

CCJBH Full Council Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 28th, 2022
2:00 PM - 4:30 PM
Zoom Meeting

I. Welcome & Introductions:

Councilmembers Present: Secretary Kathleen Allison, Dr. Kooler (on behalf of Michelle Baass), Christina Edens (on behalf of Stephanie Clendenin), Stephen Manley, Danitza Pantoja, Tracey Whitney, and Anita Fisher.

Councilmembers Absent: Mack Jenkins and Tony Hobson.

Staff Members Present: Brenda Grealish, *Executive Officer, Council on Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health (CCJBH)*, Elizabeth Vice, Monica Campos, Kamilah Holloway, Jessica Camacho Duran, Paige Hoffman, and Daria Quintero.

Brenda Grealish welcomed participants to the meeting and gave an overview of the agenda.

Secretary Allison highlighted some of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's (CDCR's) 2022 accomplishments. The incarcerated population is down to about 96,000, which is below spring projections. The courts are still behind due to COVID, so there are many pending cases. Revenue projections are extremely down, so it is anticipated that there will be limited to no additional programs or initiatives initiated within the next State fiscal year. CDCR is currently pursuing some new initiatives, such as the Norway Model, which they hope to rebrand to become the California model. There are currently pilot programs in three institutions: Valley State Prison for Men and Central California Women's Facility, both in Chowchilla, and Salinas Valley State Prison's psychiatric program. The preliminary results are positive. The program teaches entry-level frontline staff how to interact with the population from a treatment model. Staff have been sent to Norway, and Norwegian correctional staff have come to California to work side-by-side with CDCR staff. Early evidence shows that there is a decreased use of force, decreased incidents, and decreased violation reports. CDCR is also implementing cameras within all CDCR facilities. Collectively, there has been a positive impact on the incarcerated population with a goal of decreased staff misconduct.

Additional updates were provided on efforts to:

- Provide free tablets to the incarcerated population for educational and programing purposes.

- Implement new legislation, beginning in January 2023 that allows for free phone calls, emails, video clips and live video chats with families.
- Move forward with prison closures based on the declining prison population. *The Deuel Vocational Institution has closed and Susanville Correctional Facility is in the process of closing. Additional closures will be announced within the next month.*
- Assess and plan for implementation of the bills related to CDCR that were signed by the Governor.

II. Newly Appointed Councilmember Scott Svonkin

Mr. Svonkin is currently serving as Director of Intergovernmental Relations for Los Angeles County Probation. He is co-chair of the Political Action Committee for Beverly Hills Hollywood Branch of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. Mr. Svonkin was appointed to CCJBH in September 2022 by Speaker Anthony Rendon.

Mr. Svonkin stated that it is a distinct pleasure and great honor to be appointed to CCJBH, and he is committed to the mission of the Council. His story is unique as he dropped out of high school, but community college turned his life around. He went down a successful path and became a staff member of the California Legislature as the Chief of Staff for an Assemblyman Paul Kortez. He also served on the Los Angeles Community College Board for two terms and on a K-12 board for one term, and worked with President Obama on Free Community College reform.

His love and commitment for services started as a child, and he hopes to engage and work together to help the focus population get jobs and careers through the community college system. He wants to promote and encourage those with whom he works and believes that we can help people turn their lives around.

III. Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership (LARRP)

Troy Vaughn, Executive Director and Chair, Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership

LARRP is a network of public, community and faith-based agencies and advocates working together to ensure that the reentry system meets the needs of the community. LARRP was founded in 2011 to address realignment. It has been building a locally rooted reentry movement to advance positive change for formerly incarcerated and convicted Angelinos and build public goodwill for greater equity in the criminal justice system. LARRP started with 20 organizations and now has over 875 network partners. It is a membership-based organization that has partners, members, and affiliates who work together with government entities to help impact change through legislation, housing, employment, integrated health, civic engagement, faith-based community

work, and policy and legal development. LARRP connects individuals to opportunities and has the capacity to serve across all Los Angeles County.

LARRP believes in four key elements to successfully reenter returning citizens to the community: in-reach, transition, stabilization, and connectivity. The goal of LARRP's in-reach is to have a reentry plan in place prior to release. The goal of transition is to have a warm release that reinforces positive learned behavior. Stabilization helps anchor the individual into the community. The goal of this planned connectivity is to see the individual connected in such a way that they are reinvesting into the community. Successful reentry engagement involves addressing the essential social, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, environmental, and physical needs in all areas of the returning citizens' life.

A part of the cycle is creating an environment of healthy living. This is done through community solutions to promote health equity, such as education, employment, transportation, social environment, public safety, physical environment, health systems and services, housing, and income and wealth. The new CalAIM initiatives may aid in the success of LARRP services.

LARRP prioritizes collaboration with agencies in the community, specifically the Los Angeles Mission (LAM) and Chris-Centered Ministries (CCM). Collaboration to achieve a common goal helps a team member organization focus on specific parts of the overall goal while understanding how their efforts complement and feed into the work helping the unhoused in the community. LARRP is critical to assist in finding appropriate placement and community reintegration for people returning home. Returning citizens are offered support through committees and L.E.A.D.E.R.S (Leading, Engaging, Advocating, Demonstrating, Enhancing and Expanding Reentry Systems) Academy. LAM serves as a stabilizing spiritual house of worship and discipleship. LAM teaches the principles of Christ, and the importance of anchoring a person back into a mindset of community responsibility and investment in self and service to others. CCM is a sister non-profit organization that stewards and oversees many services ministries that focuses on interim, permanent and affordable housing.

LARRP's pathway to success includes a roadmap to recovery, which includes stabilization, restoration, illumination and graduation.

- Stabilization includes services for the unhoused in the community before they can fully acclimate into housing. LARRP has two stabilization partners. The Anne Douglas Center for Women is a unique housing component of the model that is designed to take women through a thorough process of self-discovery and recapturing their dignity. LAM includes a Men's Stabilization project which has proven to be a highly effective model of getting men connected with their higher

selves to take their rightful place in society. LARRP takes into consideration the differences of men and women when reintegrating into society.

- LARRP aims to restore individuals to their full selves to help them remain housed. LARRP's interim and permanent housing programs include the Restoration Reentry Residence and Do Good in Your Hood program. The Restoration Reentry Residence serves as LARRP's interim stabilization supportive housing. It is a Community Based Transition restoration model in which individuals are placed in supportive housing that is imbedded in the community. There are currently twelve homes. Do Good In Your Hood is a permanent supportive housing initiative that is the next tier of specialized housing for individuals that are ready to leave interim housing. The model of housing is intended to offer people a stable and affordable means of living. There are currently four projects and other housing supports that individuals can be placed into in LARRP's model. In addition, LARRP recognizes the importance of addressing substance use and behavioral issues.
- LARRP's model suggests when the illumination of thoughts are recognized than the way forward becomes much clearer.
- Lastly, LARRP believes in honoring milestones and successes along the way to reinforce that success is possible through graduation of the program.

Without the economic component attached to housing, success is hard to obtain. LARRP is very intentional about creating employment opportunities. Two opportunities that are partnered with LARRP are MANNA Feast and Pit Stop. MANNA Feast is a food service business that employs people from LARRP's housing projects, as well as the community. MANNA Feast has contracts with the city of Los Angeles and many community-based organizations (CBOs). Pit Stop is a community services business that provides clean and safe restrooms to unhoused individuals throughout the city of Los Angeles. They hire individuals connected to LARRP to clean the restrooms in the community.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, LARRP identified and met the challenge to feed and serve over 600,000 meals. LARRP has partnered with the probation department, the county of Los Angeles and many CBOs to create the Young Adult Diversion Alternative (YADA) Project to serve individuals coming out of the juvenile system. The program includes classes and opportunities to work with probation partners. It realigns youth and prevents recidivism in an effort to keep them out of the adult correctional system.

LARRP has many projects that are currently in the works. LARRP just purchased a property in Hawthorne, California that is currently being renovated. LARRP partners with Fresh Cycle Laundry Services, which is a "triple-bottom-line Social-micro Enterprise Company" serving the mission-critical laundry needs of business and institutions throughout Los Angeles County. It uses laundry services to fill an essential

need, and to create a launching pad back into the workforce for adults recovering from histories of chronic homelessness, unemployment, incarceration, addiction, and other barriers to employment.

The collaboration of so many entities working together to address reentry is what allows LARRP to do such amazing work.

Councilmember Discussion

Q: Judge Manley asked if any of the 12 homes serve the severely mentally ill coming out of prison or jail.

A: Mr. Vaughn stated that they do and added that LARRP has a Psych Recruit Housing Program which serves those who are severely mentally ill and need a higher level of care. LARRP is able to assess someone's mental/behavioral health needs and determine the appropriate types of housing. LARRP has determined that it is important to assess individuals properly and make appropriate referrals to place them in housing where they can succeed. The goal is to stabilize them on their medications to be able to function within the housing models. When you run community-based restoration housing, a key element is making sure they are staffed appropriately. The Department of State Hospitals (DSH) program has doctors, clinicians, case managers, community partners, and client aides that LARRP works with to provide wraparound services. If it is apparent that an individual is destabilizing, their situation is assessed to potentially place them in different housing where their needs can be better served.

Q: Judge Manley asked, how is it determined who goes into the beds that are available? Is there a waitlist?

A: Mr. Vaughn stated individuals are assessed comprehensively for placement. Individuals are moved into another tier of housing within 120 days so other make beds available. There are 100 beds for men and 45 beds for women. Individuals select what route they want to take when reintegrating back into the community. There is no waitlist at the moment because individuals move in quickly. If there is no room at the Los Angeles Mission, individuals are referred to other organizations that help with stabilization.

Q: Judge Manley asked how LARRP is going try to reach the resistant population who are "difficult to work with." What is the plan?

A: Mr. Vaughn replied that there are many restrictions to move people out, such as Martin vs. Boise. Mr. Vaughn stressed that Martin vs. Boise has empowered people to live on the street and has depowered LARRP's ability to serve the target population. LARRP is proposing Safe Sleep as an opportunity for people who are shelter and/or housing-resistant. LARRP has determined that the best way to reach

them is to create safe sleeping opportunities on the streets. LARRP does that by ensuring clean bathrooms and showers, and creating lighting and an environment where people can safely sleep on the street. Mr. Vaughn commented, “You cannot win the fight of trying to house people who do not want to be housed.” Safe Sleep is one of the most viable options that needs to be a part of the conversation. LARRP keeps people where they want to be, therefore LARRP works towards controlling the access predators have to vulnerable individuals, and identifying outreach and engagement opportunities for those who want them. Also, creating additional walking paths for individuals in the community so the population can stay on the streets but community members can still walk on the sidewalks. LARRP has envisioned a methodology where they can build in the environment that they are forced to live in. For the Music Matters event, LARRP did not move a single person on the street, but instead built the event around them and involved the community in the conversation. Mr. Vaughn emphasized that the event was transformative and they experienced less resistance than people thought was going to be received.

- Q:** Mr. Svonkin asked about the education that is taught in these programs? Are the individuals provided with certificates that can translate to the private sector?
- A:** Mr. Vaughn stated that individuals are provided certificates and trained to integrate into the private sector. LEAP is a program where LARRP assesses basic skills. PIA and other nonprofit partners have created a janitorial maintenance program; there is a culinary route with Five Keys Charter School Partnership, so individuals can get certificates; there is a deal with CISCO Academy so individuals can get jobs through them, as well. The goal is to reintegrate individuals into the private sector in a seamless way.
- Q:** Mr. Svonkin encouraged that professional work translates beyond just the skills learned so that employers know that they have the required certificates for whatever job they are applying for. Are they paid living wages?
- A:** Ms. Vaughn stated jobs range from \$21 an hour and go up from there. Along with living wages, LARRP provides professional growth opportunities for the population. LARRP goes further than just providing certifications, they provide job opportunities, as well.
- Q:** Ms. Fisher asked if there are programs for someone who goes into a Behavioral Health Mental Health Court for diversion.
- A:** Mr. Vaughn stated that LARRP has a diversion program that diverts people away from custody when they come in contact with law enforcement. LARRP is operating one of the first Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion housing projects, where they work with women who are being sex trafficked and deal with the trauma around it. There are stabilization beds that are connected to the diversion program with Los

Angeles County through the Alternatives to Incarceration project. LARRP is very intentional about diverting individuals away from the criminal justice system.

Q: Dr. Pantoja asked if LARRP is planning to expand the center for juveniles.

A: Mr. Vaughn stated that LARRP would love to expand, but the decision is up to the county because they do the funding.

Q: Mr. Svonkin asked, what areas of LARRP have the most need or how can LARRP make a bigger impact?

A: Mr. Vaughn stated that it is important to understand points of connectivity to facilitate a transition appropriately into housing. It is important to find the right partners at the point of release. Stabilization centers help with that. The point of transition and the point of connectivity need to be stronger. The burden cannot be placed upon the State alone. Facilities need to be put together and legislation needs to be created to give the community the ability to make a smoother transition and put them into a system that they will benefit from. If we focus our energy on those who are employable and able to be housed and get them stabilized, then we can focus energy on the individuals who are harder to stabilize. We should give more flexibility across the model that was presented today so that agencies may come together to create employment that will tie to marketplace opportunities.

*****Public Comment*****

Q: A participant asked if the agency is acting as a fiscal sponsor, who signs contracts, and who is responsible for reporting? What is used for the matches required by the State?

A: Mr. Vaughn stated that LARRP has fiscal sponsors, which are community partners. In terms of resources, LARRP works with many other partners and is ready to grow and move out of community partnerships. LARRP is looking for funding throughout existing line items across the network and finding commonality of expenditures, then grouping those expenditures together to create an entity that can service the need of those expenditures. LARRP receives donations through large companies, such as Costco. LARRP looks for opportunities through philanthropic supports and through foundations to fill budgetary gaps.

Q: A participant asked if LARRP has advocated with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for housing opportunities for the re-entry population. Has that been successful for voucher participants?

A: Mr. Vaughn stated that LARRP had advocated with HUD on many levels and has been successful. The barrier lies with housing authorities in different jurisdictions having their own voucher system. LARRP does not currently have many supportive housing vouchers, but has a lot of tenant-based vouchers. Housing needs to be created for potential tenants before vouchers expire. Landlords need to create clean



and safe environments for people to live in. When people are recovering their lives, we should not expect them to want to live anywhere, we need to make sure that we are creating opportunities for them to live that are with dignity in homes that are clean and safe.

Q: A participant asked, are victims included in any of LARRPs programming as a part of recovery?

A: Mr. Vaughn stated LARRP is partners with city of Los Angeles to create healing circles in the community which focus on the victim side. It aims to raise the conversation regarding victims. Restoration is a part of rehabilitation and LARRP, so LARRP makes sure that people understand that restitution is a part of the transformation process.

Q: A participant asked if LARRP has programs that serve older adults where working is no longer an option.

A: Mr. Vaughn stated that LARRP has a component that focuses on mentoring seniors in a way that can be utilized in the community. They provide them with volunteer opportunities, get them connected to social security for income, create group housing opportunities, and work closely with families to figure out how to create healing opportunities for seniors.

Q: A participant asked if a religious overtone could be a turn off for participants. What happens to the members who choose to continue their engagement alcohol and drug use?

A: LARRP believes that spirituality is a key component in helping others. LARRP does not force that on anyone, but finds that the majority of people who go into the program are connected or want to be connected to spirituality. Harm reduction needs to be a main focus of rehabilitation, which is what LARRP focuses on to reduce drugs and alcohol. Harm reduction needs to be taught as a part of the community. The issue in society is that people are placed in spaces where they are allowed to operate without any consequences and are not practicing harm reduction.

Q: A participant asked if the Skid Row Project is a part of Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Triage project.

A: Mr. Vaughn stated that the Skid Row Project is not a part of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Triage project.

Q: A participant asked what other counties or areas has LARRP been able to collaborate with to create similar holistic and highly collaborative community models?

A: Mr. Vaughn stated they are partnering with Orange County, Riverside County, and San Bernardino County to create a model for reentry opportunities and efforts in those counties. LARRP has also created and launched a statewide model that focuses on using LARRP's model of community collaboration to bring communities together.

Q: Ms. Grealish asked what are some preliminary conversations happening in terms of connecting efforts, such as CalAIM?

A: Mr. Vaughn stated utilizing unique programming alongside the plans to understand contracts and opportunities with organizations is in the works. The programs online have to be careful to not duplicate services.

Q: Ms. Grealish asked if LARRP had “not in my backyard” (NIMBY) resistance, and if so how did they get through it? How does that work today?

A: Mr. Vaughn stated lessons have been learned in society with the pandemic on how to do community impact work and what it is that brings people into commonalities. We have found that the communities that have housing for these populations are the same communities who have been impacted. The resistance comes from people speaking from authoritative positions, so LARRP meets people where they are at and resistance is lowered.

IV. Announcements

The next [Juvenile Justice Workgroup](#) meeting will be held on November 12, 2022, from 12:45-2:45 PM via Zoom. The [Diversion and Reentry Workgroup](#) will be held on November 18, 2022, from 3:00-5:00 PM via.¹ The next [Full Council Meeting](#) will be on December 9, 2022, from 2:00-4:00 PM via Zoom and will feature a Pay for Success contracting model specific to the Alameda County Justice Restoration Project.

v. Adjourn

¹ Note that the Juvenile Justice Workgroup and Diversion and Reentry Workgroup were rescheduled to a later date following this meeting, the record reflects the updated dates.