

Cayuga County and City of Auburn Collaborative on Police and Community Relations

Alternatives to Police Response and Procedural Justice - Subgroup 3

Meeting Notes November 24, 2020

- This meeting conducted via Zoom will be viewable on both the City of Auburn and Cayuga County webpages.
- Facilitators: Jeff Dygert, Manager – City of Auburn
Steve Lynch, Director of Planning and Economic Development – Cayuga County
- Participants: Kathy Aguilar, Fred Cornelius, Jimmy Giannettino, Lloyd Hoskins, Rhoda Overstreet-Wilson, Heather Petrus, Kyle Platt, John Socci, Nicole Stewart, Greg Gilfus
- Guest appearances by: Cayuga County Sheriff Brian Schenck and Port Byron Police Dept. Officer in Charge Meagan Kalet
- Facilitators mentioned the separate but related work that Cayuga County is undertaking to update their Alternatives to Incarceration Program.
- Facilitators mentioned local efforts to comply with recent changes mandated by NYS related to discovery laws and process as well as bail reform.
- Facilitators referenced previous community outreach efforts of APD and CCSD and the participation of several community groups prior to this initiative.

Proper Response to Criminal Calls

- K. Aguilar inquired about access to translators for non-English speaking residents.
 - Several law enforcement participants shared their experience and their agency's current approach.
 - It seems that this is an area that could benefit from further collaboration and/or policy development.
- R. Overstreet-Wilson inquired about how calls for assistance are determined to be criminal or non-criminal.
 - Several law enforcement participants shared their experience and their agency's current approach.
 - As this topic begins with the first call for assistance, most often through the 911 Center, it seems that a response to this question and input from the Cayuga County 911 Center would be appropriate. J. Dygert will reach out to CC911 to ask for their response prior to the next meeting and for their participation in the next meeting.
- Discussion of available resources for mental health and/or domestic violence related issues, for example, the Mobile Crisis Team.

- J. Socci asked about the APD Crisis Intervention Team
 - N. Stewart explained the City/County/State approach currently in use.
 - J. Socci asked if an appropriate level of resources are available to support the program.
 - H. Petrus clarified that Cayuga Counseling Services work is governed by NYS Article 31 regulations and confirmed that the regulations create funding constraints that limit the ability of her agency to provide field visits/response at the optimum level.
 - J. Socci – law enforcement shouldn't be solely responsible for the delivery of some of these services. There is a value in these services to the victims and families impacted.
 - The APD/ Cayuga Counseling Victim Specialist Program was discussed. Funded through a grant. A new grant will be providing a similar service through the CCSD.

Diversiónary Programs

- R. Overstreet-Wilson – How are diversionary program opportunities accessed and how are they made available to those in need?
 - F. Cornelius explained the various courts and programs available.
 - ◆ District Attorney's office reviews cases before they are assigned to individual courts
- R. Overstreet-Wilson – How does the DA's office determine eligibility and how do they maintain impartiality?
 - ◆ It seems that these questions would be best addressed by the DA's Office. J. Dygert will reach out to the DA's Office for a response and their future participation in these discussions.
- L. Hoskins – discussed centralized arraignment and its advantages – no one is arraigned w/o legal counsel
- H. Petrus – detailed the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services 13A update – Alternatives to Incarceration process – currently underway via a working group similar to this one – includes Pretrial Diversion, Pretrial Release, Bail Reform, etc.
- Several participants in this group are also taking part in the County's Alternatives to Incarceration update – the comments and discussion from this group will be forwarded.
- R. Overstreet-Wilson – is familiar with this program and the pre-trial diversion program. Shares that there are segments of the community that may not be provided access to these court alternative programs
- K. Aguilar – are these programs available to the non-English speaking community?
 - ◆ H. Petrus – Translators are available
 - ◆ L. Hoskins there are a few attorneys involved that speak other languages and have been utilized.

Community Partners

- Provided lists of agencies that APD and CCSD collaborate with
- H. Petrus – the working group would benefit from a representative from the substance abuse/recovery community (partners from CHAD)

Community Expectations

- K. Aguilar – Expressed her experience with and support for SRO programs in schools
 - K. Aguilar asked how the relationships that established with SROs carry over into adulthood.
 - ◆ N. Stewart provided some examples of continued positive relationships with young individuals after graduation.
 - ◆ J. Giannettino spoke to his observation of the ongoing/continued relationships w/ former students during his ride-alongs with APD and during events such as Shop with a Cop and local food drives.
 - ◆ J. Socci – SROs are very valuable – “Community relations start with young kids.”
 - ◆ J. Socci – The community wants to trust law enforcement; believes that trust is there.
 - ◆ J.Socci – Are their adequate resources to support SRO programs?
- R. Overstreet-Wilson – inquired about SRO response to behavioral issues. May not be beneficial to ongoing positive relationships.
 - F. Cornelius – CCSD SROs do not get involved in issues at school that would not ordinarily require law enforcement intervention, ie. “Billy won’t get off the swing set”
 - R. Overstreet-Wilson – Lack of resources may have led teachers and administrators to rely on SROs for support to bring order. May be counterproductive in building positive relationships.
 - N. Stewart – SRO training includes what to and what not to get involved with. Even after a necessary interaction between a student and SRO, there should be a follow up to repair/re-establish a positive relationship.
 - S. Lynch – is there a lack of resources for counselors/social workers in schools?
 - ◆ R. Overstreet-Wilson – “yes” – leads to SROs being asked to manage situations that should be managed by social workers and/or guidance counselors.
- H. Petrus – discussed various community collaboratives and Cayuga Counseling’s reliance on APD as well (for dangerous situations)
- R. Overstreet-Wilson & J. Socci – need a diverse police force
 - J. Socci – need appropriate resources
 - F. Cornelius – described the extensive efforts of APD and CCSD over the years to diversify their workforce. Explained that he feels the Civil Service process is sometimes a barrier. Some aspects of Civil Service are controlled at the state level and some at the local level.
 - R. Overstreet- Wilson – need to “grow our own” create programs to help local youth prepare for these jobs
 - N. Stewart – consider Explorer Program?

Implicit Bias and Procedural Justice

- K. Aguilar – For undocumented residents there is often a reluctance to call for help out of fear their immigration status will result in a negative outcome for them. This leads to potentially serious crimes going unaddressed and this population becoming at risk. How can this be addressed? What are the rules?
 - L. Hoskins – agrees this is a significant problem; better training for Assigned Counsel on Immigration Law would help
 - F. Cornelius – explained the County Sheriff's department approach to these calls, focusing on the need that prompted the call and understanding that individuals being in the country without documentation is not a criminal offence
- R. Overstreet-Wilson – would like more information on each agency's implicit bias and de-escalation training, including continued/ongoing training and refreshers. How is the training delivered?
 - K. Platt – explained APD's approach and efforts at implicit bias training. Resources, cost and time constraints have an impact on training.
 - F. Cornelius – explained the State minimum annual requirement of 21-hours of training. Cayuga County Sheriff department strives to conduct monthly trainings and approaches 90-hours of training annually
 - R. Overstreet-Wilson – believes the amount of training routinely done by APD and Sheriff's department is a main factor that our community is not experiencing the problems we are seeing at the national level
 - N. Stewart – Auburn Police and Sheriff attended week-long de-escalation training last year
 - J. Socci – if there is a lack of resources for training, can the APD and Sheriff leverage local resources to tap into training (such as the faculty at Cayuga Community College)? Shares example of Sheriff Schenck's outreach to CCC for similar collaboration.

Transparency (media/public communication) & Complaint Process

- L. Hoskins – asked if there is a community review board in place?
 - F. Cornelius – No – there is not one in place. It has been discussed and there are both pros' and cons' to consider. The subject is often only broached when there is a crisis.
 - H. Petrus – is there any mechanism for the public safety community to share concerns on the pros' and cons' providing an opportunity to understand how the community perceives the complaint process and community review? Also discusses how CCS could benefit from training to make staff more aware of the role and workings of the APD and Sheriff's departments.
 - J. Socci – sees the points being discussed but not in favor of a review board at this time – asks if there are other alternatives to achieve the transparency?
 - K. Platt – understands the intent and need; also points out the potential constraints associated with the union(s).

Meeting covered all items on the agenda. With no further discussion, meeting concluded around 5:10 PM. Follow up meeting scheduled for December 8, 2020 at 3:00 PM.