail conditions**
- * **The agency is not an advocate for any client: they try to be neutral that reports clients’ performance**
- * **IMPORTANT--Agency manager communicates with the county manager, commissioners, sheriff or whomever the county chose, to provide data on a daily basis.**
- * **The agency can also calculate the number of bed days the agency has saved the jail by working with clients out on bail-though there is no guarantee the client would have saved that time in jail**
- * **MPS has a contract with State of Maine providing a drug program for post conviction offenders**
- * **With Knox, MPS’s reports are filed with county administrator---we are familiar with it**

Much of Committee's discussion covered types of crimes that are covered and how---MPS works mostly with Class B crimes. DA Rushlau is concerned about present workload of Knox County case manager, Shirley McAfee:

November, 2006 Report:

Number of clients served	43
Cases closed in November	7
Revoked in November	6---5 positive drug and alcohol screens and one stopped reporting
Number of Drug Screens	28

Full copy of report is attached to minutes

DA Rushlau is concerned about release of inmates and potential danger to our citizens---he will take no chances---no one disagreed.

Could add OUI Community work to MPS's workload and this would free up valuable time at jail. Shirley McAfee gave committee a note stating that adding another caseworker would cost approximately \$42,000 and then could take on duties of OUI Program.

Mark Jensen---we should look at Penobscot Bay Medical Centers' drug program. Hospitals can't get paid--inmates lose insurance when incarcerated. Costs fall thru the cracks and the local taxpayers end up paying the bill---Chris Rector is well aware of the bad situation---no solution to problem yet and the problem is money. Can't get State of Maine to pickup some of these costs.

Tammy Swasey-Ballou ----community support networks can work---how to tap it or connect better with them.

Chip Laite----on bundling---need to try and consolidate programs for maximum benefit.

Anne Beebe-Center---whatever we come up with and implement, the programs must be audited and unquestionable accountability achieved. No one disagreed with this constructive comment. From the beginning, the Jail Committee has stated that reporting actual results achieved by our managers and reporting to a public forum is our Job 1 objective.

John Durgin----we should consider tapping into the University of Maine system---students are available to evaluate programs and doctoral candidates could provide invaluable service to us. If anyone has ties/knowledge/friends working at the U of M, please pass on contact detail to the chair.

Sheriff Dan Davey---we have to bust the drug culture. Hancock County has a Drug Court managed by a retired judge---doing a terrific job---we should look into program. In the Hancock program, if a inmate falls off the wagon/program, it's back in jail to serve more time. Program has shown success--probably because the judge backs up what he says---good way to motivate inmates that have little or no social skills, no family support net work and maybe abused. Drug and mental health problems of these inmates are probably long term and will take a dedicated support network and therapy to correct. Maybe we have to do more to inform the public but suspect the public is overloaded with hearing the same stories over and over---like crying wolf to often. Invite judge to attend one of our meetings---he is willing to do so. Dan has talked to a local judge (Mike Westcot) about a drug court--judge said he is willing to talk about it.,

Potential items to add to MPS workload:

* Weekly review of list of inmates---over 90 days

- * More closely monitor defense attorney's work on cases. Can we expedite the info flow to them?
- * Better, more efficient sharing of information
- * How can we get more "eyeballs" on the inmate problem?
- * Tie in MPS's effort in a new Community Outreach Program
- * Some type of "outreach" program to support inmates efforts to rejoin the community and become productive citizens.
- * If we could establish a Drug Court, could or would MPS work with Drug Court to implement program?

Anne Beebe-Center stated that one way to jump start our efforts to reduce future inmate projections would be to add two more case workers at Maine Pretrial Services. This would give Knox County a total of three case workers. This proposal would give us the manpower to really implement what we know has to be done. Choquette mentioned that this would be a significant, positive step forward since we could get started very early in 2007.

There was more discussion which resulted in the following action plan:

1. Chair to review Jail Committee discussion with County Administrator, Bill Post
2. Request county administrator to prepare a quote to add two new case workers plus any other ancillary costs. Choquette and Post to meet or at least have a conference call with Shirley McAfee and Elizabeth Simoni--the Executive Director of ME Pretrial; her office is in Augusta. Purpose of meeting is discuss proposal and also to obtain their comments/suggestions regarding what programs should be added, need for new or revised reporting, a plan to audit results on a quarterly or semi-annual basis.

Once a plan is developed, then it must be summarized to provide the following information to the Commissioners at their January 17, 2007 meeting (meeting date should have been Jan. 9):

- *Annual program cost--provide enough detail to sell program
- *Develop estimate of number of inmates bed saved--will reduce our 2020 inmate bed forecast---obtain assistance of Rod Miller
- *Develop estimated cost savings accruing from proposal---with McAfee's assistance
- *Explain how the program will be audited---establish accountability---seems each case worker should be held accountable
- *Assume funds will be provided from jail cash reserves
- *Review quote proposal with Rod Miller and obtain his comments/suggestions

At the end of meeting Commissioner Anne Beebe-Center suggested that in order to start an effective public relations campaign that we consider contacting Leanne Robicheau---she might be available to do a series of articles for Knox County---a stipend was mentioned but none of us had a clue as to what the cost might be. Tentative action plan:

1. Jail Committee Chair to contact Leanne to find out if she is interested
2. If she is interested, request county administrator to negotiate stipend to accomplish objective---this statement is an oversimplification since a decision has to be made on how many articles we want, want we want covered---basically set some parameters for the assignment. Or maybe we could just do something on an article by article basis.

This comment was not covered at the meeting but is added by the Chair since it seems relevant to

start thinking about the timing of what we want and what we are attempting to accomplish. Seems our No. 1 priority is getting the added two case workers . Then pick up the public relations effort later in the First Quarter of 2007. Remember, the county administrator also has to negotiate with SMRT for a Phase II contract. The Jail Committee in the First Quarter has to discuss what will be covered in Phase II, what options we want costed out and analyzed---still a lot of work to be done.

(signed)

Don Choquette, Chair
December 15, 2006
Revised January 5, 2007