

Jasper County JRAC
Friday, December 1, 2023
Meeting: 12:00 pm. – 2:00 pm.
Valley Oaks Conference Room
131 W. Drexel Parkway
Rensselaer, Indiana

Present: Judge Russell Bailey, Kaitlyn Boosma, Jason Wallace, Kim Denton, Joseph Morrison, Chris Biehn, Sheriff Pat Williamson, Samantha Joslyn, Carol Santos of Sycamore Springs, and Denise Symdon of the Center for Effective Public Policy.

Not Present: Eric Kidwell, Michael Spangler, Judge John Potter, Rein Bontreger and Jacob Taulman.

Minutes of the 10-27-23 JRAC Meeting: Samantha Joslyn made a motion to approve. Judge Bailey seconded motion. All approved. Minutes passed.

Introductions:

Judge Bailey introduced special guests.

Denise Symdon:

Roundtable introductions were made. Denise introduced Chris Biehn, Deputy Director of Justice/Court Services. His office works closely with the Supreme Court regarding the the certification of different types of programs; specifically the certification of the Pretrial programs. He gave a brief synopsis of his job and the purpose of his position within the Court Services/Justice Programs. He has minor interaction within the rural counties. He wants to hear more from those teams about the challenges that that the JRAC teams are encountering. He is here to listen to the team, and hopes that the team will reach out to the Court Services with issues or concerns. Chris informed the team that he does sit on the state JRAC team and is a liaison as such with collaboration from local to the state level. Carol

Santos, caseworker, was introduced from Sycamore Springs.

Denise: Since 2010, EBDM (Evidence-Based Decision Making) has been around. Process is intended as to how we do business from here on out. JRAC is the way of doing business. Team Charter Handout was passed to all. EBDM was evolved out of lessons learned!! Long term sustainability in developing a team chapter. Team Purpose: Is based upon the State JRAC committee.

Looking at changes/revisions:

Judge Bailey says team purpose makes sense. Kim concurs with this assessment. Sheriff Williamson wants to see the purpose implemented.

Denise: Typically problems are solved within agencies and that we need to work as a team effort; being JRAC. Council members, commissioners need to be a part of this committee for all to work as a team, and they need to be pulled into this team.

Purpose of group:

Charter: This document represents who or what we are as a team. This document will be a public document after its approval.

Team activities:

This will have statutory language. The various county agencies, the need to know who is in the jail and how long have they (Defendants) been in there. Sheriff Williamson says that the Courts, Prosecutor's and Probation Department keep "tabs" on the jail. They get reports from the Sheriff's Department so they are aware of when they were taken into custody and how long they have been there pursuant to their Court appearances and such. Reports are compiled on a daily basis with their intake information and provided to the various county agencies.

Advisory & Regional:

Pull in additional members as sub-committees that will report to the JRAC team, whether it be with issues to solve or changes to be made. Annual reports are due by March

31 of each year. Discussions on annual reports. It appears that two (2) have been submitted, and these reports have not been discussed prior.

Denise: It is important that we bring all information back to the team. Chris indicated that report should be approved by December 8, and published thereafter.

Kim: Questioned if the team is reviewing the annual report from State? Denise responded that the framework/story is to be reviewed. Discussion held on vision and mission statement. Team Charter will be good to have in place for the foundation and sustainability of the team.

Activities:

Judge Bailey added that the activities listed in charter are good for now, as a start. They are very broad. Denise indicated that they are intentionally broad at the beginning, and a good place to start the formation.

Self Assessment:

Denise indicated that this is the road map like other states and counties that have used this. Question was raised if we are already using this within the team.

Trust & Collaborative Spirit:

The foundation and putting the team charter together is the start.

Understanding & Planning for Future/System Map:

Kim indicated that this has been done in theory the work for the future. Denise says that the team will walk through research, data, and the data that the team would like to have and those changes to be made or what is currently being done well. What improvements need to be done? What resources used to reduce recidivism? What base line data to use? This all can be a challenge based on different information collected. What data does that mean to use? Do we trust the data? Is there integrity with data? Use of all that has evolved and been done and trusted with usage for reduction and recidivism. How do we as a team implement this?

Performance measures:

Reduce jail population to what amount? Data is important as to how it is collected.

Data Dashboard:

Some counties use this measure, and put this out there on their web page. Information needs to be shared within staff and the public.

Tolerance of change:

How to engage the stakeholders/staff to change.

Community:

Create a logic model, this is like a road map. This will be dealt with at a later stage.

Advanced Changes:

Logic model/committees, these will need to be formed within the team.

Continuance Quality of Progress:

This is all a process, that will continue and evolve and grow within the County and team.

Carol Santos:

Carol questioned as to how many counties are involved in the JRAC process? Denise indicated eight (8) counties with the EBDM work, and not sure how many other have started with this program.

Judge Bailey:

Our JRAC program started with the CCAB/Jasper County Community Corrections approximately one and half to two years ago. The program was kept within the Community Corrections Department. We knew not long into the program that more work was needed with the local JRAC team, and we “divorced” the two (2) boards. Annual reports were done, with no substance prior to the reports being done. Denise agreed with the approach to “divorce” the two (2) boards.

Carol sits on the West Central Regional Community and wondered if counties can join forces, and it was stated there is no limit and thought that it could be done

regionally. Chris indicated that there are two (2) regional JRAC counties, and Carol questioned if Tippecanoe County was one? Denise indicated that they are working with those counties, and there is no cookie cutter approach, but making progress. Asking help for data is needed. Every county is expected to put together some activities within their team.

Jason:

Are we too late to the game in developing our team? Has JRAC made a difference within a county? Denise indicated that JRAC has made a change and/or recommendations, and has been successful. Chris indicated that there have been at least ten (10) counties that have had great success with the Pretrial Program, or roughly nine (9) counties that have success stories. Jason questioned what they consider a success with the Pretrial Program? Chris said that there is a mis-characterization as to what the news does in reporting. It is empowering Judges to make decisions on Pretrial Release Program. Denise indicated that Grant County has outlined what they have done as a team.

Denise: The purpose of this meeting/team is to look at the best practices/outcome of this work. Tolerance of change? Some counties aren't ready to take this on. It is very important for stakeholders to be present at every meeting to complete the outcome of the JRAC team.

Joe: Joe questioned would it be of benefit of each member to define the team's mission? Denise indicated that the team is not ready yet to take on that approach. Process is as important as the progress.

Carol: Are problem solving courts a part of this? Denise questioned if a county does have problem solving courts, it is beneficial to recidivism? Carol says that the Veterans Court is most powerful and conducts beautiful ceremonies upon completion of the program. Denise says it is important to build the foundation, and build it as a team.

Workspace:

Benefits of information as how it is presented. If this was available, it would be very helpful to go back and review documents previously presented in between meetings and come back to the next meeting and have discussion regarding materials and videos. And if all team members were listed on there, the team would have allowance to view all the materials. Denise says this would be very helpful and useful, and this was created for JRAC in Indiana.

Samantha:

Would this be created for Jasper County? Denise says it would be just for Jasper County, and would have the worksheets and materials available on it once it has been created. Samantha questioned if this would be a website? Denise indicates it would be set up per the team's recommendations. All present approve to set up a workspace and Denise will set this up. She will need names and email addresses to put all members of team in for access.

JRAC Vision/Purpose and Mission Statement:

All agreed to keep in place for now.

Core Values:

Reflective to Jasper County as to what the team is committed to. Core values are sometimes helpful to go back and revisit from time to time, and help to keep us grounded when we have tough decisions to make. Judge Bailey questioned as to how the core values tie in with the team? Denise responded that core values can be duplicated, by being respectful. Showing professionalism. Kim questioned if the meeting norms show how we act out during the meetings? Denise though this was a good example of core values. Sam indicated that every person deserves respect, and that is a value that everyone shares. Denise indicated that respect is a very valuable asset that everyone brings to the table.

Value Statement:

Denise wants to know do you want a lists of words to this statement? Do you as a team want this in your Team Charter? Sam indicated to use words or statements, not sentences. Kim responded to use the words respect and integrity. Denise responded with the following to be added to statement: Treat people with respect; integrity; honesty; humanity and recognition or recognizing individuality; transparency; unbiased decision; collaboration; engagement of Jasper County partners and other community stakeholders. Carol suggested Spirit of Community/Innovative that sees respect. Kim suggested morals/morality. Kaitlyn suggested unbiased, goal to make unbiased decisions. Jason suggested collaboration/honest and respectful collaboration. Judge Bailey suggested the value of engagement of each stakeholder. Sheriff suggested innovative, proactive/not afraid of change, the “get it done” attitude. Carol suggested to receiving feedback from the community as a vehicle to keep this moving.

Here is what the final words to be used in charter statement:

Treat people with respect/Integrity/Honesty/Humanity and recognizing individuality/Transparency/Unbiased decisions/ Collaboration/Engagement of JRAC partners/Continuous improvement through community.

Jason has volunteered to work on this statement and Judge Bailey has agreed to assist Jason.

Meetings:

Meetings are to be held on the 4th Friday of each month, 12:00 pm. To 2:00 pm. January meeting is to be held January 26 and the team will be discussing System Mapping. Denise indicated that she could be available two (2) days or maybe one full day for the January meeting, but she does like the idea of meetings being two (2) hours in length.

Further discussion:

The team agrees that members leave meetings with respect, and are candid during the meetings, but are still respectful to each other. It is the goal to make the system the best that it can be, and it is not intended to take away any authority from each individual. When the team gets to discussing the system mapping, some individuals may need to form a sub-committee on this issue. Jason still feels the need for all team members to be present at the meetings. Denise feels that we don't want to sanction or bring on negativity on the team members. Judge Bailey questioned if we need other options for or where to hold the meetings? It was suggested that the conference room at the CASA Building is available. For now, the members will keep the meetings at the conference room at Valley Oaks. Kim responded that as the team becomes more active, engagement will become more active. Denise suggested that a representative from the State JRAC team be present to help in the formation of the team, and to talk about the value of each member's attendance. Chris indicated he will try to be present at each meeting for the time being. Sam indicated that Rein forwarded his apology for not being present at this meeting due to an unforeseen issue prior to the start of the meeting. Sheriff Williamson indicated the importance for office holders on the team to attend each meeting as they are the ones to implement changes. Denise questioned if delegates were to appear on their behalf? Judge Bailey questioned if there is any objection to delegates appearing on behalf of the office holder/department head/team member? Sheriff Williamson responded that if office holders/department heads/team members are to implement changes within their office, how can a delegate make that decision on their behalf? Denise responded that if one judge is here and the other is unable to attend, that the judge present should be able to decide on behalf of the judiciary for both. It was decided at the next meeting to

discuss the delegate decision.

Unfinished business:

To finish up the charter statement at the January meeting.
Survey, evidence-based practices—to be issued by Denise
to the stakeholders.

Next meeting: January 26, 2024 Noon - 2 pm.

Next meeting location: yet to be determined.

Adjourn:

Kim moved to adjourn. Samantha seconded. All
approved. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Theresa Lakin
Secretary