

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

### Alternatives to Police Response and Procedural Justice - Subgroup 3

Meeting Notes December 8, 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: Fred Cornelius, Jimmy Giannettino, Lloyd Hoskins, Rhoda Overstreet-Wilson, Heather Petrus, Kyle Platt, Nicole Stewart, Greg Gilfus
- Guest appearances by: Cayuga County 911 Center Director Denise Spingler, Auburn Police Chief Shawn Butler, Port Byron Police Dept. Officer in Charge Meagan Kalet
- J. Dygert reported that there was no response from the District Attorney's Office regarding questions posed at the last meeting regarding diversionary programs. Lt. Cornelius offered to collect a list of questions and reach out to the District Attorney's Office for a response.

#### Proper Response to Criminal Calls

- D. Spingler – discussed how the 911 Center takes in calls, how calls are prioritized, and what agencies are dispatched based upon that info.
- R. Overstreet-Wilson and D. Spingler continued a dialogue about a variety of scenarios and resource deployment.
- Group discussed “non-emergency” calls and 911 hang ups.

#### Diversionary Programs

- Several programs run through Cayuga Counseling Services.
- H. Petrus – the programs seem underutilized in Cayuga County compared to other counties she is aware of.
- There was discussion of how much, if any, discretion law enforcement officers have or could have in directing individuals to diversionary programs.
- L. Hoskins, F. Cornelius provided a general outline of how the pre-trial diversionary and alternatives to incarceration programs function, noting the role of the Cayuga County District Attorney and that of assigned counsel and the judges.
- R. Overstreet- Wilson – asked if demo graphic information is available about these programs.
  - H. Petrus – may be able to provide info – they are required to report to NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services. They may be able to share some contacts of past clients to share their personal experiences.

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**Deleted:** Cornelius, Jimmy

**Deleted:** John Socci,

**Deleted:** Sheriff Brian Schenck and

**Deleted:** <#>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.¶  
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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 re funding constraints that limit the ability of her agency to provide field visits/response at the optimum leve ...

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- R. Overstreet – Wilson – “must get District Attorney on board”
- L. Hoskins – agrees that diversionary programs are under utilized
- L. Hoskins – explained further how the diversionary process typically works – defense attorney request to judge.
- Chief Butler – most diversionary programs are lengthy and require extensive staff time. Feels there is frequently a lack of accountability for participants.
  - L. Hoskins – agreed that in some instances potential participants opt for incarceration rather than a diversionary program in order to more rapidly put the issue behind them.

#### **Community Partners**

- Lt. Cornelius – An approach to consider would consolidate many smaller community meetings with law enforcement participation into larger community meetings to bring together more individuals, broaden the conversations and improve schedule demands on participants.

#### **Community Expectations**

- Chief Butler – explained that the online survey results are reviewed weekly with Auburn Police staff.
- J. Dygert – need to find a method to share information with the public and educate about procedures
  - ♦ Lt. Cornelius – CCSD working on community forums in the northern and southern portions of the county.

#### **Implicit Bias and Procedural Justice**

- J. Dygert – City is looking into staff training for all departments, boards, and commissions

#### **De-Escalation**

- Lt. Cornelius – on-going training in all jurisdictions
- Chief Butler – noted that de-escalation techniques – in other forms and approaches, have been deployed for a long time in law enforcement, adding that successful de-escalation results in fewer use-of-force incidents
- Lt. Cornelius – need to work with the current and future generation of recruits to improve communication skills
- J. Giannettino – complimented Auburn Police on their daily efforts of de-escalation across all interactions as he has observed through several ride-a-longs
- H. Petrus – Auburn Police has sent officers through training referred to as “Mental Health First Aid”
- Deputy Stewart – NYS DCJS has training on dealing with mental illness calls – Covid has sidetracked delivery
- Chief Butler and H. Petrus – need to expand the Mobile Crisis Unit program

- H. Petrus – her agency depends on local law enforcement regularly to deal with clients
- J. Giannettino – suggested that a reference to funding support should be written into the plan
  - Lt. Cornelius – need to be cautious not to pull funding away from existing essential services/programs

Meeting covered all items on the agenda. With no further discussion, meeting concluded around 4:40 PM.

Next meeting is the community based public meeting scheduled for December 15 at 3pm via Zoom and moderated by Guy Cosentino.