

STATE COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS BOARD MEETING FEBRUARY 18, 2004

Michigan State Library and Conference Center
Lansing, Michigan

Approved: July 15, 2004

PRESENT: Patricia Caruso, Lawrence Emery, Nanci Grant, Larry Inman, Roger Kahn, Michael Nye, Bernard Parker, John Phillips, Mary Kay Scullion.

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion by Mr. Parker, supported by Mr. Phillips, to approve the agenda as submitted.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

II. APPROVAL OF October 16, 2003 MINUTES: Motion by Judge Grant, supported by Mr. Parker, to approve the October 16, 2003 Minutes as written.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

III. AMINISTRATOR REPORT: *Prison Commitment Rates* - Administrator Brzozowski brought the Board's attention to the Department's Felony Disposition data reports for the first three quarters of CY 2003 that were in the board meeting packets for their review. The data showed that the overall PRC for the state is 22% and the rate for straddle cell offenders is 37.7%. The PCR for straddle cell offenders decreased from 42% in 2002 to 36.9% in the first quarter of 2003, and increased to 39.8% in the third quarter.

There is an expectation that these rates would have continued to decrease because of the strategic planning process required by the State Board, and the state's renewed emphasis on targeting straddle cell offenders to control the state's prison growth.

Training – Administrator Brzozowski also stated that OCC has encouraged CCABs to promote and coordinate sites for the National Institute of Corrections Satellite Broadcast of “Implementing Effective Correctional Management of Offenders in the Community” on February 25th. There are currently 18 sites throughout the state with approximately 1,200 seats available. The Department has encouraged field staff to attend this training.

In December, OCC staff provided training relative to the Community Corrections Comprehensive Plan & Application for FY 2005. All CCABs, with the exception of one, had staff attend who were primary responsibility for completing the document. The training evaluations completed revealed ratings of “very good” to “outstanding” in most categories.

Drunk Driver Jail Reduction & Community Treatment Program – Administrator Brzozowski reported that the OCC received 27 applications from CCABs, representing 35 counties, for the DDJR/CTP funds. Five applications were submitted after the due date or in draft form and the grant coordinators are working with the CCABs to complete these documents. Reviews and proposals have been completed on 19 applications and contracts have been prepared.

IV. INTRODUCTIONS: Chair Larry Inman noted that some Board Members were not present when Deputy Director Dennis Schrantz introduced the new Director, Patricia Caruso, to the Board previously. He wanted to take this moment to allow Director Caruso to address the Board. Director Caruso introduced to the State Board the new Deputy Director of Field Operations Administration,

Joan Yukins. She stated that this was part of a re-organization in the department that has been ongoing since July, as Mr. Schrantz had been the Deputy Director of FOA and encompassed under that agency was all of the ReEntry and Strategic Planning efforts. Director Caruso reiterated her belief that the future of the department rests on the ability to control and decrease the populations in the prisons. These two enormous functions are now in the Policy and Strategic Planning Administration, headed by the new Deputy Director Dennis Schrantz.

Deputy Director Joan Yukins has been with the department for over 23 years and was previously the Warden at Robert Scott Correctional Facility in Northville. Director Caruso stated that she was extremely pleased to have Deputy Director Yukins as part of the Executive Team in the Department of Corrections.

Deputy Director Yukins stated that she was very pleased to be the new Deputy Director of the Field Operations Administration. She had worked with Corrections for many years and has seen the good, the bad and the ugly. She noted that she was very pleased with the administration and wants to be a part of the change, and is very happy to be on board.

V. CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS: Objectives & Priorities - Chair Larry Inman called the Board's attention to the "State Community Corrections Board Priorities" located in their packets that included some changes. (Attachment A)

Administrator Brzozowski stated that at the October Study Session, some changes had been presented to the State Board and it was decided that prior to any change being made, the changes should be distributed to the CCAB Managers for their comments. Only three responses were received concerning the document and the President of MACCAB was contacted, who indicated that nothing in the document was problematic.

Rather than to have these priorities come before the State Board each year, Administrator Brzozowski stated the language changes that were made will enable the document to become permanent. If there becomes a reason to change the priorities in the future, then they will be addressed at that time.

Director Caruso questioned a portion that had been stricken under the Prison Admissions Section. In the language that states "or maintain low prison admissions" if it sent the message of penalizing those who are doing a good job already because it is not possible to reduce? She noted that we should want to acknowledge and not penalize those that are doing what we are asking.

Administrator Brzozowski explained that the language was stricken to encourage those counties that have rates below the state rate to reduce the rate even further if possible. Several counties have indicated in the past few years that they will continue their local comprehensive corrections plans since their prison commitment rate is below the States rate. The changes were not intended to penalize a specific county if they were below the state rates and they were maintaining.

Ms. Scullion also stated that she had the same reaction as Director Caruso. She noted that when the language was originally adopted the State Board was trying to acknowledge that in some counties they had gone as low as they would be able to go given their bench. She suggested that the language be retained "or maintain low" and maybe add a qualifier, such as "target populations would be to work to reduce or maintain low". Then the message would be to continue to work, but also acknowledge that sometimes they may already be as low as they can go.

Mr. Emery suggested that the substitution of "minimize prison admissions" be made to the sentence. There was a consensus of opinion that this would alleviate the question.

MOTION: Motion by Ms. Scullion, supported by Mr. Parker, to accept the State Community Corrections Board Priorities with the revision, "minimize prison admissions" and the changes as submitted.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Livingston County CCAB Six Month Review - Grant Coordinator Christine Curtis brought the Board's attention to the updated status review of Livingston County that they had received. She reported that the County had complied with all of the contract conditions that were established for the first six months.

One of the more gray areas is the issue of the availability of data in Livingston County. In January, the county realized that their community corrections data systems was being directed at two different servers within the county and it depended on what computer you ran their data on, what was in the data. Even though the County did not comply with that monthly certification that their data was accurate, it is her belief that they have put forth an extreme effort to identify what the problems are and the County Administration has pledged their support in resolving the issue. The felony disposition data issue is now moot as MDOC/OCC will be providing OMNI data to the counties on a quarterly basis.

Ms. Curtis supported continuing funding for Livingston County for the balance of this fiscal year. She stated that the County has made a great deal of progress related to their contract conditions and it is expected they will now be able to devote themselves to strategies to reduce their prison commitment rates per their objectives. Additional conditions, objectives, and technical assistance will be included to ensure the County continues to make progress per State Board expectations.

Representing Livingston County CCAB were Tara Vanvalkenberg, CCAB Manager; Robert Block, County Administrator; David Reader, County Commissioner.

Dr. Kahn questioned if the problem with the server has been fixed and he was assured that the problem has been fixed at this time and the County will continue to monitor the situation.

Ms. Scullion said she was glad to see the work that has been done to come into compliance with the contract conditions, that she was shocked when she saw their prison commitment rates and hopes that the fourth quarter numbers are lower. She also reiterated that they should see their prison commitment rates down to at least their first or second quarter numbers by the time they come back.

Coordinator Cutis stated that now the programs are in place, they understand the programs and they are targeting the appropriate people, and our office is able to turn out prison commitment rate data on a quarterly basis. This will make it much easier to review data and make minor revisions to programs or targeting to have the intended effect.

Mr. Parker questioned the contractual condition if actual levels of utilization fall below 80% of projected levels, reimbursement of program service costs may be reduced or withheld on a percentage basis. Coordinator Curtis answered that yes, this would be a reduction of their overall grant by that percentage for that month.

MOTION: Motion by Mr. Parker, supported by Judge Nye, to approve six month continued award of funds (Comprehensive Plans & Services - \$82,952 and Probation Residential Services - \$47,214 for total funding of \$130,166) pursuant to OCC staff recommendations. This recommendation is to be forwarded to Director Caruso. (Attachment B)

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

Muskegon County CCAB Six Month Review - Grant Coordinator Christine Curtis reported that there has been significant progress in Muskegon County. The specific charge from the State Board given to Muskegon County at the August Board Meeting was that they reduce their prison commitment rates in two particular areas: 1) the straddle cell rate and 2) probation violation rate.

The benchmark set by the State Board was reducing the straddle cell rate to 60%, and she was pleased to say that the County was able to reduce (in the fourth quarter) their rate down to 53.6%. This is a drop from 70.2%. The benchmark for the prison commitment rate for the probation violation group was set at 40% and the County was able to reduce this rate from 51.4% to 35.2%. A great deal of the progress in the County can be attributed to the commitment of the Sheriff and the bench to using several beds that were set aside in the jail, for straddle cell offenders. Also, a significant number of agent recommendations included a decrease in the number of prison recommendations. These recommendations are being followed, in large part, by the bench.

Mr. Emery questioned if this was a “temporary fix” regarding the 30 beds that had been set aside? Ms. Curtis introduced several stakeholders that were present representing Muskegon County: Sheriff George Jurkas, Circuit Court Judge Timothy Hicks, CCAB Manager Donna Powell, Corporate Counsel Steve Corwin, Asst. Corporate Counsel Thoa Du, MDOC Area Manager John Arnaldi and Field Supervisor Jesse Doan.

Judge Hicks stated that they are making a good faith effort to accomplish this. They are in the process of re-evaluating the situation and have an answer when the 30 beds are filled. He asked the State Board to trust their good faith efforts to accomplish more.

Steve Corwin, Corporate Counsel, stated that he was here on behalf of the County Board of Commissioners and the Administrator. They have been working for the past six months very closely with community corrections programs trying to see if they could assist in building a bridge between criminal justice and community corrections. He noted that there is an unprecedented degree of cooperation between the courts, the sheriff, the County Board of Commissioners, community corrections and the agents to achieve the objective that was targeted by the State Board. He also noted that they are making progress on record keeping issues and that this is probably a turning point for Muskegon County.

Judge Hicks commented that regarding the articles that had recently been in the local newspapers, he would like the State Board to be aware of the conflicting currents that they have in Muskegon County on this debate. He extended his appreciation to the OCC staff, Ms. Curtis and Mr. Brzowski to engage in this debate, which has been helpful.

Dr. Kahn questioned if there was a commitment to straighten out the County’s data problems, and if they do, what is the date? Ms. Powell stated that they receive their data from the MDOC and it is entered into a CAMIS system. Their vendor is working with the state to consolidate the process so that it is in agreement with what occurs with the state. They have enlisted the assistance of a professional company, Northpointe, to help with that data.

Mr. Corwin stated that regarding the remaining contractual objectives listed in the proposal, that they are definitely within reach and see no problem with them being resolved within the next six months.

Mr. Emery said he wanted to congratulate the Sheriff for having an excellent idea and hopefully that will carry on. He also stated that he appreciated Judge Hicks attending the meeting today and that this plays an important part on how he thinks about this issue.

Ms. Scullion stated that she was assuming that OCC would make available to them, as they need, in continuing this process, information about successful programs in other jurisdictions that have had a positive impact. This would give them input as to what is going on around the state that may address some of their issues. Ms. Curtis answered that regarding the technical assistance listed in the proposal could be attained by enlisting any of the OCC staff at the County’s request.

Director Caruso and Chair Larry Inman also reiterated their appreciation for all of the stakeholders that attended the meeting today to address the State Board and that their presence demonstrates with a professional response their commitment to this issue.

MOTION: Motion by Ms. Scullion, supported by Mr. Phillips, to approve six month continued award of funds (Comprehensive Plans & Services - \$116,450 and Probation Residential Services - \$291,153 for total funding of \$407,603) pursuant to OCC staff recommendations. This recommendation is to be forwarded to Director Caruso. (Attachment C)

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT: Barb Hankey, CCAB Manager for Oakland County and President of the Michigan Association of Community Corrections Advisory Boards, and she wanted to make the State Board aware of Senate Bill 968, entitled "Michigan Pretrial Services Act", which she has authored. The pretrial population is very important on the impact that it makes on the jail. She noted that her past 16 years in Oakland County has been involved with pretrial services in some manner and she feels that this bill is long overdue. This bill was introduced to the Senate on February 10th. (Attachment D)

VII. OLD BUSINESS: None

VIII. NEW BUSINESS: Regarding the bill that Ms. Hankey just distributed to the State Board, Ms. Scullion stated that this presented an interesting question that they have not visited with the new administration. The question of if they are asked to consider supporting legislation, is the Director interested in hearing the State Board's recommendations on a public policy question, would she prefer they not deal with it, would she like their personal reactions, and not Board reactions? She noted that it would be helpful to know how the department wants the Board to respond.

Director Caruso stated that her initial reaction is that she agrees that there is an informal role, in terms of whether it is discussion or some level of communication on an information level. The department does have a legislative arm within its composition, and they do actively support or not support pieces of legislation, they testify on legislation, it is part of what the Department of Corrections does. There is a role in this discussion due to the various backgrounds of the people that serve on the State Board and their valued experiences and opinions. She did not think that the State Board going on official record of supporting or not supporting various pieces of legislation would be beneficial.

Chair Larry Inman commented that when they had their study session, it had been decided to have time for Board Members to have an open forum/study session on issues that they would like to introduce. He questioned the Board on their feedback of when the State Board would meet for this forum.

It was the consensus of the Board to maintain the two hours before the meeting and they felt that this had worked out very well.

Meeting adjourned.