

LA CROSSE COUNTY NOTICE OF MEETING

COMMITTEE OR BOARD: JUDICIARY AND LAW COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2022
MEETING PLACE: Meeting held remotely with Microsoft Teams
[Click here to join the meeting](#)
TIME OF MEETING: 3:00 P.M.
PURPOSE OF MEETING: MONTHLY MEETING

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Public Comment **Please see below on how to sign up for making public comment**
3. Approve Committee Minutes of January 11, 2022
4. Consent Agenda (informational): None
5. Conference/Meeting Report
6. Committee on Policing: Potential Members Listing Review – Monica Kruse
7. Next Committee Meeting: March 8, 2022
8. Future Agenda Items
9. Adjournment

NEWS MEDIA

La Crosse Tribune
Other Media

OTHERS

Emails:
Ryan Westpfahl
Bev Heebisch
Bryan Jostad
Maureen Freedland

DEPARTMENTS/STAFF

County Board Chair
County Administrator
County Clerk
Facilities
Emails:
Kelly Goyette
Elizabeth Wright
Jeff Wolf
Tim Gruenke
David Steinberg
Kevin Rindy
Tim Candahl
Lisa Stablier

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Margaret Larson, Chair
Noelle Weber Strauss
Vicki Burke
Jack Pogreba
Dawn Wacek

MEMBERS: If unable to attend, call the County Clerk's Office at 785-9581.

****PUBLIC COMMENT:** Individuals may make a public comment virtually. For individuals intending on making a virtual public comment, **please register at least 24-hours** in advance by emailing publiccomment@lacrossecounty.org or leave a message at 785-9700. Please include your name and email address you will be using to connect with the committee, along with the name of the committee you would like to provide a public comment.

The Committee may receive information from the public, but the Committee reserves the right to limit the time that the public may comment and the degree to which members of the public may participate in the meeting.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITY: If you need accommodation to attend this meeting, please contact the County Clerk's Office at (608)785-9581 as soon as possible.

DATE NOTICE FAXED/MAILED/POSTED: February 7, 2022

This meeting may be recorded, and any such recording is subject to Disclosure under the Wisconsin Open Records Law

All attendees of this meeting are STRONGLY ENCOURAGED to wear a face mask!

JUDICIARY AND LAW COMMITTEE
Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.
County Board Room 1700

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Chair Margaret Larson, Noelle Weber Strauss, Vicki Burke, Jack Pogreba, Dawn Wacek
MEMBERS EXCUSED:	
MEMBERS ABSENT:	
OTHERS PRESENT	Steve O'Malley, Jane Klekamp, Eric Timmons, David Steinberg, Jeff Wolf, Judge Scott Horne, Tonya Van Tol, Marte Peterson, John Siegel, Cody Bernhardt, Steve Rundio, Brad Williams, Ryan Root, Lisa Bruring

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Margaret Larson called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 2, 2021 JUDICIARY AND LAW COMMITTEE MOTION by Vicki Burke, **SECONDED** by Dawn Wacek, to approve the Committee Minutes of November 2, 2021. **Motion carried unanimously.**

CONSENT AGENDA

a. **CJMC – OCTOBER 20, 2021**

MOTION by Vicki Burke, **SECONDED** by Jack Pogreba, to approve. **Motion carried unanimously.**

CONFERENCE/MEETING REPORT – None

DRUG TREATMENT COURT REPORT – JUDGE SCOTT HORNE/TONYA VAN TOL

Judge Scott Horne and Tonya Van Tol presented the Drug Treatment Court Report.

Highlights include:

- The typical participant in Drug Treatment Court is a white male between the ages of 25 and 34 with a high school diploma or GED.
- Most participants coming into the program were not married and unemployed.
- Of the participants, the primary drug of choice was methamphetamine, with heroine coming in second.
- Most participants were diagnosed with at least one mental health issue.
- Received a grant through the National Center for State Courts to evaluate the Drug Court regarding persistent absconding, low graduation, frequency of arrest after graduation and no recent evals.
- The sole treatment provider is Driftless Recovery Services. About 90% of participants go through the service. This provider has improved treatment access.
- The evaluation shows the number of offenses committed by graduates was less than the comparison group, which largely consisted of individuals, some of whom had been placed on probation, others who had gone to prison. In addition, the severity of crimes was less than those committed by the comparison group.
- The evaluation looked at the cost effectiveness of Drug Court versus jail and determined that Drug Treatment Court is less than prison incarceration.
- As for future improvements, there is an Equity and Inclusion Assessment Tool to be used to ensure that whatever tools being used, and decisions being made are not bias on racial grounds.

- Moving forward, data collection needs to be enhanced to assure that the changes made are helping us reach the benchmark of less than 15% recidivism in program and 25% post participation.

The complete evaluation can be found here:

La Crosse County Drug Treatment Court Evaluation 2017-2021

JAIL VISITATION/MESSAGING – SHERIFF JEFF WOLF

Sheriff Jeff Wolf provided information on the mail policy within the jail, due to a possible complaint.

In 2016 a new contract was signed with Securus Technologies for the visitation system within the jail. Prior to this visitation system, all visits with family and friends were done in person in visitation booths, which proved to be very time consuming and resulted in numerous confrontations and at times fights within the jail visiting area.

In 2016 video visitation was setup. Kiosks are available at each of the cell blocks and inmates can visit with friends and family either from home or they can come into the jail lobby area to visit seven days a week. Along with the visitation change, the technology of eMessaging began, which is comparable to email, allowing inmates to email friends and family from their cell block for \$.50 an email, which is less than the cost of a postage stamp. Inmates can get mail basically seven days a week on any day and time; previously it was once a day five days a week with no weekends or holidays.

The Sheriff's Office began looking to get a body scanner for the jail because of contraband coming into the jail and not knowing how this was happening. It was discovered quite certain that one of the ways it was coming in was through the old mail system. There were processes where individuals could soak heroin and methamphetamine into a letter or envelope. Subsequently, the drugs got into the jail and it could be soaked back out into water and then ingested. This also created a hazard for jail staff handling such mail. It was determined that the mail policy needed to be changed; only allowing mail in from legal sources, law enforcement and other correctional facilities.

The mail system was implemented, and friends and family were notified of the change. We do make exceptions (i.e., hardship, no access to internet, do not know how to use the internet, etc.) If an inmate requests letters, the letters will be scanned and given to them.

The eMessaging has been well received by inmates as well as friends and family, as it speeds up communication.

GANG ACTIVITY – SHERIFF JEFF WOLF

Sheriff Jeff Wolf reached out to investigators familiar with gangs and inquired as to what law enforcement sees on gang activity in the La Crosse area.

Questions asked and answers received are as follows:

Q: What gangs are here in the La Crosse area?

A: It is not uncommon to see Asian, Latino, African American and local gangs within the area. The Asian members are mostly from the Twin Cities and Wausau. The Latinos are from Milwaukee and the Twin Cities. The African American gangs are from Chicago, Rockford, and Toledo. Local gang members are mostly white and belong to bike clubs.

Q: Do you feel there is a problem with gangs within the La Crosse area?

A: The consensus is that there is not necessarily a gang problem, but a drug problem. Most all the significant drug cases are tied to a gang one way or the other. The overall goal of the gangs is to make money. In general, there is not an issue between the gangs unless there is some type of disrespect between various gang members.

Q: Why do gangs come from these bigger cities to La Crosse?

A: Two reasons; one being business related (supply and demand). They have a supply of drugs in these other cities, and they can bring them to La Crosse as there is a bigger demand and less supply here. They can make almost double, especially from methamphetamine and fentanyl, selling drugs here versus Chicago. The second reason; there is a perception among gang members that they will get a lesser penalty if caught in a small community like La Crosse versus a big city like Chicago.

DARE REPORT – CODY BERNHARDT

Deputy Cody Bernhardt, La Crosse County DARE Officer, reported on the DARE Program. Highlights include:

- The DARE Program is for 5th grade students and covers districts across the entire county as well as one district outside of La Crosse County, that being Melrose-Mindoro.
- Last year 575 kids graduated from the DARE Program.
- The program is designed on a theory to teach kids self-awareness, responsible decision making, understanding others, relationship and communication skills and handling responsibilities and challenges.
- All topics are covered with ten lessons each. Every lesson builds on what they learned previously and adds it to the next lesson. Lessons start with responsibilities, alcohol and tobacco, risks and consequences, peer pressure, dealing with stress, verbal communication, listening, bullying, helping others and getting help from other people.
- A soon to be released study from UNC Greensboro will show there were statistically significant reductions in the prevalence of alcohol use, getting drunk, using cigarettes, and using vapes for kids who participated in DARE compared to ones that did not.
- Planned this year locally includes working with the La Crosse Logger's to provide an event of appreciation for graduates.
- The program costs \$6,000 per year and in 2021 to date we have received \$10,377 in donations. Any money that is over what is needed goes to the next year to help provide the program for that year.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

- February 10, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. (Thursday)

SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

- Committee of Policing – Potential Members Listing Review

ADJOURN

There being no further business, **MOTION** by Jack Pogreba, **SECONDED** by Noelle Weber Strauss, to adjourn at 4:28 p.m. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Disclaimer: The above minutes may be approved, amended, or corrected at the next committee meeting. Lisa Bruring, Recorder

La Crosse County
Drug Treatment Court
Evaluation
2017-2021

Background

Reasons for Requesting Grant

- Persistent Absconding
- Low Graduation
- Frequency of Arrest after Graduation
- No recent evals

Background Cont.

Multi-Part Evaluation—National Center for State Courts

- NDCI (National Drug Court Institute)—Technical Assistance Summary
- Dr. Kruse and Dr. Bakken—Process Evaluation
- NCSC—Process Evaluation
- NCSC—Evaluation of Cost Effectiveness

NDCI July 2018

- Identified 14 best practices
- Eligibility Criteria—Recommend Admission by Objective Criteria
- Sole Treatment Provider
- Streamline Staffing
- Explore high rate of expulsion and absconding
- Team Training
- Sustainability—Outreach to Community
- Implement 5 phase program with advancement based on treatment benchmarks

NDCI Implementation

- Legal Screener Based on Norfolk, Va. Severity of Crime and Violence
- Sole Treatment Provider—Driftless
- Enhanced due process for jail sanctions
- Team Training—Annual WATCP and National Conference in 2021

Process
Evaluation
Dr. Kruse &
Dr. Bakken
(2018/2019)

- Methods include observation and interview—12 active participants and 3 graduates
- Measure Therapeutic and Procedural Justice
- Procedural Justice Present—Therapeutic Approach Resulted in Perception of fairness
- Interactions lead to trust in court
- Best Practices Followed in Court Interactions
- Perception of Equal Treatment in Incentives and Sanctions
- Barriers in form of Housing and Access to Treatment
- Interaction with team members
- Expand Programming—parenting

Responses to Process Evaluation

- Access to Sober Housing—Driftless
- More Access to Residential Housing—Opioid Grant
- Group Community Service
- Sole Provider has improved treatment access

La Crosse County DTC Participant Demographics

- 65% of participants were male
- 88% White/ 4% Asian/ 3% Black/ 2%Hispanic/1% Native American
- 53% of participants were between 25-34
- 67% of participants had a high credential
 - 20% had no credential
- 88% were unemployed at the time of admission
- 56% were homeless
- The average number of previous offenses was 11
- 57% reported methamphetamine and 29% heroin as drug of choice
- 54% reported at least 1 mental health challenge
 - 71% of those participants suffered from multiple mental health factors
- 78% of participants were High risk for recidivism on the Compas

La Crosse County DTC Strengths

- DTC is in compliance with many of the critical Best Practices recommended in the 10 Key Components of Drug Court (NADCP, 1997) and NADCP's Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards
- Areas in which the La Crosse DTC is performing well according to the Wisconsin Statewide Drug and Hybrid Court Performance Measures:
 - Sobriety
 - Average length of stay

Recidivism

In-program recidivism

- NDCI Benchmark: Less than 15% recidivism
- Evaluation showed La Crosse DTC 28.9% with new charges resulting in conviction within 3 years

Post-program recidivism:

- NDCI Benchmark: Less than 25% within 3 years of discharge
- Evaluation showed 50% recidivism for La Crosse County DTC

Report Finding: Significant benefits in reduced frequency of new crimes and reduced severity

Cost Effectiveness

- Cost of drug treatment court is less than prison incarceration
- The cost of recidivism for a drug court participant was **\$14,464.80**, while that for a comparison group member was **\$18,623.99**
- Comparison group members recidivated with generally more serious offenses at a much higher cost to society

Implemented Recommendations

- Eliminate voting to select admissions
- Make a clinical diagnosis of addiction a criterion for admission, which request obtaining such a diagnosis before admission- Implemented with assistance from ISRS therapist located in La Crosse County Jail
- All treatment providers need to participate in team meetings (**Implemented with sole provider contract**)
- Developed and utilize matrixes of graduated sanctions and incentives that specify appropriate responses to particular behaviors
- 5 phase program with advancement based on treatment benchmarks

Future Improvements

- Use the Equity and Inclusion Assessment Tool to monitor referrals and admission processes for potential racial bias.
- Review legal screening tool
- The probation officer assigned to DTC should have caseload consisting exclusively of DTC participants
- Benchmark: 50 days from arrest to entry
- Incentives and sanctions ration should be 4 to 1
- Increase rate of successful completion- graduation rate should be 60% or higher
- Enhance data collection to evaluate effectiveness of implemented changes



LA CROSSE COUNTY
Exceptional services. Extraordinary place.

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#6

Date: February 3, 2022
To: Members of Judiciary and Law Committee
From: Monica Kruse, County Board Chair
Re: Committee on Policing Membership

The following individuals are being submitted to the Board of Supervisors on February 17th.

- Laura Abellera
- Chuck Ashbeck
- Keith Belzer
- Luis Delgado
- Amanda Goodenough
- Henry Greengrass
- Thom Huh
- Mark Huesmann
- Tara Johnson
- Lisa Kruse
- Shawn Kudron
- Jonathan Locust
- Vincent Loera
- Hailey Polk
- Andrew Rasmussen
- Heidi Svee
- Joe Veenstra
- Jeff Wolf