

**Legal Services Subcommittee 2.14.23**  
**12:30- 1:30 PM @ SCI and Zoom**

**In attendance:** Kelly Richards, Cookie Bookman, Blair Castro, Cathy White, Rich Powell, Christina Chaves, Ronnie Rivera, Kyle Koptychuck, Teresa Sholtz, Chad Wilhite, Carrie Crome, Allison Patton

**Discussion:** Connie began the meeting by recapping the goals and purpose of the Task Force as a whole.

Kyle mentioned how at the last meeting he attended, he ran the numbers and aggregated some data on arrests, and Ronnie expressed that Allison was interested in reviewing this data again.

Cathy gave a recap of the prestations from TEAM Court at last month's meeting, and said that her office would be willing to work with anyone as long as they have a type of permanent stable housing, if they otherwise qualify. They have, in the past, had people who lived at REAP etc who were able to qualify. Candidates for the program just have to be able to show that their living situation is somewhat stable and they can be reached when needed.

Ronnie said he wants to know from data how many people are currently in jail that are homeless from all agencies. Chief Powell explains that this is not possible at this moment, as many people are hiding their last known addresses for other reasons, and many are identified as homeless who are not. The jail focuses on those with medical conditions, as being homeless can exacerbate those conditions exponentially.

Connie posed the questions, "What can this subcommittee focus on changing in 2023?" Kelly said she had a client who couldn't come into drug court because he didn't have a stable residence (family members were not sober, etc)...these kinds of people won't show up as homeless so he just took regular probation and took his chances. If we can get people with temporary shelter to help them get started in the program, this could make all the difference, this way, they could actually do drug court.

Kathy also agreed that having locations such as REAP would be good to help more homeless be eligible for these programs. The city and county are both looking at a low-barrier shelter that could come into play. Connie suggested that Vinne Whibbs and Troy Watts could come to a meeting with the Specialty Court team, to further discuss ways they can assist with client eligibility and program acceptance.

Ronnie says there is an opportunity to catch people leaving the jail who are going back to the streets. Is there a way to catch some of these people and save them from the streets?

Allison says we currently have a bottleneck in getting people out of shelters and into housing. The county is currently looking at spending their money on housing for these people with the city looking at the low-barrier men's shelter that we need. We need to approach this like disaster

recovery and get everyone on the same page in terms of logistics, etc. Kyle pointed out that these programs cannot be fully funded with grant money, they need to generate some sorts of revenue.

It's a win for the homeless to now have more access to speciality court and that is a direct reflection of Cathy's representation in the Task Force, and it's also a win to be working with the jail and Chief Powell.

Allison and Ronnie suggest that we should partner with the Chamber to see what their needs are, and where our business leaders could plug in. Perhaps representatives could speak or present to the Workforce leaders from that subcommittee. Ronnie also suggests we need to come with concise language for "camping ordinances" to try and make them more effective.

Note: Allison received a thank you note from Liberty House for helping them avoid being shut down for an additional 30 days.

**Meeting Adjourned: 1:30 PM**