



Dane County

Minutes - Final Unless Amended by Committee

Commission on Sensitive Crimes

Consider: Who benefits? Who is burdened?

Who does not have a voice at the table?

How can policymakers mitigate unintended consequences?

Tuesday, October 20, 2020

8:30 AM

Virtual Zoom Meeting

A. Call To Order

Staff and Guests Present: Bethany Cooke, Anthony Cooper, Julie Foley, Marlys Howe, Dana Pabellon, Carrie Pomije, Monica Rodriguez, Howard Thomas, and Faye Zemel

Chair Crowley called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

- Present** 7 - SHANNON BARRY, AMY BROWN, Chair HEATHER CROWLEY, BETH FREEMAN, SHARYL KATO, BARBARA MCKINNEY, and JAN MIYASAKI
- Absent** 5 - Supervisor MAUREEN McCARVILLE, KERRY PORTER, KAT RILEY, ERIN THORNLEY-PARISI, and VANESSA STATAM

B. Consideration of Minutes

[2020](#) MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 15, 2020
[MIN-235](#)

Attachments: [2020_0915 COSC Minutes](#)

A motion was made by KATO, seconded by BROWN, to approve the minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 7 - BARRY, BROWN, CROWLEY, FREEMAN, KATO, MCKINNEY and MIYASAKI

Absent: 5 - McCARVILLE, PORTER, RILEY, THORNLEY-PARISI and STATAM

C. Action Items

None.

D. Presentations

None.

E. Reports to Committee

1. Agency Updates

- Brown reported there have been no jury trials since March and most hearings are being conducted via Zoom. The backlog of cases is unprecedented. One Victim Witness Unit Case Manager in the Dane County District Attorney's Office has 850 pending cases. Marsy's Law has benefited victims who can now be present and heard at all hearings and has also greatly increased the workload in the DA's Office. There has been a large increase in racially motivated hate crimes, especially in the past six months. Situational domestic violence cases also are rising as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. With defendants spending less time incarcerated due to COVID-19 concerns, offenders' recurrence rate is on the rise. With non-profits more involved in paying bail for offenders rather than family or associates, victims often have no knowledge of when the perpetrator is being released from jail.

- Foley reported the DA's Office is seeing more cases of sensitive and violent crimes committed against homeless individuals. Collaborations within the county have been integral in finding temporary housing for victims.

- Howe reported she has an unusually high caseload of 377 because of how long it's taking to resolve cases. In addition to more situational domestic violence, the DA's Office is also seeing an increase in repeat offenders and offenders with multiple open cases.

- Kato reported The Rainbow Project has been successful in providing online support groups for adults throughout the pandemic and is now beginning to reach youth. Referrals were down early in the pandemic but have increased with more children in school. The waiting list for services is frozen. Research has shown the pandemic is having a negative impact on children's mental health, a trend The Rainbow Project is seeing locally. Staff are checking in with families up to three times per week compared to once per week prior to March. The agency is fully staffed with the recent hires of Bethany Cooke (Referral and Reporting Coordinator), Monica Rodriguez (Community Service Facilitator) and Ashiantii Collier-Slaton (Community Service Facilitator).

- Barry reported DAIS is nearly fully staffed after the recent hire of a bilingual case manager. The hire of a Crises Intervention Services Manager is imminent. There are 60 households on the waiting list for shelter. Staff have seen an escalation in mental health and AODA issues, and more men are seeking services than usual. DAIS has collaborated with other organizations on a voter registration initiative and is providing education about how to vote in person safely. The helpline is extremely busy. Court Watch data will be released soon.

- Pellebon reported The Rape Crisis Center's hotline has seen an uptick in callers and a large increase in calls regarding mental health issues. Nearly half the clients who have called recently are individuals working through assaults that happened years ago but have been triggered by current-day stressors. Staff recently provided training at the Madison Police Academy. Online middle school and high school support groups began last week. An internal work group is forming a reconstitution plan. Pellebon and Missy Mael have been named Co-Directors of RCC, removing the interim designations.

- Freeman reported Dane County APS is concerned colder weather will further isolate seniors. Staff are preparing to do more indoor visits. APS is seeing an increase in domestic violence among seniors. The helpline, after experiencing a drop in calls early in the pandemic, has returned to pre-pandemic activity levels. There is no waiting list for services. The department is fully staffed.

- Pomije reported sexual assault crime numbers are down in the Developmental Disabilities population during the pandemic. Dane County APS staff believe that's because individuals aren't getting to their vocational agencies or seeing doctors in person, two prevalent avenues of referrals. Pomije has made in-person visits to clients

throughout the pandemic.

- Miyasaki reported Project Respect has dealt with higher numbers of substance abuse during the pandemic. Accessing residential treatment is difficult with facilities limited to 50 percent capacity to allow for social distancing. There has been an uptick in male victims and in mental health issues. Conflicted feelings about police and how an interaction between police and a family member or friend might go is causing some people not to call for help.

- Crowley reported the strain of the pandemic is being felt by young children. There's been an increase in gun violence-related work in Dane County's Youth Justice programs. Violence prevention efforts continue with partner agencies.

2. Legislative Updates/Announcements

McKinney reported there are two Madison Common Council resolutions circulation for which the commission should consider providing input. One is the funding of a pilot project for Madison Police Department officers to wear body cameras. The other is a proposed law to ban all city agencies, including MPD, from using emerging face surveillance technology or information derived from a face surveillance system.

3. CCR Updates

Child Abuse & Neglect: Details for the ninth annual Trauma-Informed Community Summit, scheduled for Nov. 20, will be shared with commission members. Developing a Children, Youth & Families Priorities Platform that focuses on issues such as prevention, mental health and advocacy is a primary focus.

Sexual Assault: The SA-CCR and DV-CCR are considering combining membership in pursuit of many common initiatives. Department of Children & Families Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinator Asia Jackson will speak at the meeting on 18 November. Safe Harbor is taking the lead in creating an MOU for agencies responding to youth sex trafficking.

Domestic Violence: The October and November meetings are being conducted primarily as leadership circle sessions (open to all) to think through next steps with the goal to reconvene as a full CCR in January. One thing being explored is combining with the SA-CCR. Also under consideration is a restructuring of the leadership circle.

Elder Abuse: Outreach Madison LGBT Senior Advocate Ticia Kelsey spoke about culture and terminology during the October meeting. The Financial Assistance Services Team is seeing an increase COVID-19-specific fraud and scams and continues to educate citizens. The Domestic Violence in Later Life Conference was held virtually for the first time on 1 October and drew about 280 participants. Ninety-five percent rated the event as "excellent" or "very good." The Hoarding Task Force, which meets next on 12 November, is re-examining how it can best fulfill its mission of helping community partners and individuals.

Intellectual Disabilities: Today's meeting will be the first since activities ceased in spring due to COVID-19.

4. Committee Chair Transition

Crowley announced Miyasaki will assume chair duties in January. Crowley will remain a committee member. Krista Ewers Hayes will join the commission as the Dane County Sheriff's Office representative, replacing Kerry Porter. A University of Wisconsin representative is expected to join soon. Crowley extended an invitation to Anthony Cooper, CEO of Focused Interruption Coalition and Vice President of Re-Entry and Strategic Partnerships for Nehemiah Center for Urban Leadership Development, to join the commission as a community representative.

F. Future Meeting Items and Dates

Next meeting: Tuesday, 17 November 2020, 8:30 a.m. via Zoom

G. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda

None.

H. Such Other Business as Allowed by Law

None.

I. Adjournment

A motion was made by KATO, seconded by FREEMAN, to adjourn. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: 7 - BARRY, BROWN, CROWLEY, FREEMAN, KATO, MCKINNEY and MIYASAKI

Absent: 5 - McCARVILLE, PORTER, RILEY, THORNLEY-PARISI and STATAM

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Howard Thomas,
Administrative Assistant, DCDHS Office of the Director*