

Minutes – Criminal Justice Alternative to Incarceration Meeting

Date: July 27, 2022

Time: 12:00-1:30 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Bridgette Nugent, Mark Dresser, Benay Rubenstein, Lance Salisbury, Matt Van Houten, Michael James, Ray Bunce, Deana Bodnar, Mary Orsaio, David Sanders, Sherron Brown, Louise Miller, Rich John, Judy Griffin, Taili Mugambee, Harmony Ayers-Friedlander

Welcome and Introductions – Bridgette Nugent introduced herself as the new chair taking Deanna’s place. She then had each participant give a quick introduction of themselves. She asked for input on benefits of the group, what if anything, participants want to work on that hasn’t been addressed. All participants said that the collaboration, communication, and networking of the group are appreciated. In her introduction **Benay R.** said that what she would like to see is more referrals to College Initiative Upstate. **Dave Sanders** said that one area he thinks needs focus are the goals. Have some initiatives and action steps developed to reach the goals of the CJATI.

- I. **Changes to Agenda** – Sheriff Osbourne is not present to give an update on the unarmed pilot project so that was removed from the agenda.
- II. **Minutes** – Minutes from June meeting approved.
- III. **Chair Updates (Bridgette)**- Being her first meeting Bridgette did not have any updates. She said that she would like to know what goals or action items that the group wants to work on. Bridgette suggested not meeting in August so that the people that have committed to specific goals can think about their goals and the direction they want to go to meet the goals of the group. The committee can reconvene in September to talk about what can be accomplished in the time we have remaining in the year. The group agrees.
- IV. **TIDES Project Update – (Rich John)** The group is composed of volunteers from the community; there are people from Common Council, Legislature, there are property owners, builders, and other interested parties that have been working on this proposal for The Ithaca Designated Encampment Site in response to the growth and spreading out of the current camps. The goals are to have the city designate space that will allow for showers, bathrooms, meeting rooms and cabins with secure doors to stop people from camping wherever they want. The goal is to be respectful in the move. The current policy of not doing anything is not working. Although TIDES may not be a perfect solution it will give different human service agencies a chance to connect with this population that may have healthcare needs, addiction treatment needs or other services that can help them make the changes they need to move into permanent housing and find work. The group has presented to the City Planning and Economic Development Committee. Bridgette has the information from that

and can share with the appropriate people. Rich has also asked Richard Rivera to share a video he made of one of the abandoned encampments. **Dave** reiterated that the showers are a huge need. He wants to know if the showers would be available for others, not just the residents. **Mary** thanked Rich for the work on this project. She said that IPD is aware that there is now dog breeding happening in the encampments and wants to know how that will be addressed. She also asked what the pay for the people that will staff the new development would be and hopes that it reflects the difficult work that they will be doing. Rich said TIDES would be pet friendly for people that can control the pets. Mary reiterated that the Pitbull puppy breeding is becoming an issue with people trying to steal the puppies. The person that owned the puppies used a knife as a threat to get the puppies back. Rich said that as far as pay the city and the county need to be involved and that they need to be able to help fund this and they have not responded yet. Mary reiterated that the success of the program will come from the outreach workers at the cabins staying on and building meaningful relationships with the residents. Rich said that although the budget for this project is large the cost of the encampments now is damage to the businesses, the lowered property taxes and that is money that the current programs are losing. **Louise** said that they get a lot of calls from people in the encampments that have been sexually assaulted and abused by their partners. The victims are not going to rely on the services and the system because there often is no prosecution for these crimes. She asked how the people that go to TIDES to cause harm will be monitored. Rich also said there is the concern that teens may see it as a chance to leave home and have freedom. **Mary** reiterated that the risk of teens being drawn to TIDES is that it then becomes a breeding ground for human trafficking. **Judy** said that she understands that it is a big challenging issue. She said that it is not that the people in the encampments now do not have access to healthcare or mental health services it's about being able to build long-term relationships with the homeless population. She knows of one service provider that spent 2 years building a relationship with someone in the encampment before the person would accept medical care. Her concern is that the success of a project without significant buy-in and the support of the people that live in the encampments and they need to be a part of the process, or it is doomed to fail. **Rich** said that he is aware that this is hard and that getting participation is going to be hard. His hope is that the current service providers can help in ways that are more structured and more helpful. He said that there should be a city policy that addresses the potential issues and make sure that there are rules in place that can make the program succeed. **Taili** said that there needs to be a long-term plan for TIDES because it is a big project. Taili asked if Rich could provide the budget for the project so that he can present it to the Legislature. He wants to be able to develop a strategic plan that is accurate for time that it will take to heal this situation. **Lance** said that if there is too much structure imposed the people in the encampments are going to just move to a different area. He said there needs to be more engagement with the people in need for there to be success. Taili agreed that the buy-in of the population that this program is looking to serve, rather than imposing new policies

and requirements on them is important. Rich said that there is a construction budget and an operating budget that Taili will get. Rich said that getting the city and county on board is very important at this point.

- V. IPD Dashboard- (Mary Orsaio)** Mary shared her screen showing the dashboard. The dashboard was created in-house by an IPD sergeant. It shows the calls that IPD has responded to, it is updated every Tuesday. Arrests are made on 3% of calls that IPD responds to. Blue represents the primary officer, and the yellow is back-up responses. There are 4.7 officers for each shift. It used to be 6. There is a section for what calls are reported as compared to the observed call type. The dashboard also shows location of calls. There is a chart that shows call volume for each day. If you click on a location, it will show the types of calls at that location. If you make a mistake when trying to access different parts of the dashboard you can click “reset filter” to start over. Mary said that there is a 10-minute tutorial video that is available for anyone that wants to know more. **Dave** asked if there is an option to create an annual report from this dashboard. Mary said there is an IPD annual report. She said that anyone that wants that annual report can email the chief. She said that the data from the dashboard and the annual report is the same. Dave asked if people could access things in the dashboard from previous years. Mary shared the process for getting that information from the dashboard. Bridgette asked if the data is used to make changes to their policies and procedures. Mary said it is used to determine where and when officers are needed the most. **Bridgette** reiterated what **Sherron** said in the comments that the information on the dashboard is important for transparency and for service providers. **Taili** asked if a collaborative unit can be formed to evaluate the information to resolve some of the community issues, rather than expecting IPD to come up with all the solutions. Mary reiterated that it shows where there are needs in the community for services that can help the people get what they need before it leads to a call for IPD. **Lance** said that the chief at IPD has pointed out that 1/3 of the calls that IPD receives could be handled by unarmed responders. This data is useful in showing that. **Bridgette** agreed that there is an overlap in the work CJATI does and the larger RPS plans and discussions. **Judy** said that she is interested in having people collaborate with her on the first goal and that the information in the dashboard can help with that.
- VI. Long Term Inmate Report- (Capt. Bunce)** Bridgette shared her screen as Capt. Bunce reported. He said that one inmate took a plea and is waiting for sentencing. Another inmate has been sentenced and is completing their sentence. Matt reiterated that there are two people that are going to trial.
- VII. TCMH staff and intake process update: (Harmony)** Harmony said that the staff issues that they had are resolving and they are able to move people through the intake process faster. She is sharing an easy access intake form for other agencies to use when they refer people to MH. **Judy** asked if there are any restrictions for people to use the easy access intake, Harmony said no but that if there is something

specific that the person needs, or they have extra needs the service provider can reach out to MH to let them know that.

- VIII. Adjournment-** Bridgette adjourned the meeting. She is going to send the TIDES documents and encouraged folks to meet in August to map out their goals in preparation for the September meeting. Next meeting is September 28, 2022 @ 12:00 via Zoom.