

**LARIMER COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS**  
**ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**  
**September 15, 2020**

**Members Present:** Ed Seegrist, William Sublette, Katie Mangan, Jeff French, Kristine Miller, Cliff Riedel, Commissioner John Kefalas, Sam Houghteling, Sid Simonson, Staci Shaffer, Laura Walker, Chris Gastelle, Chief Judge Stephen Howard, Allyce Lobdell, Heather O'Hayre, Sara Steen, Chief Swoboda

**Staff Present:** Shelley Durkin, Alexis Ongley, Mike Ruttenberg, Alex Danielson, Dana Hersch, Ingrid Schroeder, Alexis Avitia, Nikki Zulian,

The meeting took place via Zoom and was called to order at 12:04pm by Chair Jeff French

- **Welcome/Introduction of New Board Members**
  - Jeff French welcomes everyone back from the August break. He welcomes our new Board members: Allyce Lobdell and Heather O'Hayre.
  - Allyce is serving as a community member. She works in the College of Veterinary Medicine at CSU and has a background in sociology.
  - Heather is the new Human Services Director and will be replacing Laura Walker on the Board.
- **Victim Services Requests**
  - Alexis Avitia with Victim Services has a couple requests for the Board. Currently victims of Diversion Clients are only allowed a written statement for victim input. Victim Services is requesting that the victims be able to give an oral statement during selections, just like victims of Transition clients.
  - Jeff French brings this proposal to the Board for a vote. Chief Swoboda asks for some clarification on what is being voted on and William Sublet explains that he would like a little more time to think prior to voting.
  - Alexis Avitia shares that when she hears the victim's perspective during her phone calls, many of them are fine just passing along the information, however some feel like they want more of a voice.
  - Mike Ruttenberg and Alexis also state that it is written in the Victim Rights Act that they are to be given a voice.
  - Alex Danielson mentions that with Diversion clients, Evaluations has a tighter timeline for selections with a quicker sentencing turn around.
  - It is asked to table the discussion and vote until the October meeting. Alexis Ongley and Alexis Avitia will gather information to send out to the Board and this will be tabled to next month.
- **Program Wait Times and Capacity Levels**
  - Alex Danielson reports that the current waitlist is low. The Women's side has open beds. Both the Men and Women's programs are trying to get people in as quick as possible as well as looking to pull in DOC clients.
- **Expansion Update**
  - Alexis Ongley explains that the expansion is moving forward. The Directors have been working with the County and the Architects on plans and to make sure the space meets the needs of the population.
  - Mike Ruttenberg mentions that the treatment programs will be expanding.
  - Alexis shares that Community Corrections is looking forward to collaborating with ASD to serve our female population.
- **Student Intern for Transgender studies**
  - Alexis Ongley is excited to share that we are working with a graduate student from CSU who is conducting a study on transgender clients in a Community Corrections setting. She will be facilitating some interviews with staff and clients around best practices as well as giving recommendations for future protocols and developing trainings for our staff.
  - Jeff French asks about Community Corrections transgender population.
    - Alexis Ongley shares that in the last few years we have seen an increase in the transgender population, on average 1-3 transgender clients at any given time. She shares that we need to be able to meet them individually along their process.
  - Commission Kefalas asks how we currently accommodate for the transgender population?
    - Alexis says that it begins with the evaluations team and getting to know them. The clients

can advocate their preference with how they are substance monitored and pat searched, as well as programs they want to attend (treatment, eating, rec, etc.) She explains that Corrections is very binary as we only have men's and women's housing. Where they are housed can have an impact on the client themselves as well as who they are housed with. Covid has been challenging for transgender population because of cohort grouping and limited movement; transgendered clients have been a little more limited with what choices they can make.

- **Conrad Ball Update**

- Jeff French first shares the bad news – we had to cancel this year's Conrad Ball because of COVID-19 and therefore were not able to award Gary Darling this year's award. We will present 2 awards in 2021, combining the 2020 and 2021 recipients.
- He jokes that the good news is that he would have been the MC this year; we are in luck that we do not have to put up with his jokes and commentary.

- **Holiday Luncheon Update**

- Unfortunately, we also had to cancel this year's holiday luncheon. We will come up with something special to celebrate the season while social distancing.
- Chris Gastelle suggests that Jeff can host and do some ventriloquism.

- **Judge Howard Retirement**

- Jeff French extends the board's sadness and excitement for Chief Judge Howard's retirement. He thanks Judge Howard for all he has done for Larimer County and Community Corrections. Judge Howard shares that he feels a little bad about leaving, but he says he will be around and will continue his support for community corrections and Larimer County. He mentions that he will still be around for a few more months.

- **Letter from Dean Williams to CCCC**

- Dana reports that there has been a huge drop in DOC referrals. The Coalition had sent a letter to Dean Williams requesting to collaborate with him, advocating community correction programs, and asking why the referrals have been so low. The Coalition received a letter back 4-6 weeks later; Williams said they will stay with their current protocol that facilities that are determined to be COVID Phase III will not transfer any clients out of the facility. Dean Williams also explained that people are choosing to opt out of Community Corrections due to the cost, availability of drugs, waiting for parole boards, etc. See attached letters.
- Jeff French's opinion is that offenders are getting paroled much earlier; they do not want to go through community corrections when they can instead expect to get paroled early.
- Judge Howard asks how much of this is related to COVID-19 and if Dean Williams feels like it is safer to put clients from prison straight to parole as oppose to putting them in Community Corrections? Jeff French explains he does not know Dean Williams thoughts, he only has opinions as to what he is thinking.
- Dana shares that programs across the state are hearing that there have been higher instances of new charges by parolees as well as overdoses by parolees since COVID and the early releasing to parole.

- **Facility Update**

- Dana Hersch reports that LCCC is slowly moving back to normal operations for both staff and clients. We have made steady increases on getting people employed, with 10-12 new people getting jobs a week. We just reinstated church passes and beginning next week clients will receive pre-Covid pass times with restrictions on where they can go. The clients are happy with the added pass time and locations.
- Around 65% of clients are employed.
- Alexis Ongley contributes that we are continuing to manage the facility through symptom checking, surveys, handwashing, sanitizing, etc.

- **Evaluations Supervisor**

- Jeff shares and congratulates our new Evaluations Supervisor, Alex Danielson. Congratulations, Alex!!
- Nikki Zulian will be filling in the Evals vacancy, welcome!
- Laura Walker jumps in to say thank you to the Board for all their important and hard work. She will miss everyone. Jeff thanks her for her time on the Board.

- **Adjourn at 12:43**