

**MINUTES**  
**LANCASTER COUNTY-CITY OF LINCOLN JUSTICE COUNCIL**  
**FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2022, 7:30 A.M.**  
**605 S. 10TH ST. ROOM #137A TRAINING ROOM**

*Advanced public notice of the meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board, and the Lancaster County, Nebraska, website and emailed to media on May 4, 2022, and published in the Lincoln Journal Star print edition and website on May 2, 2022.*

*A copy of the Nebraska Open Meeting Act was available on the wall at the back of the room.*

**PRESENT:** Rick Vest and Deb Schorr, County Commissioners; Brad Johnson, Corrections Director; Kim Etherton, Community Corrections Director; Landon Parks, Assistant Director of Community Corrections; Dave Derbin, Chief Administrative Officer; Jeff Curry, Chief Probation Officer, Adult Probation; Hassan Ramzah, UNL Chief of Police; Ben Houchin, Chief Deputy Sheriff; Jane Raybould and Bennie Shobe, City Council members; Jessica Kerkhofs, Chief Assistant City Attorney; Joe Nigro, Public Defender; Spike Eickholt, Government Liaison, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU); Julie Fisher-Erickson, Associate Vice President of Health and Wellness, Lutheran Family Services of NE, Inc.; Mitch Herian, Soval Solutions LLC; Kristy Egger and Graham House, citizens; and Leslie Brestel, County Clerk's Office

Commissioner Schorr opened the meeting at 7:30 a.m. Copies of meeting materials were made available. Introductions were made by meeting attendees.

**AGENDA ITEM**

**1) APPROVAL OF JUSTICE COUNCIL MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 4, 2022**

**MOTION:** Vest moved and Etherton seconded approval of the February 4, 2022 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**2) COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS UPDATE – Kim Etherton, Community Corrections Director**

Etherton reported Community Corrections has a Treatment Diversion program, which is intended to work with repeat offenders with drug and substance charges. She is working with the courts and law enforcement to allow Personal Recognizance (PR) bonds for individuals already lodged on those charges.

Etherton noted there are multiple personnel changes in the department as well as a new case management system.

**A. REENTRY ENHANCEMENT UPDATE**

Etherton stated the reentry program for incarcerated women is going well and she is working to expand the program to incarcerated men. Additionally, there have been meetings between jail and Community Corrections staff as well as Lincoln Regional Center (LRC) staff regarding competency restoration at the jail.

## **B. GOV2GO PILOT PROGRAM UPDATE**

Etherton reported the Gov2Go pilot program has been pushed back to July 2022 due to technical difficulties for interface capabilities in service outreach. Court reminder calls are made by Community Corrections staff.

Parks said the Community Corrections staff has been working with LRC staff on reentry plans for those being released from LRC.

Raybould asked what the Mental Health Diversion stabilization efforts look like. Etherton responded each individual is assigned a mental health specialist, who attends appointments with the individual, assists with housing and programming needs, and connects the individual with a community service provider for continuing services. She added the individuals on this program have a high success rate.

### **3) CORRECTIONS UPDATE – Brad Johnson, Lancaster County Corrections Director**

#### **A. Population Statistics and Charts**

Johnson reviewed the quarterly Corrections update (see agenda packet). There has been a population increase of 1.1% for an average daily population of 565. The jail's operational capacity is 665.

Concerning waiting periods for the LRC, Johnson stated the number of days for individuals waiting to go to the LRC has dropped from 96 to 49. He felt some was due that the LRC suddenly took individuals who had been in the County's custody for a while. The LRC has discussed LRC staff treating less severe competency cases in the jail. The Legislature recently passed LB921 (Change where sentences of imprisonment are served) which prioritizes bed space, assigns a priority list, as well as provides a per diem of \$100 per day plus expenses per individual to the County for individuals who have stayed beyond 30 days in the jail since being sentenced to the LRC. Eickholt added Senators Matt Hansen, Steve Lathrop and John Cavanaugh were supporters of the bill. An interim study has been introduced to focus on this issue.

Johnson demonstrated the Eleanor Creative correction officer recruitment site located at <https://www.helloofficer.careers/>.

### **4) 2017 SENTENCE CONVERSION/REENTRY GRANT – Kim Etherton, Director, Lancaster County Community Corrections; Mitchel Herian, Ph.D., Soval Solutions LLC**

Herian reviewed the final results from the reentry grant (see agenda packet). Etherton said more than 45 individuals were served through the grant; however, to be able to collect meaningful recidivism data, individuals from the first year of the grant were tracked and corresponding data was used in the final report. The individuals all had sentences between nine and twelve months and all were on house arrest and electronically monitored for the length of the program. Additionally, the program participants were either not eligible for other programs or did not successfully complete a prior program.

Raybould asked if the 22 individuals who violated the program represent the number who were removed from the program. Etherton responded anyone who violated the program either had a

warrant or is back in custody.

Fischer-Erickson inquired if peer support is offered throughout the program. Etherton answered yes.

Etherton stated she is hoping to introduce culturally sensitive treatment programming for young black men and women.

Parks discussed the risk-needs assessment related to the individuals in the program. The higher the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LSCMI) score, the higher the individual's risk of reoffending. Curry added for those in Adult Probation, case managers are assigned varying amounts in their caseloads depending on the LSCMI score of the individuals on probation. LSCI assessments are conducted every six months. He felt for high and very high LSCMI individuals even three to four months of non-offenses is successful.

Herian concluded the results suggest individuals participating in the program are less likely to reoffend.

## **5) AGENCY AND ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES**

### **A. Courts**

No update.

### **B. City Attorney**

Kerkhofs stated the pretrial detention subcommittee is reviewing jail data. Also, recent night court offerings have not been as successful as in the past. It was suggested to advertise the offerings through social media, offer them more frequently to continue cases through the system, and to offer warrant amnesty for misdemeanors with night court.

### **C. County Attorney**

No report.

### **D. Public Defender**

Nigro reported District Court has had meetings reviewing the appointed counsel rates. Lancaster County pays \$75/hour on felonies while many counties pay \$125 or more per hour depending on the offense.

### **E. Law Enforcement**

Houchin said The Bridge Behavioral Health will no longer be taking alcohol-related emergency protective custody cases due to staffing issues. This will begin for the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office (LSO) on June 30 while the Lincoln Police Department (LPD) and University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) have different contract end dates. Ramzah added Bryan Health and CenterPointe have been involved in ongoing conversations about this issue.

Houchin also reported on staffing shortages due to deputies retiring. LSO is adding a Crime Analyst position. He also reviewed State statistics from January 2018-December 2021 on the racial makeup of traffic stops as follows: 83.5% are Caucasian; 5.3% African American; 6.4% Hispanic and 2.5% are Asian.

**F. Probation**

No updates.

**G. Service Providers**

Fisher-Erickson stated Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) grants have been extended to cover costs of care navigators and medical management staff. She also discussed staffing shortages resulting in less timely care for clients.

**H. Other Community Partners**

Eickholt stated rates for contracted attorneys are low with a high demand rate.

**6) NEXT MEETING – FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, 2022**

Informational only.

**7) ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 a.m.

Submitted by Leslie Brestel, County Clerk's Office