

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL

March 19, 2009

Call to Order. Chair Deupree called the meeting of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to order at 4:00 P.M. in the Courthouse Conference Center on the second floor of the Rock County Courthouse-East.

Committee Members Present: Chair Neil Deupree, Supervisors Sandra Kraft and Marv Wopat, Supervisor Robert Fizzell (for Regina Dunkin), Sheriff Robert Spoden, Art Thurmer, Eric Nelson, Ruth Bettin, Jose Carrillo, Jan Devore, Deputy Chief Dave Moore, David O'Leary, Judge James Daley, Lorenzo Henderson.

Committee Members Absent: Charmian Klyve, Ed Pearson, Rich Gruber.

Staff Members Present: Elizabeth Pohlman McQuillen, Criminal Justice Planner/Analyst; Josh Smith, Assistant to the County Administrator.

Others Present: Supervisor William Grahn; Kay Deupree, League of Women Voters; Lynda Owens, Justice Overcoming Borders; Tony Farrell Sr., Dr. David Pierce, Mercy Options; Kurt Reynolds, Retired Police Officer.

Approval of Agenda. Judge Daley moved approval of the agenda as presented, second by Mr. O'Leary. ADOPTED.

Approval of Minutes of February 19, 2009. Sheriff Spoden moved approval of the minutes of February 19, 2009 as presented, second by Mr. O'Leary. ADOPTED.

Recognition of JDC Staff & Regina Dunkin. Chair Deupree advised Ms. Dunkin has been selected as a Woman of Distinction by the YWCA for 2009.

Supervisor Wopat read a letter from Catherine Manthey, a court appointed representative from Walworth County, commending the Juvenile Detention Center staff for their helpfulness, courtesy and good work.

Discussion Regarding Heroin Problem in Rock County. Chief Deputy Moore said he feels heroin use is significant in our community. There have been two deaths and 6-12 overdoses in the City of Janesville in the last year. He said kids begin by using prescription drugs which many get from their parents' medicine cabinets and then migrate to heroin. Users sell or do other crimes to get the money for more drugs. He commented heroin is terribly addictive and he doesn't think arrests will solve this problem. We need a wider net to help these people.

Sheriff Spoden said he has met with Mr. O'Leary and the local drug units. He said they all realized over the past year that something was developing. He said they have seen activity in Edgerton, Evansville and the rural areas of Janesville and Beloit. The usual age group is 20-36, college-educated people. A law enforcement meeting was held a week and a half ago with the

Chiefs from our area. They believe this has come into our communities within a year's time. Sheriff Spoden said he met with law enforcement in Winnebago County, Illinois, and they are seeing the same things we are, but their numbers are higher. He has also met with the FBI.

Sheriff Spoden said they are seeing a lot of people go to heroin first. They discovered heroin is relatively inexpensive and easy to get, partially due to some internal strife between drug gangs. The Sheriff said he also met with Senator Feingold. When the Taliban was initially eradicated from Afghanistan, this stopped 90% of the heroin exports. However, there has not been enough forces on the ground to deal with this issue and production has increased. The Sheriff said the heroin comes from Afghanistan, Columbia and Mexico.

Sheriff Spoden said he intends to increase the manpower in this area and hopes to rein this in. Because heroin is so addictive, people get on it and then have to sell it to their friends to finance their addiction. He believes people from this area go to the Rockford area, buy heroin, use it down there, drive back to Rock County and sell it to others. He commented there are so many dealing and using, it is difficult to get information from anyone.

Sheriff Spoden said the Sheriff's Office wants to do a multiple approach: 1) Educate the community about this problem; 2) Continue investigations with the Sheriff's Office, Beloit and Janesville Police Departments. He said they are getting a JAG grant and their goal is to hit the problem hard with all of their combined resources.

Mr. Nelson said he thinks a major contributor to drug problems is the availability of prescription drugs. He feels doctors are too quick to prescribe these very powerful drugs.

Mr. O'Leary said he and the Sheriff have been asked to make a presentation on the drug issue in Rock County to the Janesville School Board. He said heroin is the most purchased drug by the Street Crimes Unit in sting operations. Ms. Bettin asked if this presentation will be made to the Beloit School Board, with Sheriff Spoden advising he will discuss this with Chief Lathrop.

Supervisor Wopat commented that he attends a men's support group consisting of 50-60 attendees, ages 13-70. Of this group, about 25 were heroin addicts at one time.

Chair Deupree introduced Dr. David Pierce from Mercy Options. Dr. Pierce said he came from New Mexico, the "heroin capital of the United States". He said in 1986 he was working in the Harlem Drug Clinic, and at that time, there was a heroin epidemic. He said he is seeing opiates as the first drug being tried, ahead of marijuana. He commented the epidemic is here now and is very different from 10 years ago. People are getting into it with prescription drugs, i.e., Oxycontin, Vicadin, etc. He said law enforcement works and treatment works too.

Dr. Pierce said addiction is a complicated process. The part of the brain that is in the brain stem, which controls behavior, is what is taken over in addiction. He said the system is hijacked by the drug. Dr. Pierce said drug addiction is affected by availability, price and genetics and that a person can/will become addicted to heroin after 3-4 uses.

With regard to withdrawal, Dr. Pierce said the entire nervous system is sedated during heroin use. In withdrawal, the entire nervous system comes roaring back with increased heart rate, respiratory rate, GI system hyperactivity, anxiety, inability to sit still, and inability to sleep. Depending on the degree of drug use, a person can also develop bone and muscle pain.

Dr. Pierce said treatment involves detox, residential treatment, a 12-step program, and a maintenance program. He commented that this works more than it doesn't work. It reduces heroin use along with the transmission of hepatitis and HIV. Supervisor Wopat asked about Suboxone. Dr. Pierce said this new drug basically blocks the effects of heroin and is a very effective medicine, however, it is expensive.

Chair Deupree asked Dr. Pierce how the Criminal Justice System can help with the heroin situation. Dr. Pierce encouraged law enforcement and courts to fill addicts with fear as they desperately need to see the consequences of their actions. He added that coercion works. Mr. O'Leary said his office is overrun with heroin cases and the crimes associated with heroin. He said he is reluctant to put heroin addicts, users or suppliers into the Drug Court because we don't know if a 6-12 month program is long enough. He thinks it would more likely require a 3-5 year supervisory period.

Judge Daley said we have to deal with: 1) drug trafficking caused by the demand for drugs, and 2) the collateral crimes which go along with the heroin. The Criminal Justice System is not going to correct the heroin problem - we are reactive. We need to determine how to keep people from starting because once they start, there is a cascading effect. Mr. O'Leary said we need to look at prevention and treatment options for younger kids. He said he is not familiar with what is available in Rock County. Supervisor Grahn commented he receives calls from people about getting into a treatment center, but we have no place to put them.

Mr. Thurmer said he agrees with Mr. Nelson that drugs are being over prescribed. We not only have to educate kids in school, but we need to educate doctors. This group should take an active role and become aware of what is happening with these prescriptions. Mr. Thurmer said we need to look at creating partnerships to provide treatment options. He commented that he doesn't know that we have any good options for treatment. Mr. Nelson said we need to make more treatment available because at this point, if a person has no medical insurance, treatment is not available.

Supervisor Fizzell said he agrees opiates are readily available from doctors and that if treatment were available, people would use it. Supervisor Kraft said she agrees with the need for education. Mr. Henderson said the Beloit Police Department has seen an increase in drug use and related crimes. He recommends an earlier approach and to hit it hard. Ms. Devore advised she has a State Methadone Authority staff person in her department. She said she will talk with this person and look into federal grants within the Substance Abuse Bureau. She thinks there may be some that are targeted for kids. Ms. Bettin agreed with the need for more treatment. Mr. Carrillo agreed with the need to stop the supply. He commented that doctors have records in their computers so there should be a way to monitor it.

Chair Deupree thanked everyone for their good ideas and said he will work with Marv, Josh, and Elizabeth and see what we are going to do.

CJCC Priorities. Postponed to a future meeting.

Discussion Regarding Alcohol Tax. Postponed to a future meeting.

Future Meeting Dates and Locations. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 16, 2009, 4:00 P.M., here in the Courthouse Conference Center.

Citizen Participation and Announcements. Mr. Reynolds commented that law enforcement is doing beer and tobacco stings, but he could find a 15 year old to get drugs for him. Mrs. Deupree said drugs are too available in schools and students know who to go to get them.

Ms. Pohlman McQuillen advised the grant has been submitted.

Adjournment. Chair Deupree adjourned the meeting at 5:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Milligan
Confidential Administrative Assistant

NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED BY COMMITTEE.