



**Dallas County Criminal Justice Advisory Board
Minutes for Monday, March 21, 2011**

Welcome & Introductions, Commissioner Garcia called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM. Last month's minutes were approved. Dr. Michael Noyes introduced Christina Crain, who provided an informative presentation regarding the DOORS (Dallas One-stop Optimized Reentry System) Program.

DOORS Presentation, Christina Melton Crain

Ms. Crain, who served on the TDCJ Criminal Justice board for 7 years, was happy to announce that on 2/16/11, DOORS received its 501 (c)(3), a Texas non-profit organization designation. A packet on the DOORS program was handed out to all attendees. The program is a county wide re-entry solution that was developed and implemented in partnership with the City of Dallas, Dallas County Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB), and Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). It formerly operated solely under the auspices of *Safer Dallas, Better Dallas*, but it's now operating with *Safer Dallas, Better Dallas*, as a supporting, affiliated organization. DOORS will act as an umbrella organization that will provide staff and IT systems that will assist in facilitating successful re-entry services by partnering the needs of ex-offenders with the services of more than 50 different community/faith based organizations and more than a dozen government/private providers.

DOORS purpose is to address the re-entry needs of the county via the development and use of a multi-dimensional databases (the Support Optimization System or SOS) to form a seamless collaborative network. The system will link a formerly incarcerated person (FIP) needs database to an existing database of competent providers. It will later link with other involved users such as legal, government agencies, foundations, churches, etc., creating both a common language for re-entry and a critical delivery tool.

Key components of DOORS will be

- a) Standardized assessments to create a personalized life plan
- b) Uniform & monitored case management partnering with non-profits
- c) Evidenced-based practices for services offered
- d) Independent evaluation of outcomes.

DOORS identified seven (7) locations for the One-Stop Reentry Centers throughout the City of Dallas; a map of the locations was in the handout. The offenders are sent to vendors, and by way of the IT systems, the offenders are tracked up to four (4) years. There are a few providers who are doing evidence-

based analysis and research. And there are a few who monitor the offenders in linking the funds with an offender.

Dallas' DOORS has been designated as the TDCJ Pilot Program for the Re-Entry Services Model, and has applied for a grant with the Governor's office. Once the grant is received, DOORS staff will meet with stakeholders from the Dallas County Criminal Justice System to discuss the structure of referrals to the program.

While monitoring 100 offenders currently incarcerated at the Dallas County Jail, DOORS works with the offender's family members and children to educate them with the hope of addressing issues that would cause them to re-offend. Also, they are working with Parkland Jail Health Services, Metrocare & other groups.

The handout had a list of their Board of Directors, Advisory Council, and a list of officers. They have their own legal counsel, David Rosenberg. Their next meeting is scheduled for May.

Mary Kay is a partner in the job skills program. They are working hard to get corporate companies to be involved in the network. They are educating corporate America about the tax incentives for companies that are hiring formerly incarcerated people. The main office is located in Richardson, and Martha Salmeron is the Administrative Assistant. The South Dallas office is located in the Bill J. Priest Center. Vicki Hallman is the Director for the DOORS Task Force.

Someone asked Ms. Crain how a client would access their services. Ms. Crain said that they were asking all agencies and people to be a referral source or self-referrals. They will be having a meeting with all diversion courts for referrals. They want to work with these pre-release offenders soon. Their goal is to get this put into statute as a requirement for those who are coming out on parole with re-entry services as a condition of parole. Currently, offenders are released without any community linkage or referral contact. Even an offender who has served a flat term sentence will need help re-entering society and re-engaging.

At the last TDCJ session, Vicki Hallman was in Austin at the State Re-Entry Task Force. She discovered that there were not a lot of re-entry efforts in place. DOORS goal is to be a model and to have TDCJ be supportive of the program. Also, they are working with the Texas Workforce Commission to possibly obtain federal funding. Commissioner Garcia thanked Ms. Crain for the information and asked that she and CJAB be kept updated.

Commissioner Garcia asked everyone to introduce themselves and state their title and agency name. After introductions, Commissioner Garcia requested reports from the CJAB standing committees.

Corrections Committee (Jail Population) presented by **Ron Stretcher**

6,500 was the jail population as of 3/9/11. Jail population is in a seasonal downward trend. The homeless people in the jails are also trending down. 650 to 1150 per month are being referred to NorthStar. Ron presented a graph of the breakdown of incarcerated people from January 2007 to February 2011. 2010 showed a noticeable increase in jail population in comparison to the other years. Ron mentioned that valuable resources are found in our diversion programs and thanks to the NorthStar system for assisting in funding these programs. With the assistance of NorthStar we are getting people back into their managed care group and linked back up with their service providers instead of putting them back into jail.

Ron pointed out that there has been a decrease in defendants who are serving county jail time, and he mentioned that the transfers to the state jails are quicker. Ron also elaborated on the impending challenges to the system as it relates to treatment dollars.

Ron said that we are making good assessments and are identifying those people with mental illnesses better and faster. He said that there is a system to track them only if they are in the managed care system (NorthStar).

One positive outcome is (OCR) outpatient competency restoration. Ron said that we have about 80 folks waiting for the State Hospital which is down from over 100 in the past. A new facility in Montgomery County has helped get more people into the state hospitals. We have had good luck in getting them into outpatient care, and getting them hooked into a provider in the community. Our next challenge will be as our resources diminish, there will be more pressure placed on other organizations.

Law Enforcement, Chief Mitch Bates, Garland PD

Law Enforcement group met on 3/2 to discuss transports to the Dallas County jail. They need to set up an agreement between the cities and Dallas County. On 3/11, a number of folks from County & Sheriff's office met with a goal of building the framework to put together an agreement for intercity transports. They will be generating a formula for each municipality for their transport costs. They are waiting for legal staff to draft the documents. Ryan Brown is helping with the budget figures. The final step is making MOU documents. He is positive they will be able to reach an agreement. Each city will have to make their decision. Some of the cities are small with a number of transfers. We will get it out to the cities and get a resolution for this. Dr. Noyes stated that once it is done, those who use it most, will pay the most. The Sheriff's department went through 12 months of data to come up with the formula and data for a two year agreement for billing. They will use this for now, and after a two-year period, they will enter into another agreement based on the current two year cycle. Commissioner Garcia said she appreciated how quickly they are working on this. It will help for the Commissioners to have this information. It will be a challenge for all the cities,

when we are facing difficult budget times in the future, but preparing a schedule for everyone is good.

Pre-Trial/Diversion, Ron Stretcher

Ron Stretcher provided an update on the Alternative Sentencing and ELM/Bond programs. He explained that the number of persons under supervision is increasing, now at 48. This is very encouraging as these programs have been slower to ramp up than expected. He also pointed out that the number of pretrial release bonds have gone down since funding for one pretrial officer was removed for the FY 2011 budget. Mr. Stretcher discussed the concerns with the potential loss of state funding that currently provides for jail diversion services for 85-90 people.

Jurisprudence, Kevin Brooks

The Committee met about a month ago. The purpose of the meeting was to get all sides communicating. The meeting was with the Dallas County Public Defender's Office, a representative of the Dallas County Defense Lawyers Association and Dr. Noyes. The Plea Offer will be in the Court File within one week of the Case being indicted. Ron Stretcher said it was an excellent discussion and a major accomplishment. It was nice to bring the entire group together.

Courts, Ron Stretcher

Ron provided the update for Judge Burns, who was not available. Ron said that the Courts Committee has been asked to assemble a Judicial Dashboard. This would be for anyone who is a judge or prosecutor. We would like to track the number of new cases, number of disposed cases, how many Public Defenders or court appointed attorneys are being used. We want to know if Judges have concerns about the numbers and make sure we address all of those concerns. Dr. Noyes and Ron will be getting with the Judge about this.

Re-Entry – this was handled by Ms. Crain's DOORS presentation

Public Policy – Delia Jasso is out of the country today. Thanks to DPD Gary Tittle for assembling the legislative information. There were updates on issues the CJAB Public Policy Committee's legislative agenda are supporting:

Blue Warrants - No one understands why the governor has vetoed this twice. The last session Gov. Perry had agreed not to veto it, but did. This has not gone to hearing yet, but they are saying it is not going to pass.

Sobriety Checkpoints - The Senate has referred to committee, but House has not. We need to let people know we support it. We desperately need administrators willing to testify at the committee hearings on both the House and Senate side.

Metal Theft - Several bills, but no hearing being held yet.

Mental Health – They are very worried about budget cuts. Mental health services face a possible reduction in funding. Dallas NorthStar partners and the Dallas County Behavioral System Redesign Task Force (BHLT) are doing an outstanding job of staying abreast of the issues and addressing the committees and members as needed. We need to continue funding for assessments and funding increases for adult probation, specifically for homeless. Ron attached a letter that was signed by the Commissioners Court and was sent out regarding these issues, as it relates to what the numbers would potentially mean if our projected base is cut. It will cost us more than the amount of cuts.

Ryan Brown has prepared information about potential reductions in federal, and state grants. Adult Probation is not a county agency, but by law the County Commissioners provides workspace. Probation's funding comes from the state budget and they depend on appropriation bills. Senate Bill 1 reduces funding for Probation by \$3.72 million and House Bill reduces it by \$6.71 Million. Probation will have to cut the special services they provide such as assessments for courts, public defenders, and plea bargain. It would greatly reduce the options available to our courts to divert offenders from jail and prison. This would push up the numbers in our jail, an estimated annual \$30-45 million in additional to jail costs. We are at a real crisis, and even if assessments aren't cut, without resources, treatment would be drastically cut.

The question was raised – Has the Dallas Morning News drafted a story on this? It had not. There had been a little bit of airtime regarding budget cuts on TV but not newspaper. It was suggested that we need to make sure the DMN is aware of the problem. Commissioner Garcia made a motion to take the impacts of the cuts to the newspaper for an interview and how it would impact the taxpayers. The motion was seconded and approved.

Juvenile Court – Dr. Terry Smith

There are two juvenile bills that have had discussion and several hearings, but they still don't know about final decisions. They met a week and a half ago and are talking about forming a Texas Juvenile Justice Program. The Juvenile Department would lose \$150 to \$250 thousand in funding. We must put a contingency plan together.

JCMS Roll-OUT

Commissioner Mike Cantrell announced JCMS reached a milestone this weekend. JCMS was implemented this weekend in Dallas and next in Tarrant County. JCMS will roll this out statewide to all Juvenile Departments. The JCMS Court piece may be able to push this sooner than expected. It is funded from federal money. Basically, Dallas County and Tarrant County will be able to share their information. They will be looking next at building a system with other counties and law enforcement agencies for jail management. The DA's office

has taken lead in working with Tarrant County regarding the ACMS (Adult Case Management System).

Justice of Peace – Judge Steve Seider

The specific items that are going to be looked into include:

1. Changing Scofflaw program from an IT perspective as to how the Tax Office and the JP Courts efforts coincide;
2. Change the procedures within the JP Courts to more fully support the intent of the Scofflaw Program;
3. Possible expansion of the *Dallas County Wanted* website to include Class A and B misdemeanors and Felonies;
4. Possible enhanced collection of delinquent fines & costs with a concentrated effort on Class C-CPF Warrants;
5. Possible use of Sheriff's Reserve Deputies in support of weekend efforts on Warrant Round-ups;
6. Alternatives to 14.06 letters for Class C warrants that are executed-- i.e. an opportunity for arrestees to plead, pay or post bond;
7. Possible jail space or temporary separate space for holding Class C offenders (warehouse, tents...)

Announcements

Ron Stretcher informed the board that Shay Cathey has changed positions and started work at the County Judge's office. Duane Steele will be the new CJAB coordinator.

Jim Jacks from the U.S. Attorney's Office was in attendance in today's meeting. At every meeting he has attended lately with law enforcement agencies and community, budget issues dominate. A lot of the grant programs are being eliminated. Like the rest of us, they are just waiting on Congress to put out its budget. If anybody has questions about grants, contact his office and they will let you know what they are doing.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.