

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday November 8, 2017 09:30AM
Department of Corrections
825 Marlboro Road
Keene, NH 03431

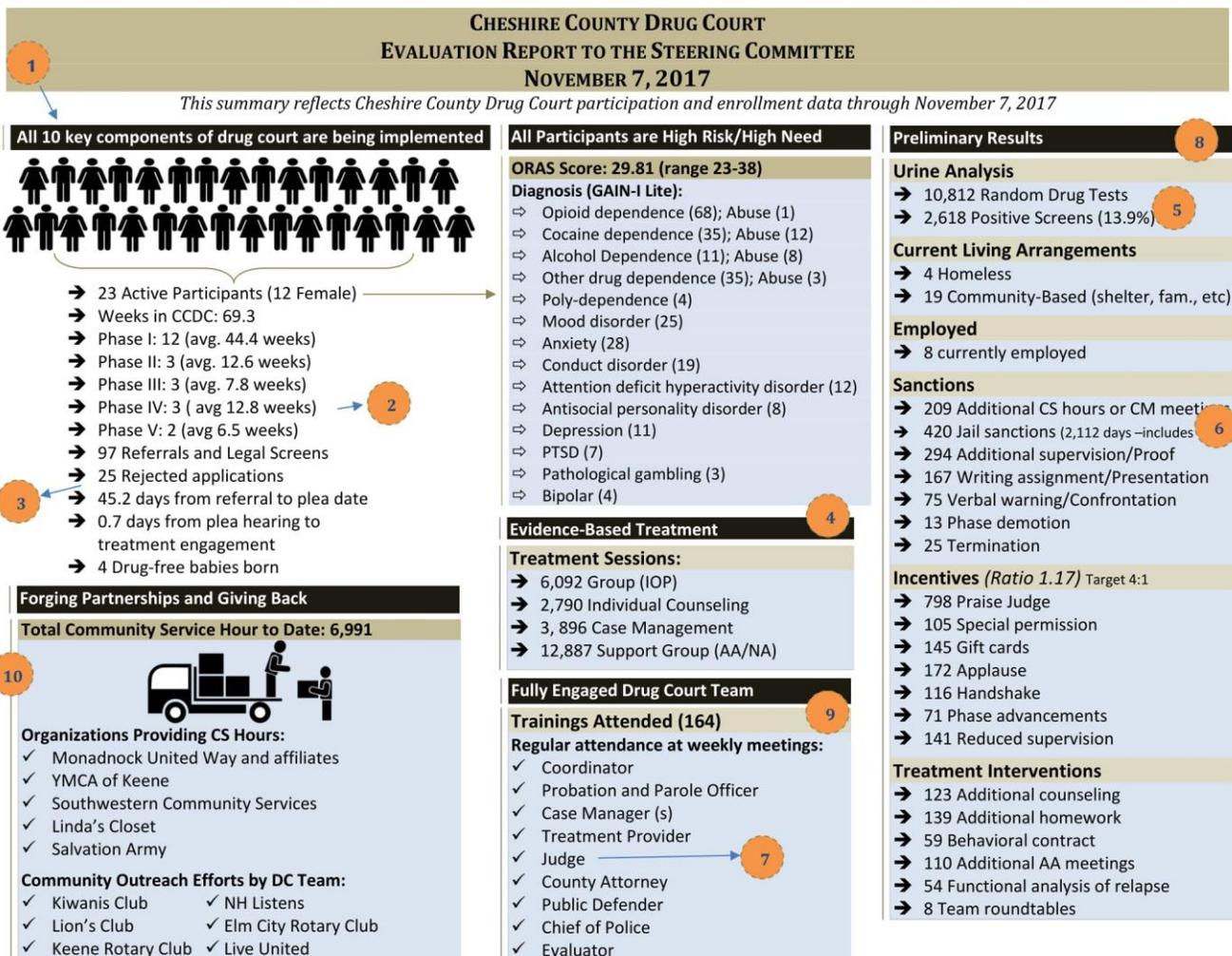
Present: Commissioners Peter Graves, Joseph Cartwright, and Charles Weed

Staff: Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Drug Court Director Welsh, Superintendent Van Wickler, Capt. McLaughlin, Capt. Willis, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Bouchard

Guests:

At 9:30AM the Chair opened the meeting and took-up Master Agenda Item #542: Semi-Annual Drug Court Report – A. Welsh

Welsh provided a report entitled “Cheshire County Adult Treatment Drug Court: Process, Outcome, and Cost Evaluation”. Welsh discussed the loss of recent Drug Court participant due to an overdose and the impact that it had on the staff, family, and friends. She outlined the recent graduation of three (3) participants yesterday and handed out a summary sheet titled “Cheshire County Drug Court Evaluation Report to the Steering Committee – November 7, 2017”. She then handed out a third report titled “CCDC Performance Snapshot from 6/4/2013 to 11/8/2017” and a corresponding handout from 1/1/2017 to 11/8/2017.



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CHESHIRE COUNTY DRUG COURT EVALUATION REPORT TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 7, 2017																																															
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Developed by Community Health Institute, Bow, NH

Key Component #: See page 2 for list of components

A question concerning grant incentives for the hiring of Drug Court participants by local businesses was discussed. Coates said that work programs are very important but even more critical is housing for recovery which is in extremely short supply in the area.

A discussion of the way that the death of the Drug Court participant was handled for the staff and other participants was covered.

A discussion of the working relationship with the Department of Corrections was covered and Welsh said that the relationship is excellent and it is clearly a huge benefit to the Drug Court program.

The Commissioners thanked Welsh for her report and then recognized Nursing Home Administrator Kindopp for the purpose of reviewing a potential hire as a speech therapist.

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At 9:54am Commissioner Cartwright moved to enter non-public session Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(b) for the hiring of any person as a public employee. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

As a result of deliberations in non-public session, a decision was made and a unanimous vote was taken to hire R. B. as a Speech Therapist for \$39.00 per hour based on their training, education, and experience.

At 10:01 the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to public session.

Kindopp then discussed a question previously asked by Commissioner Cartwright concerning the filling of the night RN supervisor position. She said that based on conversations with her staff she thought that a higher starting salary and a sign-on bonus might be effective. The overall staffing issues at the nursing home were reviewed.

Kindopp then discussed the mandatory Emergency Disaster Planning process that covers transfer of residents to other facilities in the event of a major emergency event and the signed Memorandum's of Understanding (MOU's) that need to be in place in case such an event occurs. She said that she is actively seeking to get these agreements signed.

Administrator Coates was then recognized to provide the Weekly Operations Report.

Coates said that following the Commissioners Meeting on December 13th the Longevity Awards will be presented at the employee recognition luncheon. The program is scheduled to begin at 12:00pm.

Coates said that the Windows Restoration campaign is now over \$100,000.00 with the \$118,000 goal in sight and that he is encouraged by the progress being made.

He then discussed that the EPIC software program that Cheshire Medical Center is implementing at the hospital and will use with the nursing home as a client is being reviewed so that it can be implemented between the two (2) facilities.

Coates then discussed that two (2) public events took place over the weekend in the Delegation Hall and both events were well attended and well received.

He then said that Republican Party of Cheshire County will hold a meeting next week in the Old Courthouse.

Coates said that an asbestos abatement bid for \$54,000.00 was received from the ADEP Group of Salem, NH to remove the materials from the old jail so that the demolition of the structure can begin. He said that ADEP was the lowest bidder and that based on previous instructions from the Commissioners he has instructed the company to proceed to obtain the necessary permit from state to complete the work.

Coates then discussed the purchase offer that was received on the Blood Farm last week. A discussion of the process that the real estate firm is required to follow for offers was covered.

A lengthy conversation concerning the use of the farm land and the disposition of the Blood Farm began. Commissioner Graves stated that he did not want to put any funds into repairing any buildings on the farm and

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that the best course of action would be to demolish the Blood Farm house and then sell the land. An option of selling a conservation easement to an interested party was covered and Commissioner Cartwright said he would be against that option because the property could end up in the hands of the federal government through a resale from the conservation and that he was against that happening.

Following discussion, it was determined that the Administrator will contact the Chairman of the Farm Committee for a follow-on discussion and review of the options the committee wishes to consider.

Coates then said that a meeting with local ambulance and dispatch personnel would be held this week to pick-up the previous discussions around creating regional response points for services to assist in improving response time and lowering costs. He said that he will report on progress of the project in the coming weeks.

A discussion of the proposed budget began and the Commissioners agreed to meet on Tuesday November 14th to wrap-up the 2018 Commissioners Budget process.

The Census was reviewed and discussed.

The Weekly Manifest was then reviewed and the payout for half of sick time accruals over 60 days was covered. Commissioner Cartwright moved to accept the Manifest as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

The minutes of October 25, 2017 were then reviewed and Commissioner Weed moved to accept the minutes as amended and was seconded by Commissioner Cartwright. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

The Calendar was discussed and was approved as amended to include next Tuesday's meeting.

At 11:10AM the Commissioners adjourned the public portion of the in-progress Commissioner's meeting to conduct the Second (2nd) semi-annual 2017 Department of Corrections inspection as required by RSA 30-B: 12.

Pursuant to the above statutory requirement, the County Commissioners for Cheshire County will submit a report on their examination into the management, conditions, and security of the inmates in the county correctional facility to the State Attorney General's Office.

At 11:12am the Commissioners examined the new transport van that was recently obtained for the transportation of inmates. The Commissioners asked a number of questions concerning the use and capabilities of the vehicle and learned that the main use of the van will be for local transports (i. e. to and from the Courts, hospital, etc. and that the larger transport bus will continue to be used for the federal transports throughout New Hampshire and Vermont.

At 11:25am the Commissioners entered the Sally Port examined the transport bus and discussed with the Correctional Officer (CO) conducting the tour the use of weapons by the Correctional Staff. The CO said that only the transportation team is trained and authorized to use the weapons and currently there are three (3) CO's who are also certified Part-Time Police Officers that are also trained in the use of non-lethal and lethal shotgun uses.

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A discussion of firearms training and the amount of ammunition and types of weapons that are used for training was covered.

At 11:36am the Commissioners entered F Block to review the condition of the area. Following a short discussion with an inmate and one of the CO's on duty the Commissioner exited the area.

At 11:40am The Commissioners entered the Medical Department and inspected the area. It was learned that only one diabetic is current in population which is very unusually low.

At 11:44am The Commissioners entered R Block and met briefly with the CO's on duty and discussed the larger than normal population currently assigned to the block.

At 11:47am The Commissioners entered the Maintenance department and reviewed the Geo-Thermal and boiler units and discussed the re-commissioning work that was recently completed to bring the HVAC systems up to original specifications.

At 11:51am The Commissioners entered D Block spoke with an inmate and the CO's concerning the condition and operations of the facility. Overall both inmates and staff were satisfied with the facility.

At 12:02pm The Commissioners entered on of the multipurpose rooms to conduct interviews with two (2) inmates.

The first inmate was a sentenced female who said that she likes the quality of the facility but after six months of being inside she was looked forward to being released on electronic monitoring (EM) to serve out her remaining one (1) year sentence. She said that the CO's are very good, much better than in Florida where she also served some time. She said that the Florida facility was very bad on a number of levels including the CO's and the food. She went on to say that the Cheshire facility was the opposite, as the treatment here was very good.

She said that she was serving time for drug related offences and in response to a question from the Commissioners said that one of the bad parts of being in jail was the difficulty in communicating with outside agencies and potential employers as she starts looking for employment for her EM release.

The Commissioners thanked her for her insight and comments and she was escorted from the interview room.

At 12:21pm a sentenced male inmate entered the room and the Commissioners introduced themselves and asked for any input, good or bad, concerning the physical facility and his interactions with the staff.

He said that he had served time at the previous Westmoreland facility and knew some of the staff and was able to get along with most everyone. He said that the direct supervision model that is now in use is much better than the old way of operating the day rooms where the CO's were in a glassed-in room looking into the day rooms. He said that he and the other inmates felt safer from other inmates with the new model.

He then discussed the various programs (self-help and counselling) that he is participating in and explained how the "Moral Strengthening" program was helping him make better decisions.

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He discussed that he is scheduled to leave the facility in April of 2018 based on his current “good-time” release date that he has come to realization that at being over 40-years old he needs to straighten his life out and not return to jail. He then discussed that he was serious enough in that belief that he voluntarily self-amended his bail so that he could stay in the facility to get clean from drugs and to help him make a clean break from his previous life.

The Commissioners thanked him for his honest comments and 12:20pm the inmate was escorted from the interview room.

At 12:22 the Commissioners entered the Laundry area and reviewed the operations.

At 12:25pm the Commissioners entered the facility Kitchen area and meet with the chef and reviewed the daily operations. One item that was noted is that one of the steam kettles needs either substantial repair or replacement.

At 1:03pm there being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Cartwright moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was then seconded by Commissioner Weed and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
C. Weed