



City and Borough of Juneau
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DATE: February 26, 2018
TO: Ken Koelsch, Mayor
FROM: Jerry Nankervis, Deputy Mayor
RE: Final Report, Mayor's Taskforce on Public Safety

Background:

On July 31, 2017, the Mayor's Taskforce on Public Safety was created and charged with:

1. Creating an inventory of what services the CBJ currently provides or has access to in the areas of Public Safety, Treatment for Drug and Alcohol abuse/Addiction, and reentry.
2. Making recommendations to the Mayor regarding options available to the CJB to combat and reverse the current crime trends, including what services may be added or enhanced to address the treatment of drug and alcohol abuse.

In addition to myself as Chair, members of the taskforce included: David Campbell, Deputy Chief JPD; Sherri Layne and Emily Wright, CBJ Criminal Prosecutors; Don Habeger, Community Coordinator for the Juneau Reentry Coalition; Bradley Grigg, Chief Behavioral Health Officer, Bartlett Regional Hospital; Terry Goff, General Manager Safeway; and Angie Kemp, District Attorney. Mila Cosgrove, Deputy City Manager was the staff liaison.

The Taskforce held 10 meetings between August 9, 2017 and January 30, 2018. During those meetings the Taskforce discussed what services were available in the community and generated and discussed ideas to define potential solutions to resolving the increasing crime and addiction issues in our community. Those ideas fit into three primary topic areas; staffing, diversion and treatment, and legislation.

Staffing:

There is a national shortage of people who are qualified and interested in serving as sworn Police Officers. Juneau's size and geographical isolation combine to limit the number of people who apply as sworn staff and meet hiring criteria. In addition, sworn staff participates in the 20 year retirement system which serves to qualify officers for retirement with a shorter career span than non public safety staff. While staffing numbers are always a moving target, currently out of the 55 sworn positions (including command staff), 8 are eligible for retirement now, 8 are eligible within the next 5 years, and 30 are more than 5 years out. There are 9 vacant positions.

Recruitment and Retention of Police Officers: Many ideas surfaced during the taskforce discussions that might have an impact on this area. In addition, the Assembly identified first responder recruitment and retention as a 2018 goal. The Taskforce's recommendation is to focus JPD command staff and Human Resource staff with generating strategies to more effectively recruit and retain sworn staff and to determine how to most effectively deploy the current staff given the current vacancies. Part of this discussion should include a discussion of whether the Assembly should support different retirement system options through the legislative process. There was a consensus in the group that it was too early to evaluate an increase in staffing due to the number of existing vacancies. Costs associated with this solution will be dependent on the strategies identified.

Create a Misdemeanant Probation Officer: Hire a staff person to serve as a Probation Officer for individuals working their way through the system with misdemeanor convictions. This function would take over where pre-trial services leaves off and help assure that misdemeanants follow through with probation conditions and have access to services. The cost of creating this level of staff would be approximately \$125,000 which includes salary, benefits and training costs.

Support additional staff for the District Attorney's Office: Over the last 3 years, the local District Attorney's Office has lost a significant number of staff. This puts staff in the position of triaging what cases go forward for prosecution and generally impairs their ability to be as effective as needed. The Governor's submitted budget includes additional funding for the DA's Office. The CBJ Assembly should support additional funding for the DA's Office and specific funding for staffing in the Juneau/Southeast Office.

Treatment & Diversion:

According to staff from the CBJ Law Department and the District Attorney's Office, a significant majority of crime in the community is directly related to drug and alcohol addiction. Any effort to effectively identify and treat individuals with substance abuse disorders should have a positive impact on reducing crime in general and recidivism.

Coordinate meeting between Rainforest Recovery Center, Gastineau Human Services, and AK Department of Corrections: Issues to be addressed should include bed to bed protocols to allow incarcerated individuals or those who are ready for release to go directly into treatment. Also, anyone needing an addiction assessment should have access to one. CBJ may be able to reduce barriers to this by providing a small amount of grant funding to assure that addiction assessments are available to anyone in the criminal justice system who might need one. Anticipated cost is \$10,000 - \$25,000.

Create a separate residential treatment center for incarcerated individuals: Currently, individuals in the criminal justice system who need substance abuse treatment do not have ready access to such services. When treatment is provided as an alternative to incarceration, individuals are co-housed (at least locally) with individuals who have sought voluntary treatment. Having the populations mixed, particularly if the person who is getting treatment for diversion reasons is there just for diversion and not motivated to fully engage in treatment, can have an adverse impact on those who are there for voluntary reasons. In addition, a number of residential treatment centers, Rainforest Recover

included, tailor their programs for a period of up to 30 days. There needs to be a longer term, residential option available to the incarcerated population which will also allow more tailored service delivery.

Hire a contractor to conduct an analysis of service gaps: This contract could include substance abuse assessment and treatment options as well as gaps in other services that might benefit those making their way through the criminal justice system and help reduce recidivism. It is believed it may be possible to find grant funding to covers such an analysis.

In addition, a general assessment of treatment options in the community for those individuals who are not involved in the criminal justice system. As an example, there is a shortage of beds in the community for females who are transferring out of Rainforest into a supported environment. The ability to identify, and solve issues prior to individuals entering the criminal justice system is ideal.

Legislation:

There were several ideas for legislative “fixes” including stiffer penalties for heroin possession, sentence structuring that incentivizes treatment, changes to the public safety retirement system, and other related ideas. Bills will be introduced this legislative session that should be monitored and supported if appropriate. As an example, HB 171 is legislation that deals with education, training, and work programs in the Department of Corrections. It is also possible that there may be legislation introduced dealing with Heroin possession and distribution.

The consensus of the group was that SB 54 modified SB 91 and the new legislation should be given time to take effect prior to advocating for further changes.

Other:

A recommendation was made to pilot a program to put security cameras in high crime areas. JPD could weigh in on the best placement and the Law Department should weigh in on any associated legal issues associated with such placement.