

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday, March 19, 2014 9:30AM**  
Department of Corrections  
825 Marlboro Road, Keene, NH

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**PRESENT:** Commissioners Pratt, Rogers, and Zerba.

**STAFF:** County Administrator Wozmak, Director of Finance Trombly, Alternative Sentencing Director Potter, Sheriff Rivera, Grant Specialist Desrosiers, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Bouchard.

**At 09:30AM** – Commissioner Pratt opened the meeting and recognized Administrator Wozmak who presented the weekly operational recap.

- Administrator Wozmak reported a request from the 100 Night Shelter to use the Latchis Parking Lot on Saturday April 19<sup>th</sup> for a fund raising barbeque event. Following discussion the Commissioners approved the use of the parking lot by 100 Nights for the Saturday event.
- Wozmak then discussed a meeting that took place with the new Delegation Courthouse Rehabilitation committee on 3/17. He said the initial meeting went well and he anticipates that the committee will meet again in few weeks to discuss the overall plan for renovations.
- Wozmak then covered the Hemenway Trust Fund balance and the intent of the fund was reviewed.
- He then reported that the Hon. Tina L. Nadeau, Chief Justice of the Superior Courts has requested a meeting with the Commissioners to review the proposed expedited process to process felony cases through the District and Superior Courts. The Commissioners requested that the County Attorney come to the next meeting and discuss concerns about staffing impacts and costs. A meeting for April 16<sup>th</sup> with Chief Justice Nedeau was suggested and staff will follow-up and confirm the date and time with the Judges staff.

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Alternative Sentencing Director Potter was then recognized and he presented the following report to the Commissioners:

**CHESHIRE COUNTY ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING  
MISSION STATEMENT:**

To divert, monitor, and case manage District Court criminal offenders from Cheshire County House of Correction through:

- Clinical and financial case management
- Protection of public safety
- Encourage and support life-cycle rehabilitation

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**PROGRAMS:**

- Alternative Sentencing Program (ASP), founded in 2001:  
Target population: diverted substance using individuals whose criminal activities are directly or indirectly involving alcohol/drug use.
- Mental Health Court Project (MHC), founded in 2003:

Target population: individuals who have a known or suspected moderate to severe persistent mental illness that contributed to the criminal offense.

**PROGRAM MODEL: Community Case Management:**

Clinical and financial management of clients using "all willing" community providers.

**PAYMENT SOURCE:**

Cheshire County is "payer of last resort."

**PROGRAM STATISTICS:**

**ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING PROGRAM:**

- Total clients served from 2001 to present: 636
  - Admissions 2013: 37 (January 1 to December 31, 2013)
  - Current active clients: 9 (as of February 20, 2014)
  - Average length of stay: 106 days
  - Successful completion: 50%
  - Co-occurring Disorder: 10
- MENTAL HEALTH COURT PROJECT:**
- Total clients served from 2003 to present: 495
  - Admission 2013: 41 (January 1 to December 31, 2013)
  - Current active clients: 11 (as of February 20, 2014)
  - Average length of stay: 130 days
  - Successful completion: 85%
  - Co-occurring Disorder: 19 (37% of total from both programs)

**5 YEAR RECIDIVISM STUDY (based on 2007 client data and CCHOC statistics)**

74.5% of 2007 CCASP clients do not re-offended within 5 years post completion. 66.5% of 2007 MHC clients did not re-offended within 5 years post completion.

**PARTICIPANTS SATISFACTION SURVEY OUTCOME:** 78% all participants found it "very helpful".

**AVERAGE COST PER CLIENT (2013 data):** \$27.27 per day.

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**FIRST QUARTERLY REPORT 2014**  
**CHESHIRE COUNTY ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING PROGRAM and**  
**MENTAL HEALTH COURT**

As CCASP/MHC started out year 2014 we had 9 individuals in ASP and 14 individuals in MHC (23 individuals between both programs compared to 22 individuals the start of 2013). On February 26, 2014, we have had a total of 11 admissions, 4 successful completions and 8 non-compliances.

Out of the 8 non-compliant cases, 6 were people under the age of 25. Four of them re-engaged their addiction to opioid/opiates, 2 did not follow through with their ASP/MHC program and 2 were arrested on new charges.

Referrals have been slow to come in. This may be a seasonal pattern and an unintentional consequence of video arraignments. 2013 we saw the same low referrals with an increase occurring as the weather changed. Also Circuit Court began using video arraignments more frequently.

As a result of this neither program has been receiving many pretrial client referrals.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH:**

The programs suffered a budget cut amid Delegation conversations about funding. Since that time referrals have taken some time to recover. The lower number of referrals is a focus point of the ongoing monthly stakeholders' meeting. This group has begun to look at how these programs can better serve our clients and community.

**CORRECTIVE PLAN, WORK IN PROGRESS:**

Last year the Advisory Committee (Mental Health Court Stakeholders) approved changes to the client service plan (now called the Court Ordered Service Plan). The revision included more specific wording and expanded the case management and treatment services that could be part of the individual service plan. One such program was "Staying Quit", an eight to twelve week evidence based program for relapse prevention. This was run by ASP/MHC staff. These modifications helped but did bring forth some problems as well.

The first barrier for the Staying Quit Group was scheduling a time that at least 6 or more of the clients could make. This is still a concern we are dealing with because of client work schedules, transportation issues, family issues etc. As the clients age decreases this appears to more of a problem with scheduling. We are still working on correcting this. The changes that were made on the Court ordered Service Plan brought up a legal problem.

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The format works well with those that are on pretrial bail conditions but not when the person is post adjudicated. Please keep in mind that when these changes were made the majority of clients being served were pretrial which not the case is currently. The legal members (public defender, county attorneys Clerk of Courts and Judge Burke) are working on clarifying the language.

Several of the stakeholders are also involved with the Cheshire County Drug Court (CCDC) program which has brought up a productive discussion on bring ASP/MHC closer to the CCDC model. The Circuit Court is now looking into structuring the Court's time to accommodate a weekly dedicated time to focus only on those who are involved in ASP/MHC.

The County was paying for inpatient treatment for some of the clients until 2012 when cut backs had to be made. Looking at the statistical information pre and post 2012 it appears that being able to use this option improved outcome measure. CCASP/MHC is still using in patient placement but because the County is not able to pay for it the wait time to admit someone (average 6 to 8 weeks) becomes problematic for some of the most needy clients yielding to higher non-compliant discharge rates. When the county shoulders the burden of payment the wait time shortens by 50% or more. We are now considering reinstating this placement option.

**FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

The programs are tracking the overall budget guidelines. We continue to explore alternative funding sources through Federal grants to enhance and expand these programs.

**OTHER DUTIES PREFORMED BY ASP/1VIHC STAFF, CHESHIRE COUNTY DRUG COURT:**

Cheshire County Drug Court is the newest addition of alternatives to incarceration and is focused on felony-level cases in Superior Court whereas the CCASP/MHC programs focus on misdemeanor cases out of Circuit (District) Court. Due to the newness of the Drug Court program and the still vacant position of Drug Court Case Manager, the CCASP/MHC staff are providing assessment, assessment follow up and case management to these clients and are a part of Treatment Team and Court Team. We have found that that the time spent on one Drug Court client is equal to two ASP/MHC clients. With the future hiring of a dedicated Drug Court Case Manager more time will be spent on enhancing the ASP/MHC programs.

The Commissioners then thanked Director Potter for his report and began a review of the Master Item Agenda. No additions were made to the agenda items.

Grant Specialist Desrosiers then discussed the EMPG grant for the Sheriff's departments new CCSO Server project that require matching funds from the County that had been previously reviewed and approved by the Commissioners. Upon passage of the budget on Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, the matching funds to complete the acquisition of the servers were made available and the grant was now able to proceed. Desrosiers asked that the Commissioners approve the EMPG

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grant agreement; accepting the EMPG grant agreement terms as presented. The grant for the CCSO Server project, is for a total cost of \$46,528.00, of which the County's share is 50%, or \$23,264.

**Following discussion, Commissioner Rogers moved to accept the grant for CCSO Server project for a total cost of \$46,528.00 of which the County's share is fifty percent (50%) or \$23,264.00, and was seconded by Commissioner Zerba. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

Desrosiers then discussed the AmeriCorps Victim Witness grant that requires \$6,000.00 in matching funds from the County. This amount was approved in the 2014 budget which was passed on Monday March 17<sup>th</sup>. Desrosiers asked that the Commissioners accept the grant terms and approve payment of the matching funds.

**Commissioner Rogers moved to accept the grant for the AmeriCorps Victim Witness position for the County Attorney's office and approve expending \$6,000.00 to provide matching funding from the County. Commissioner Zerba seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

The Commissioners then returned to a discussion of the Hemenway Trust Fund. Whereas the Delegation declined to receive a late request for \$5,000 for funding for the 100-nights shelter (a budget amendment made by Rep. Robertson), but were generally supportive of the mission of the organization, Commissioners Pratt and Rogers were comfortable with a grant that would help meet the financial needs of the shelter and also could set the stage for the agency to return in the fall of 2014 to submit a timely request for funding as an outside agency. Commissioner Zerba felt that he would not support such a grant out of deference to the vote by the Delegation not to fund the agency this year. Commissioner Pratt explained that the core objection to funding was related solely to procedural compliance and not an objection to the mission and purpose of the organization.

It was felt by two of the Commissioners' that since the Hemenway funds are "to be used by them in their discretion for the care of the young, and the aged and infirm residents of the county, outside the Town of Marlboro", that a grant from the trust for the 100 Nights Shelter would meet the legal hurdles as well as the spirit of the trust.

**Following a lengthy and spirited discussion, Commissioner Rogers moved to make a one-time only grant from the Hemenway Trust Fund in the amount of \$5,000.00 to the 100 Nights Shelter for the purpose of caring for the young, the aged, and infirm residents of the County. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pratt. Upon vote the motion passed with two (2) Yea's from Commissioners Pratt and Rogers and one (1) dissenting Nay vote from Commissioner Zerba.**

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Sheriff Rivera then presented a request to the Commissioners for the renewal of the Surplus purchasing agreement that has been in place for a number of years. This agreement allows the County to purchase State surplus items at bargain prices. **Following discussion Commissioner Zerba moved to renew the Surplus Purchasing Agreement with the State of New Hampshire as presented. Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion and upon the motion passed unanimously.**

The Commissioners reviewed the census.

Commissioners reviewed the manifest and **Commissioner Zerba moved to accept the manifest as presented and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Rogers. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

**The Commissioners then reviewed the minutes of March 12, 2014 and Commissioners Rogers moved to accept the minutes as presented. Commissioner Zerba seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

The Commissioners calendar was then reviewed and no changes noted.

Commissioner Pratt then commended the Finance Director, County Administrator, and department managers for their work in crafting the 2014 budget. He said that this year's budget meetings went more smoothly than he could recall in recent memory and that the crafting of the budget from inception to acceptance and completion at the Monday evenings Delegation meeting had gone very well throughout the entire process.

At 10:46AM there being no further business to discuss, **Commissioner Rogers moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion seconded by Commissioners Zerba and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
R Zerba, Clerk