

LEGAL SERVICES/CRIMINAL JUSTICE/SPECIALTY COURTS SUBCOMMITTEE
6.7.22 11:45 AM- 1:15 PM
via Zoom and at City Hall

In Attendance:

Ronnie Rivera, Allison Patton, Kaitlyn Bonam, Connie Bookman, Terri Merrick, Blair Castro, Ross Goodman, Carrie Cromeey (Legal Services)

Discussion:

Ronnie reviewed old business regarding the retreat, raising funds or helping pay off fines for those who have obstacles to being found, new law enforcement mental health teams, and the idea of a homeless speciality court.. Allison and Kaitlyn provided a recap of data from Pam Childers office, which has a breakdown of what type of cases were in the system for transient people or our homeless since 2017. These are all open cases. Would be great to consider this data in terms of our core indicators going forward.

Terri Merrick gave a presentation on mentorship. She began by doing outreach to the homeless community, and was frustrated when she didn't see any movement. Mentorship is needed to help people get to where they need to be, and the beauty of coaching/mentoring is that most of these people don't really have anyone to call when things are bad, when things are good, etc. It brings forth a consistent person who lives within the margins. A lot of the things we need to do with them are things we totally take for granted.

These marginalized communities do not really have consistency, do not have a constant, safe figure in their life, so it sometimes takes 6-10 weeks to form trust between the coach and mentor. In this community it is really hard to ask for help, especially for the men. The goal at the Dream Center is that hope is birthed, and they believe everyone has a purpose; one person at a time.

They mentor 18 and up, they can mentor high-risk youth, but you have to have permission from the parent and youth, so that's more difficult. Dream Center mentors are all volunteers, they have about 30 and want to build that to 100. They coach one-on-one, mentors go into this to help them discover who they are, not make them like us. They are pairing 7 mentors this week, which will be the most they have ever paired in one week.

Their set-up in training one month, and the next month doing something to feed into the coaches. (special events, discussions with experts, etc.) They presented this program to pastors (they have 9 pastoral overseers) and brought forth the idea of taking in one family per year to walk with them- their first church told me they have a house, two years in the making!

Terri also recapped their “Meal Making Moments” food program which contains table topics that coaches and mentees can discuss. Allison wants to know if there is a way to integrate this into the criminal justice system. Terri suggests we try the mentor program with maybe 5 people matched with mentors who have some knowledge of the criminal justice system. Suggested that you could offer it to the court system as an option, voluntary program.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 12:36 PM