

Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board
Minutes of the Meeting of August 14, 2023

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Place: Second Floor Conference Room, MH/ID/EI, 220 East Lehman St., Lebanon

Present

Holly Leahy, MH/ID/EI Administrator and CJAB Vice Chair; Honorable John C. Tylwalk, President Judge; Audrey Fortna, Director of Probation Services; Stephanie Axarlis, Court Administration; Tina Litz, LCCF Warden; James Donmoyer, Director of Commission on Drug and Alcohol Abuse; Jamie Wolgemuth, County Administrator; Brian Deiderick, District Attorney's Office; Michael Ritter, Domestic Violence Intervention; Stephanie Hamersky, Domestic Relations; Jeffrie Marley, Sheriff; Kim Mackey, CJAB Regional Representative; and, John P. Shott, CJAB Planner.

Absent

Robert J. Phillips, County Commissioner; Jonathan Hess, Police Chiefs Representative; Erin Moyer, Director, Children and Youth; Megan Tidwell, Chief Public Defender; Carla Cyr, Veterans Justice Outreach.

Guests

Norma Gonzalez, SARCC; Michael Schroeder and Lori Burrus, Lebanon Branch #26AA of the N.A.A.C.P.; Karen Rough, Executive Director, Lebanon County Housing Authority; Theresa Johnson, Step Into Life Ministries.

Proxies entered for the record: Brian Deiderick, Senior Deputy District Attorney, for Pier Hess Graf, District Attorney and CJAB Chair; Stephanie Hamersky for Michael Anderson, Director of Domestic Relations; Mike Ritter, Deputy Director, for LeAnne Burchik, Executive Director of Domestic Violence Intervention.

CJAB Vice-Chair Holly Leahy called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Presence of a quorum noted. Self-introductions by the members.

Minutes of June 12, 2023 CJAB Meeting—Approved on a motion by Ms. Fortna, seconded by Ms. Axarlis.

Approval of Amendments to CJAB Bylaws—Ms. Leahy announced that she was moving action on the proposed amendments to the end of the meeting. The proposed amendments would add a representative of Lebanon Branch #26AA of the NAACP and the Executive Director of the Lebanon County Housing Authority as core members.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- **D.U.I. Court**—At present, 32 offenders are actively participating in the program, with three pending. This represents a significant uptick in the number of participants. Rising numbers in this and the other specialty courts could necessitate reevaluating probation officers' caseloads.
- **Prison Reduction**—Current Average Daily Population (ADP) is 257, with 22 inmates currently involved in the Medical Assisted Treatment (MAT) program. PCCD will not extend the vivitrol grant past 9-23-23; only inmate received a shot this year. PrimeCare is able to administer vivitrol shots, but does not provide any education component. A Primecare doctor is also available via zoom. The reinstated work release

program continues, though number of participants is low. Some employers reluctant to get involved with the program. COVID protocol requires an inmate who wants to participate in work-release to be vaccinated and stay quarantined for up to ten days.

- **Mental Health**—To date, Team M.I.S.A. has discussed the cases of 41 individuals. Statistical breakdown: all 41 have current or a history of mental health issues; four have an intellectual-disabilities diagnosis; 17 have current or a history of drug/alcohol abuse; two are veterans; and, ten are currently or have been chronically homeless. Team M.I.S.A. has also discussed the following matters:
 - 1) Coordination between the Public Defender’s Office, District Attorney’s Office, LCCF, and PrimeCare for a generic order focused on expediting the process of obtaining an evaluation order for individuals.
 - 2) Whether a public defender could still be appointed if an individual refuses the public defender’s services or to expedite the ability to obtain orders submitted for evaluation.
 - 3) Creating a Memorandum or Understanding between all agencies involved with the team.

The number of confirmed suicides, to date, is 12. Statistical breakdown: 10 males, two females; average age of victim, 42.8; eight by firearm, two by hanging, one hit by train, one by asphyxiation; one veteran; five were residents of Lancaster County; seven had known mental health histories, two with known substance-abuse issues; ten white, one Hispanic, one unknown.

Two females are now residing in the County-owned cottage behind the MH/ID/EI building. The County is looking to add a third female resident if she meets the criteria for placement there. All residents are from the forensic (justice-involved) population.

- **Veterans Court**—Current number of active participants is 18, with one pending. The program has exceeded expectations since its inception. Our court team won the recent softball tournament against court teams from other counties. Trophy on display in Courtroom One.
- **Drug Court**—Current number of active participants is 19, with two offenders slated to be accepted into the program. Four more applications are pending. Program is exceeding expectations.

CJAB DEPARTMENTS: REPORTS AND ISSUES OF INTEREST

Day Reporting Center—Number of participants has not improved, leaving the future of the program quite uncertain. Often difficult for offenders who work full-time to also spend a mandated amount of time at the DRC.

Heroin Task Force—Two events on the calendar: Overdose Awareness Vigil, Aug. 31, 7-8 p.m. in front of the County Courthouse; Recovery Day, Sept. 30 from Noon to 3 p.m. at the Lebanon YMCA.

Confirmed overdose deaths, to date, is 23. Statistical breakdown: 18 from 17042/17046 zip codes, three from 17078 (Palmyra), one from Annville, one from outside the area; oldest victim was 75, youngest was 26; 13 males, 10 females; 17 deaths (74 %) involved fentanyl. The number of confirmed overdose deaths in 2022 was 29.

Offender Reentry Coalition—No report.

ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- ***IP Grant for FY 2023-2024***—The County had submitted an Intermediate Punishment (IP) grant application to PCCD in May in the amount of \$278,708. Mr. Shott shared a breakdown at the June meeting of how the funds will be expended. PCCD approved the grant application with no revisions. A modification to the project might be needed later in the fiscal year if circumstances, particularly with the DRC, change and have an impact on the budget.
- ***Strategic Planning for 2024-2025***—The Board should engage in strategic planning for the next two years. Regular strategic planning is expected of CJABs to remain in compliance with PCCD’s minimum operating standards. In recent years, such planning has taken place at regular CJAB meetings instead of at special meetings or retreats. Mr. Shott will survey Board members over the next few weeks about their priorities and areas of emphasis. Further discussion about priorities to occur at the October meeting, with a final plan to be approved by the Board at the December meeting. On a motion by Ms. Leahy, seconded by Mr. Deiderick, the Board voted to take steps toward adopting a Strategic Plan for 2024-2025.

NEW BUSINESS

- ***PCCD Updates***—PCCD is preparing to release a new round of Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funding as early as this fall. It behooves CJABs to have strategic plans in place to qualify for this funding. Local plans should also pay close attention to the priorities set forth in the PCCD Strategic Plan. PCCD has also made numerous other funding opportunities available, including those related to regional policing, Medical Marijuana Act enforcement, and COVID mitigation at prisons and detention centers. Technical assistance grants of up to \$2,000 for CJAB-related activities should also be available early next year. Annual CJAB Conference is slated for April 9-10, 2024. This is a time for local CJABs to suggest topics to address at the conference or to apply to be presenters.
- ***Community Health Council***—The Council has received a grant to offer trauma-sensitive certification for up to 16 individuals, preferably criminal justice professionals. Coursework to be presented by Lakeside Global Initiative (LGI), beginning in January 2024. The certification course will consist of 20 sessions, each session lasting 2.5 hours. Sessions will be live (but virtual) and held every other week, though LGI will consider a truncated schedule if enough interest exists. Mike Ritter of DVI will be reaching out to agencies and departments over the next few weeks to recruit appropriate individuals to participate.
- ***Crisis Intervention Consultation***—The County Commissioners have approved contracting with the Panto Group to serve as consultants to MH/ID/EI for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant. Don Panto and Sarah Eyster of the Panto Group have begun their consultation services. They will be interviewing key stakeholders, including many CJAB members, to obtain information and opinions on how Crisis Intervention now functions, including both good and bad impressions. Open feedback from stakeholders is vital to determine a baseline before the Panto Group can create a “roadmap” for transforming crisis services to include Mobile Crisis Teams and a walk-in center. The consultation services and transformation plan will be a two-year project. Members should feel free to contact Ms. Leahy with any questions.

- *Amendments to CJAB Bylaws—*

Proposed Amendment #1—Adding Lebanon Branch #26AA of the N.A.A.C.P. as a core member.

Lengthy discussion ensued about core membership on the CJAB and whether advocacy groups and entities outside of county government should be able to vote on grant applications, strategic plans, and other matters that come before the Board. Noted that Philadelphia County’s CJAB is comprised of both voting and non-voting members. Concern that other advocacy groups would request membership on the Board. Domestic Violence Intervention, though not a county department, was added to the core membership in accordance with PCCD’s Minimum Operating Standards for CJABs, which require that a victims’ rights organization be on the Board. Membership for the Housing Authority is also required under the operating standards. Veterans Justice Outreach is also not a county entity, but is a federal operation that works with veterans involved in the county’s criminal justice system. On a motion by Mr. Deiderick, seconded by Mr. Wolgemuth, the Board voted to table the proposed amendment. Issue to be discussed further at future CJAB meetings, possibly as part of developing the strategic plan.

Proposed Amendment #2—Adding the Executive Director of the Lebanon County Housing Authority as a core member.

Approved on a motion by Mr. Deiderick, seconded by Sheriff Marley.

ADJOURNMENT—With no further business to conduct, the Vice-Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m. on a motion by Ms. Axarlis, seconded by Ms. Fortna.

NEXT CJAB MEETING: Monday, October 9, 2023, 9:00 a.m., MH/ID/EI

