

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

Notes

June 25, 2008

8:00 a.m.

Board Room/Polk County Convention Complex

Coordinating Council Members Present: Dennis Anderson, Judge Arthur Gamble, Supervisor Tom Hockensmith, Sally Kreamer, Supervisor John F. Mauro, John Sarcone, Valorie Wilson.

Others Present: Robert Brownell, Angela Connolly, Becky Dewey, Jeff Eckhoff (DM Register), Sue Elliott, E.J. Giovannetti, Rox Laird (DM Register), Bill McCarthy, Mike O'Meara, Ron Olson, Khalid Rashid (Spectrum Resources), Jeff Riese (Polk-DM Taxpayers Assoc.), Allen Spencer (Spectrum Resources), Neil Wheeler.

I. Welcome – John F. Mauro, Chair
Polk County Board of Supervisors

Two separate contingents have traveled to Hillsborough County, Florida in February and May. The reason we selected Hillsborough to visit is because of their overwhelming success in this process, particularly in dealing with the jail overcrowding issue.

I believe it is critical to be able to put this group of electeds and nonelecteds together to put our egos aside, roll up our sleeves, and begin this process. This group is not asking the County Attorney to be soft on crime; we are not asking the Judge not to do sentencing or the Public Defender work to with the system. I am simply asking all of us to look outside of our own areas to what could be done for the good of the entire system.

While the jail is not overcrowded yet, we are here to make sure it doesn't happen anytime in the near future or ultimately ever. With the work and cooperation of everyone in this room, we can get this accomplished. I am assuming that your presence here means that you are willing to take this initiative to the next level. Can we each commit right here and now to be a part of this solution?

It is imperative that each of us commit to attend these meetings from this point forward. I don't think that sending a representative would be appropriate. This must be a commitment from everyone at this table that we will attend these meetings from this point forward.

The Board of Supervisors is serious about the success of this coordinating council. On June 17th, the Board approved the creation of a Statistical Analyst in the Sheriff's Office. This position will assist the Sheriff in analyzing the

jail population so that we can have access to the resources we need to make the decisions that will affect the jail population.

While our main goal is to contain jail overcrowding, this group could also work on other issues that are occurring within the system to make things run more smoothly.

II. Feedback/Reflection of Information from Hillsborough

Judge Gamble stated that he was impressed with the cooperation and collaboration that has occurred in Hillsborough but mentioned that it didn't happen overnight. Hillsborough has achieved many things that we are already doing. We should not lose sight of our past achievements. There is no reason not to build on the past and try to improve so that we can have a positive impact on the community.

Sheriff Anderson stated that the cooperation of the interacting agencies was key. Also imperative is the statistical analysis of the data. The committee reviewed that data and came up with solutions. With the Board of Supervisors assistance, we have created a new Statistical Analyst position within the Sheriff's Office that will be responsible for the preparation of the jail statistics and will provide this information to the committee.

Supervisor Hockensmith stated that he was glad that everyone took the opportunity to go to Hillsborough. It is important that everyone is willing to sit down and discuss the issues. We need to get started and I'm excited from the Board of Supervisors standpoint to help facilitate these discussions.

John Sarcone stated that Hillsborough found ways to keep the population down and protect the public. With an information system in place, we can find ways to safely deal with the population and find quicker ways to save jail days.

Valorie Wilson stated that she found it interesting that everyone in Hillsborough had the political will to make changes on the coordinating council. It was interesting that everyone was an elected official. I am one of the few Public Defenders that are not elected. It was interesting with all of the political considerations that people were able to come together with a common goal. We can reduce the jail population in Des Moines if we have the effort of the Des Moines Police and Polk County Sheriff.

Sally Kreamer stated that this council will serve as a more efficient capacity to discuss issues. If any one of us has an idea; we can bring it to the council. This group has already set a precedent of working together we should build on that with ideas to make it better.

III. Executive Committee Membership

It was the decision of the group that the Executive Committee would consist of the following members:

Polk County Board of Supervisors Chair, John F. Mauro
One member of the Polk County Board of Supervisors, Tom Hockensmith
Polk County Attorney – John Sarcone
Polk County Sheriff – Dennis Anderson
Chief Judge of the Fifth Judicial District – Arthur Gamble
Public Defender – Valorie Wilson
Director of the Iowa Department of Corrections – Sally Kreamer

Supervisor Mauro stated that each member of the Executive Committee must commit to attend each meeting.

IV. Name of Council

It was decided that the name of the group shall be the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

V. Selection of Chair/Vice Chair

It was Moved by Anderson, Seconded by Hockensmith that John F. Mauro be named Chair of the Executive Committee.

It was Moved by Sarcone and Seconded by Hockensmith that Judge Arthur Gamble be named Vice Chair of the Executive Committee.

VI. Staffing of Council

Sheriff Anderson stated that the Statistical Analyst will provide the data for the Executive Committee and that a Captain on his staff that has status with the courts will serve as staff to the Council.

It was Moved by Hockensmith and Seconded by Sarcone that the Sheriff provide staffing to the Council.

VII. Issues with Achievable Outcomes

Sheriff Anderson stated that there is a timeline for the new jail opening that he will forward to the Committee. This will give a clear picture of where we are at and where we are headed.

An \$850,000 grant has been received to expand in-custody drug treatment. We will double participants from 60 to 120 and add another 60 within the first year to 192. We are also trying to expand and get research dollars for the Polk County Jail to become a research model for the United States. Our Senators have placed this as a high priority to make it happen.

We are securing funding for a two year Mental Health Diversion Program and are setting the stage for an expansion of this program as well.

Workforce Development and Spectrum Resources have played a major role in lowering recidivism. They will be coming before the Board of Supervisors sometime in August to discuss how the program will work in the new jail.

We are looking at the life skills program that the State uses and making it a 30 day program. This is key to the recidivism rate and daily average length of stay. Our daily average length of stay is 22 days; Hillsborough was able to get their average length of stay down to 16 days. With the cooperation of the Department of Corrections, we should be able to keep the numbers down.

a. Utilization of technologies

i. Voice

The County's technology is antiquated analog. The present system does not work well for phone conferencing. Electronic filings eventually will become a reality. Logistics have been worked out on transporting files in the meantime.

ii. Data

iii. Conferencing

Video conferencing capability for the Public Defender and Department of Corrections needs to be looked into. There was an issue with the courts regarding a separate and secure line. The Sheriff will be able to make the connectivity available using fiber optics. We need to determine a video conference location for use by the Public Defender and Department of Corrections. Video conferencing will save time and money. Sheriff Anderson stated that there are two rooms at the jail. Currently we have one at the interim and one at the main jail. Sheriff Anderson will review what is needed and advise the Board of Supervisors and Executive Committee. Video conferencing costs are approximately \$20,000 per station. There are five rooms at the new jail that could be made available.

Supervisor Hockensmith stated that in Hillsborough they had kiosks for inmates to access information regarding their court dates, charges, order commissary items and file complaints. Polk County's process is currently paper driven. It would be more cost effective to go to the kiosk system which also allows for more revenue. Hillsborough uses the revenue to help fund its programs for the inmates. Sheriff Anderson stated that the kiosks have been purchased and will be installed. The kiosks were included in the cost of the jail construction.

Judge Gamble stated that mental health, substance abuse, review of alternatives to incarceration and pretrial release, probation should be reviewed by the Council. As well as broader issues that affect the jail population such as education and poverty. John Sarcone stated that our immediate task is to address the jail population and that the group should look at these broader issues as time goes on. Sheriff Anderson stated that the Juvenile Judge in Hillsborough mentioned other areas their council was able to affect. Judge Gamble stated that he would like these items on the agenda for future consideration. Supervisor Hockensmith stated that Florida was facing a crisis situation with their jail overcrowding and we are taking a proactive approach.

VIII. Naming of Subcommittees

It was decided by the group that it was too early in the process to identify subcommittees.

IX. Bylaws

Bylaws will be prepared for review at the next meeting.

X. Ideas for appointments to larger group

It was decided by the group that it was too early in the process to identify members for the larger group.

XI. Future meeting dates/times

The next meeting is scheduled for 8 a.m., Thursday, August 14th.