

## Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board

### Minutes of the Meeting of August 12, 2024

**Time: 9:00 a.m.**

**Place: Second Floor Conference Room, MH/ID/EI, 220 East Lehman St., Lebanon, PA, 17046**

#### Present

Pier Hess Graf, District Attorney and CJAB Chair; Holly Leahy, MH/ID/EI Administrator and CJAB Vice Chair; Stephanie Axarlis, Court Administrator; Jamie Wolgemuth, County Administrator; Audrey Fortna, Director of Probation Services; Tina Litz, LCCF Warden; Karen Raugh, Executive Director, County Housing Authority; Jeffrie Marley, Sheriff; James Donmoyer, Director of Drug and Alcohol Commission; Stephanie Hamersky, Domestic Relations; Joe Duke, Lebanon Branch #26AA, N.A.A.C.P.; Norma Gonzalez, SARCC; and, John P. Shott, CJAB Planner.

#### Absent

Honorable John C. Tylwalk, President Judge; Robert J. Phillips, County Commissioner; Megan Tidwell, Chief Public Defender; Jonathan Hess, Police Chiefs; LeAnne Burchik, Executive Director, Domestic Violence Intervention; Erin Moyer, Director, Children and Youth Services; Carla Cyr, Veterans Justice Outreach; Kim Mackey, PCCD.

#### Guests

Leroya Ryan, LLC-CEO, I Am An Expert at Being Me; Amelia Marsh, Communications Supervisor, PA Justice Network (JNET); Jason Lipshawn, LCCF intern (Lebanon Valley College)

***Voting proxy entered for the record: Stephanie Hamersky, Assistant Director, for Michael Anderson, Director of Domestic Relations***

CJAB Chair Pier Hess Graf called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Presence of a quorum noted.

**Minutes of June 10, 2024 CJAB Meeting**—Approved on a motion by Mr. Donmoyer, seconded by Ms. Leahy.

Self-introductions by CJAB members.

#### **Guest Presenters—**

**Ms. Leroya Ryan**, CEO of Becoming You Mentoring, spoke about her experiences with the criminal justice system and her eventual determination to turn her life around. Becoming You Mentoring focuses on guiding and assisting ex-offenders. Services offered include assistance in finding a safe home, employment that matches one's skills, referrals for mental health and addiction, building family relationships, and health and well-being.

*Ms. Amelia Marsh*, Communications Supervisor, PA Justice Network (JNET), discussed the services and information sharing available through JNET. Eligible entities are encouraged to take advantage of this system.

## **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

**D.U.I. Court**—At present, 31 offenders are participating in the program, with one case pending and three others under review.

**Prison Reduction**—The current Average Daily Population (ADP) at LCCF is 299; average length of stay is 21 days. The COVID-mitigation grant ended on July 31<sup>st</sup>. LCCF submitted a \$106,892 grant application to PCCD to continue the vivitrol program for the next two years; the application remains under review. The U.S. Justice Department is strongly encouraging correctional facilities to provide an induction phase of any Medical Assisted Treatment (MAT) maintenance program. LCCF currently provides the MAT maintenance program, but the Prison Board must decide whether to move forward with inductions. Doing so could pose fiscal and security-related challenges. The prison is also undergoing security upgrades.

**Mental Health**—Team M.I.S.A. continues to meet regularly. A recent success for the team was assisting an individual in the transition from LCCF back into the community. This individual is now residing at the Herkey House, which provides transitional housing for those who have a history of substance abuse. He is also receiving community mental-health resources and has remained stable since his release.

Two women graduated from the County-owned cottage behind MH/ID/EI and transitioned into permanent housing. Two new residents moved into the cottage within the last two weeks. It might be January 2025 before the County has an opening at the cottage.

Since February, 169 persons that have either an open or previously had an open case with MH/ID/EI have been incarcerated. Of these, 17 have been incarcerated more than once during the same period.

As of 8/6/24, information from the Coroner's Office reports 17 suicides this year, a significant increase from the five reported at June's meeting. The increase also indicates that the County is on track to exceed the 20 reported suicides in 2023. (The number for 2022 was also 20.) Statistical breakdown: 14 males, three females; average age, 50.4 (youngest 12, oldest 92); 10 by firearm, two by overdose, five by asphyxiation; two veterans; 16 county residents, the other unknown; three with a known mental health history, two with a known substance abuse history, two known to MH/ID/EI; 15 white, one Hispanic, one Dominican; four left suicide notes.

Discussion ensued about adding the county coroner as a core member of the CJAB. Having the coroner or his representative at CJAB meetings would provide the members with more updated information regarding suicides and overdose-related deaths. Some county CJABs currently have coroners on their boards. Adding the coroner as a core (voting) member would entail amending the CJAB Bylaws. Members agreed to have Mr. Shott prepare a proposed amendment and email it to all members prior to the October 5 meeting.

Behavioral Health Summit slated for October 29-30 in Hershey. Lebanon County will be sending representatives from various departments.

Discussions still ongoing about establishing a mental health court in the County. Mr. Duke, representing the N.A.A.C.P. at the meeting, serves on that organization's Public Safety and Criminal Justice Committee as well as the National Alliance on Mental Illness. He expressed support for a mental health court and is willing to be part of any planning.

**Veterans' Court**—At present, 15 offenders are participating in the program, with two pending.

**Drug Court**—30 offenders are currently participating in the program, with two pending.

### **CJAB DEPARTMENTS: REPORTS AND ISSUES OF INTEREST**

**Heroin Task Force Report**—At the end of June, the County had confirmed ten overdose deaths. If this trend continues, the number of overdose deaths for 2024 will be much lower than the 31 deaths reported in 2023. Statistical breakdown: age range of 25 to 65 (average age of 47.7); eight males, two females; five deaths involving fentanyl; seven from 17042/17046 zip codes, one from Jonestown, one from Palmyra, one from outside the County. Mr. Donmoyer's office still has Narcan, test strips, and wound kits available.

Overdose Awareness Vigil scheduled for August 29 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the steps of the Courthouse. Recovery Day coming up in September. Details to be announced.

**Offender Reentry**—Nothing to report. It was noted at the June meeting that the County had received an application from a promising candidate for the position of Offender Reentry Coordinator. No follow-up since then. The position is part-time (15 hours per week) and requires a bachelor's degree. Question whether this education requirement could be limiting the number of candidates.

**Intermediate Punishment (IP) Grant Funding for FY 2024-2025**—PCCD has officially approved the County's \$207,990 application for IP funding for the new fiscal year. The grant funds a wide array of supplies and operating expenses for IP-related programs.

**Indigent Defense Grant for Public Defender's Office**—PCCD has also approved the County's \$95,501 application to fund two new positions in the Public Defender's Office—a part-time mental health attorney and part-time social worker—as well as to fund retention bonuses for each of the four secretaries in the office. This is a two-year grant. The County Commissioners have not yet approved adding the new positions. The Indigent Defense Grant represents the first time that PCCD has made funding available for Public Defender's Offices.

**Domestic Violence Intervention (DVI)**—Porsche Green, Shelter Manager, is now the Assistant Director.

**ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**—Nothing on the agenda

**NEW BUSINESS**—No new business to report.

**ADJOURNMENT**—With no further business to conduct, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 10:03 a.m. on a motion by Ms. Leahy, seconded by Ms. Axarlis.

**NEXT CJAB MEETING**—Monday, October 7, 2024, 9:00 a.m., MH/ID/EI.