



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, June 15, 2021

8:30 AM

Virtual meeting

A. Call To Order

Staff and guests present: Cortney Doescher-Hino, Jennifer Ginsburg, Peter Grimyser, Marlys Howe, Paulette Hurley, Dr. Murray Kapell, Amy Scarr, and Howard Thomas

Chair Miyasaki called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

- Present** 9 - AMY BROWN, HEATHER CROWLEY, BETH FREEMAN, SHARYL KATO, Supervisor MAUREEN McCARVILLE, Chair JAN MIYASAKI, DANA PELLEBON, KRISTA EWERS-HAYES, and ANGELA KAMOSKE
- Absent** 2 - SHANNON BARRY, and Supervisor CECELY CASTILLO

B. Consideration of Minutes

[2021](#) MINUTES FROM MAY 18, 2021
[MIN-114](#)

Attachments: [2021_0518_COSC_Minutes](#)

A motion was made by FREEMAN, seconded by BROWN, to approve the minutes.
The motion carried by a voice vote 9-0.

C. Action Items

None.

D. Presentations

None.

E. Reports to Committee

1. Agency Updates

Kato reported The Rainbow Project's reentry committee continues work on a reopening plan. Most services are being provided virtually, but there have been some in-person presentations and personnel are visiting schools and neighborhood centers when asked. Interviews to fill a nursing position are ongoing. The Rainbow Project continues to provide mental health services for young mothers in Early Childhood Zones in Verona, Sun Prairie and the Northside of Madison. The agency has found that telehealth hasn't been effective for vulnerable populations and that the transition back to in-person schooling has been difficult for some children.

Brown reported Dane County District Attorney's Office staff are working in the Dane County Courthouse, and that a new remote working policy has been established for each unit. The staffing crisis in the Victim Witness Unit continues due to the backlog of cases caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and mandates from Marsy's Law -- specifically the stipulation that the office must reach out to every victim of crime before the first hearing in the case. The Crime Response Unit helped with the initial victim contacts during the pandemic, but those employees have resumed their usual duties. The reimbursement from victim witness surcharges was very low during the pandemic. The DA's Office has relocated a vacant full-time position in the Deferred Prosecution Program to the Victim Witness Unit and interviews are underway. New U-Visa protocols have been posted on DA's Office website. The office cleared a backlog of U-Visa work for victims during pandemic and the Victim Witness Unit added a restorative justice position. The office has trained all employees about restorative justice practices and is encouraging employees to seek creative restorative justice options and dispositions.

Scarr reported today is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, with most events being held virtually, and introduced new colleague Cortney Doescher-Hino, who will provide victim advocacy and investigation when referrals involving victims with intellectual/developmental disabilities are received from the DA's Office or the Adult Protective Services Helpline. Domestic violence among elders spiked during the pandemic. There was a drop in referrals for IDD individuals, likely because they were not in the community and seeing the people who are most likely to report suspected abuse -- a trend which is expected to end as individuals return to work and school. There is great concern for older adults as the federal eviction moratorium ends on June 30. Many older adults haven't secured available funding to stop evictions, often because landlords and property owners refuse to provide the information required from them.

Pellebon reported that with victim advocates back in the hospitals, Rape Crisis Center is connecting with more clients. Helpline calls have increased with fewer pandemic-related restrictions. The agency is hiring a front desk person/office coordinator and plans to open the office to walk-ins the first week of July. Staffing will initially be limited to two victim advocates, an executive team member and the office coordinator. RCC is working to expand therapeutic services as many victims of sexual violence who are seeking therapy are facing long wait lists. The agency recently learned two local agencies will not work with survivors who have open legal cases because they are afraid of subpoenas and litigation. RCC is attempting to communicate with the clinical supervisors of those agencies to explain cases are going to take a long time due the backlog created by the pandemic and that not accepting survivors with an open case hurts a survivor's ability to receive services. The hiring process is underway to fill an outreach position.

Pam Hurley, a Forensic Nurse Examiner with UnityPoint Health Meriter, reported 50-60

sexual abuse patients presented in May. There have been times recently when survivor services were unavailable -- usually for no longer than eight hours -- due to staffing problems. When the closings have happened, the hospital has reached out to stakeholders and made sure emergency room staff know what to do if a victim presents during the closings. Staff are thrilled that victim advocates have returned to hospitals following their absence during the pandemic.

Freeman thanked Supervisor McCarville for sponsoring a Dane County Board resolution recognizing World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Pinwheels and a banner were displayed in front of the Human Services office on Northport Drive, and banners were hung on the pedestrian walkway over Park Street near UnityPoint Health Meriter and in Stoughton. Dane County Adult Protective Services will begin the process of hiring two investigators soon. All APS staff are receiving best-practices training for working with individuals with I/DD population. There has been a noticeable increase in the complexity of issues in calls to the APS Helpline.

Doescher-Hino shared she has been employed by Dane County for about six years and that she has been conducting Elder Abuse/Adults at Risk investigations for the past three years. She shadowed her predecessor, Carrie Pomije, for the past six months.

Ginsburg reported Safe Harbor is focused on reengaging in trainings, and is currently involved in a trauma-informed care training with the Dane County Sheriff's Office. Safe Harbor's Labor Day Dash, a 5K & 10K run-walk fundraiser that was not held in 2020 due to the pandemic, will return in September.

Howe, manager of the Domestic Violence Unit in the Dane County District Attorney's Office, reported she has seen significant upward trends in attempted homicide cases, individuals with multiple cases, and people who are being sought via warrants.

Kamoske reported the Madison Police Department is getting more stolen vehicle and garage burglary calls in recent weeks -- a normal trend when school ends each spring -- and more general calls with pandemic restrictions easing. A new academy class of 19 individuals commenced on June 1, with those officers slated to begin solo patrols in February 2022. Public service windows in all districts will be open by July 12. Vaccinated officers are not required to wear masks but are instructed to do so if they are asked or if they are in contact with a masked individual. The City has implemented a new telecommuting policy for those who can and wish to work remotely. At first-year Chief Shon Barnes' direction, each police district implemented a Strategic and Community Plan on June 6 that targets issues specific to their districts and ways to foster community engagement. The four-officer gang unit has expanded to eight officers with an additional sergeant, and has been renamed the Gang Neighborhood and Crime Abatement Team.

Ewers-Hayes reported the transition is going well under Dane County Sheriff Calvin Barrett, who is taking part in many community stakeholder events during his early weeks on the job. Three new detectives are joining the Sheriff's Office. There has been a sharp increase recently in firearm-related domestic violence.

Grimyser, a Detective with the University of Wisconsin-Madison Police Department, introduced himself and reported the department is slowly returning to in-person work at its headquarters.

McCarville reported the County Board continues to meet virtually and is expected to do so throughout the summer as audio/visual upgrades are installed at the City County

Building. The aim of the upgrades is to allow hybrid meetings that feature both in-person and virtual attendance. Dane County Executive Joe Parisi is not asking for cuts to the 2022 budget, but has asked that new initiatives be put on hold due the uncertainty of the pandemic's future impact. Special elections are scheduled for two open Supervisor seats and the individuals elected are expected to be assigned to the Public Protection & Judiciary Committee, which recently lost two members.

Miyasaki reported that Project Respect responds to sex exploitation victims across the lifespan and is doing more juvenile prevention work. Project Respect requests victims to reach out to Dane County Adult Protective Services even if APS can't help so the numbers of victims are documented. Project Respect is also asking that more of its clients receive county-funded mental health case management across different levels of care.

2. Anti-Spyware Project Update

No update.

3. CCR Updates

Sexual Abuse/Domestic Violence: A model was presented for the combination of the Sexual Abuse and Domestic Violence CCRs. One group will focus on ideas and be specifically for survivors. The other group will focus on implementation and will consult with survivors about best methods for moving forward. Listening sessions will be held to start building up the survivors group. Madison Police Chief Shon Barnes is scheduled to attend the July 7 meeting of a Child Sexual Exploitation Subcommittee work group with a focus on training partnerships and how police handle juvenile perpetrators who are also victims.

Elder Abuse: The Domestic Violence in Later Life Conference will be held virtually on October 28. The Hoarding Task Force continues to re-prioritize its activities.

Child Abuse & Neglect: Several subcommittees are meeting to collectively list priorities within their areas, identify overlap and develop a platform.

Legal Issues: End Abuse Wisconsin Staff Attorney Kelsey Mullins will provide a presentation at the meeting on Thursday.

I/DD: The most recent meeting was canceled due to staffing changes and Ellen Merker being on maternity leave.

4. Legislative Updates/Announcements

McCarville reported an initiative to move 17-year-old offenders to Juvenile Court jurisdiction was removed from the governor's budget by the Joint Committee on Finance. McCarville will share with commission members a press release on the formation of the Dane County Broadband Task Force announced today.

Miyasaki reported that Senate Bill 245 and Assembly Bill 185, which provide that juveniles may not be prosecuted for prostitution, are in committee.

F. Future Meeting Items and Dates

Chair Miyasaki canceled the meeting scheduled for July 20 due it falling during the observance of Eid-al-Adha.

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 CROWLEY, to adjourn. The motion carried by a voice vote 9-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:51 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Howard Thomas