

From: [Kathy Bauer](#)
To: [Krohn, Margaret](#)
Subject: February 7, 2022 meeting written comment
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 4:25:19 PM

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To Whom it may concern,

Please accept this email as a written comment regarding items D2 and D3 on the February 7, 2022 meeting agenda.

I am in opposition of these proposals for the following reasons.

1. The pandemic has taught the community that law enforcement practices were modified in an effort to keep down the COVID infection rate. Rather than offenders being sent straight to jail, tickets were issued along with a court date. This helped ease the jail population but one has to ask this question: were previous offenders sent to jail prematurely rather than being ticketed in the first place? This question is not intended to question law enforcement practices, but rather, a community check on best practices for the future.

2, Significant movement has been achieved with the Triage Crisis Center, the non-law enforcement crisis response unit (CARES), along with investments made for housing the homeless all of which require funding. A jail is not meant to house and properly care for the mentally ill nor is the jail intended to house the homeless. \$24 million would go a long way to properly care for the mentally ill and assist individuals get back on their feet, which by the way, neither scenario is a crime. Finally, the Triage Crisis Center has not been factored in with the current jail plans and they should be as these items alone would result in cost savings in the cost of the jail and could be reallocated to truly solving the core issues that send individuals to jail.

3. Lastly, Dane County has yet to complete a comprehensive racial equity study to review the county's alternatives and jail diversion programs. The review was recommended in September of 2015 and to date nothing has been done.. Any review of news all over the country blatantly demonstrates the racial inequity when it comes to incarceration. And Dane county is also guilty of this practice. It would behove our community to conduct this study before any more money goes into this project. We have to know the current state, improve current processes, update practices, and assure that offenders are placed on the correct path to recovery. Jail is not the answer. It appears to be a convenient dumping ground.

With that, I respectfully request that items D2 and D3 be rejected. Taxpayers need to know exact projections, alternatives to incarcerations, and racial equity is built into the future best practices and assure taxpayer money is used to help rehabilitate. The old method of throwing offenders into jail is a knee-jerk practice and no longer works, if it ever really did.

Thank you
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