

JUSTICE INVOLVED WOMEN AND GIRLS TASK FORCE

APRIL 10, 2024

10:00-12:00

Task Force Members Present: Vicki Hunter, Ana Negrete, Latonya Reeves, Paula Schaefer, Jeff Spies, Connie Anest, Tana Welter, Lois Mineau, Nikki Engel, Jenna Williams, Cecelia Viel, Artika R, Corey Thompson, Eddie Miles, Holly Bot, Shelbi Groath, Paul Schnell,

Introductions by all in attendance.

Report outs from Conference Committee – none today assigned tasks for conference

Justice Involved Women and Girls Conference October 4th, 2024 –

Conference Title: Beyond the Bars: Partnering with Girls for Meaningful Justice Reform

Theme: A Justice Reform Action Plan for Girls

- All task force members were assigned a task for the conference.
- What happened with the women's writing project? – reaching out to get submissions
- Art from the Inside w/ Espinosa
- DOC going to help with workshop selection – closing on ramps and working on off ramps

Updates from DOC

- Little bit lighter legislative agenda this session, focused heavily on implementation this session for the items that were passed last year. Small supplemental budget ask – trying to address out budget shortfall because of contract settlements, pay rates are now competitive with county and BOP, workforce is stabilizing, believe by the end of June we should be hitting 95% staffing level.
- Bonding asks – last year was preservation biggest item was at MCF-SHK to build out programming space, this is being planned as we speak. Warden Bosch on sometime to explain what is being planned for this
- Asset preservation – the DOC has a massive backlog of asset preservation over \$700 million. Also has the goal of adding programming space at MCF-RC. Both are included in the Governors bonding ask.
- Expansion of higher education programming
- Addition of Parole Board – proceedings will be public now. Victims were concerned that they did not want their input to be fully public. Asked the legislature so that the victims can have the choice to do this privately or publicly if they wanted – this is under consideration.
- Implementation work going on within the agency. Biggest of which is MRRA large number of DOC staff and CCA staff. Also have Representatives of other agencies that were named in the statutes. Planning on townhall meetings. This is in the very early stages. Focused on incentives, to take advantage of opportunities and interventions. Goal of improving public safety outcomes.
- Work going on for the evidence-based practices unit creation.
- Recently hired Earl Miller – the director of the Family Supports Unit. Three current staff and three new staff will be brought into this unit, this will include everything existing as well as new programming.
- Is there a Webpage on MRRA? – link provided

- DRT – Required by legislature last year to expedite rulemaking. Interim guidance was issued to end “disciplinary room time” In the coming week draft language will be sent out regarding DRT, sent out to task force. Next time we meet the goal would be to do some crafting and finalization of this language of this rule.
- Body Scanner at SHK – we have a failure there something is mechanically wrong with it, we have had challenges to get the technician in from another state, they should be in later this week or early next week. It has been out of commission for about a week. This is a different machine than at the other facilities. Unknown if it would be easier to get support for it if it was a different unit. When purchased it was the best machine on the market, new technology became available in the three-year difference.
 - We would love to have contingencies in place for items that we know have a shelf life, but that isn’t how the state operates.
- JIWG wants to help support Earl Miller in forming his new unit. Commissioner Paul Schnell agrees to add him to the agenda in the next meetings.
- Flag time limited at SHK, first due to staffing is this going to mean more out of cell time, as staffing is higher there should be more programming and more out of cell time. This should correspond with staffing levels. Tracked every week abs staffing numbers have significantly improved.
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Vicki Hunter

- Received grant monies for college upon release – still needs to work with Dr. O’Connell helping people get connected with FAFSA and colleges as well as courses they may need.

Holly Bot

- Ashland is the only Higher Ed available at SHK, they are not accredited, some other facilities have other campuses – this is all going to be changing per Comm. Schnell should be some accredited options coming soon.

Jeff Spies

- “No Touch” policy at MCF- SHK: for years this was in line with the correctional thinking within women’s prisons. This has all changed and now appropriate touch is allowed. Not in any of the handbooks, they do speak often about appropriate touch.
 - Some reports stating that the new no touch policy is no better just more regimented.
- Several action items regarding changing the visiting rules at MCF-SHK regarding the visiting rules.

Connie Anest

- Visiting concerns at MCF-SHK regarding touch allowed during visits. Not being able to comfort daughter. Possibly speaking with Earl Miller at next meeting regarding family supports unit.

Nikki Engel

- Following up on the pilot program regarding the new intake procedure and self-reported assessment regarding MRRA.
 - Would like to see the forms and materials to look at as a group
 - Case managers are being trained in case planning, regarding all the assessments that come together.
 - MCF-SHK is offering self-reported assessments started in Nov 2023 they are getting close to 300 that have been completed by now.
 - This enables people to have better conversations when it comes to the system and how it contributes to recidivism.

Follow up needed:

- No touch at Juvenile facilities answers
- Get some people together to discuss issues and get suggestions to present to commissioner regarding concerns visiting rule issues.
- Formal Request for small pilot report regarding the self-assessment – will need to follow up with the policy and performance unit.

MEETING ADJOURNED 12PM