



Richland County Council
Detention Center Ad Hoc Committee Meeting
MINUTES
April 16, 2024 – 4:00 PM
Council Chambers
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Derrek Pugh, Overture Walker (arrived at 4:10 PM), and Cheryl English

OTHERS PRESENT: Paul Livingston, Chakisse Newton, Gretchen Barron, Jason Branham, Anette Kirylo, Patrick Wright, Tamar Black, Ashiya Myers, Angela Weathersby, Kyle Holsclaw, Michelle Onley, Lori Thomas, Susan O’Cain, Jackie Hancock, Chelsea Bennett, Shereka Jackson, Crayman Harvey, John Thompson, and Jovan Hughes

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Councilman Derrek Pugh called the meeting to order at approximately 4:00 PM.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. March 19, 2024 – Ms. English moved to approve the minutes as distributed, seconded by Mr. Pugh.

In Favor: Pugh and English

Not Present: Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Ms. English moved to adopt the agenda as published, seconded by Mr. Pugh.

In Favor: Pugh and English

Not Present: Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

4. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION**
 - a. Detention Center Update –County Administrator Leonardo Brown pointed out at the last committee meeting an update was given on staff’s continued efforts related to the facility. At today’s meeting, we want to address the issue of mental health services at the detention center. We do have a current provider that offers some mental health services. It was brought to his attention that for continuity of care and having an opportunity to know what is going on with detainees while they are being housed at our facility, we need to have the ability to access their records from other agencies they may have previously gone through. The idea is for us to augment our services by allowing the persons with the best available information to assist us in serving the people. He noted he was not necessarily looking for a motion at today’s meeting. He indicated a potential motion for the future may be “to authorize the Administrator to take necessary action to address any medical services that would benefit augmenting the gap we have currently at the facility.”

Ms. Deborah Blalock, SC Department of Mental Health – Deputy Director, stated the department is embedded into the following counties: Aiken, Barnwell, Berkley, Charleston, York, Chester, Orangeburg, Darlington, Marion, Spartanburg, Kershaw, and Horry. The contract with the department

can be as large and expansive or as small as you want. Some smaller detention centers contract with them for one Master Prepared Clinician.

In Charleston County, one of the larger contracts, there are five (5) Master Prepared Clinician and one (1) Bachelor Prepared Clinician embedded in the detention center. When someone is booked into the Charleston County Detention Center, the booking staff uses the Brief Jail Mental Health Screen (BJMHS) to determine if an individual needs a referral to the mental health team. Referrals can also come from other people outside of the detention center and/or the inmates themselves. The detention center has a medical provider, and the medical provider hires a psychiatrist.

In the Berkeley model, they hire all the staff, including the psychiatrist. They have two (2) Master Prepared Clinicians, one (1) Bachelor Prepared Clinician, one (1) psychiatrist, and ½ of an administrative person.

In most of the contracts the mental health center provides assistance on the weekend. Some of the detention centers like to use the mental health center staff to determine if a person needs to be put on or taken off suicide watch.

In some models, the detention center pays the mental health center out of its budget. In a few of the models, the delegation has done a member ask for the dollars, and those dollars come directly to the mental health center to provide care.

Ms. Blalock noted detainee follow-up with the mental health center once being released is a big issue. If they do not follow up, they may return to the detention center.

Ms. English inquired if there is a way for the detention center to immediately receive information if a detainee has already had mental health cases.

Ms. Blalock responded the detention center should be able to receive documents from the Department of Mental Health. Their electronic records are statewide; therefore, if there were an embedded clinician, they would have immediate access to the information.

Ms. English noted a discussion regarding a discharge plan needs to be had.

Ms. Blalock mentioned that sometimes, individuals are released late at night. When they are released at that time, they are not going to head to a mental health center for treatment. They are aware that many individuals in detention may have mental health issues, as well as substance abuse issues. Immediate access to care is crucial for them to succeed and not go through a revolving door. She would like to see an immediate connection to a center. Another thing is detention centers have to do a good job of providing medication upon release. She noted Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center is utilizing long-acting injectables, which is excellent. Long-acting injectables keep people better for longer. She indicated they received a grant two years ago where they contracted with Lexington Richland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council (LRADAC) for them to come to the detention center and pick people up. This was a helpful model because they were immediately connected to care.

Ms. Barron stated for clarification, if someone is in the detention center, they could self-identify they have a mental illness, or someone from their family could call in and identify the individual has a mental illness.

Ms. Blalock noted pastors report individuals with mental health issues a lot.

Ms. Barron inquired if everyone is being evaluated during the intake process.

Crayman Harvey, Detention Center Director, replied everyone goes through the screening process. The problem is that they are short-staffed on weekends and night shifts. When there are high volumes of detainees, they have to wait until the next business day for their screening. They want to be able to screen them immediately.

Ms. Barron inquired if there were any other mental health-related specific needs.

Mr. Harvey responded what they are trying to do with the mental health program will be progressive. Therefore, space and staffing are critical areas they have.

Mr. Walker inquired who would be the parties in the contract if Richland County were to go this route.

Ms. Blalock stated Columbia Area Mental Health is a part of the Department of Mental Health (DMH). The Columbia Area Mental Health, as a member of the DMH, would be a party to the contract.

Mr. Brown indicated that the county would be the other party to the contract.

Mr. Walker asked how the services are paid for in other counties.

Ms. Blalock responded some counties pay for it out of their budget. Berkeley County had a representative of the General Assembly ask for a member ask to pay for their county's contract.

Mr. Walker inquired, since Columbia Area Mental Health is one of the county's millage agencies, if they could request a millage increase.

Mr. Brown indicated they would not want to tie the funding to a millage increase. We would prefer to be the contractor paying them. He also asserted although the county aspires to provide mental health services, those services are not something county government is tasked with doing. We are trying to provide optimal access to quality care for the detainees, but our detention center is not a mental health institution or mental facility.

Mr. Pugh noted he is excited about the administration and leadership at the detention center exploring opportunities to assist detainees with mental health. Our job as community custodians is to ensure we give the best help within our purview to the detainees and employees.

Mr. Walker moved to authorize the Administrator to look into an agreement with the Department of Mental Health for augmented mental health services for the Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center, seconded by Ms. English.

In Favor: Pugh, Walker, and English

The vote in favor was unanimous.

Mr. Brown pointed out that they plan to discuss the juvenile population housing at the next meeting. He indicated Richland County is one of two detention centers where juvenile detainees are housed. Charleston County is the other. We are currently looking at what may make sense for us to do. There are some things we are charged with doing and some things we are not.

Mr. Livingston stated, for clarification, that state statute does not require the county to house juveniles.

Mr. Patrick Wright, County Attorney, maintained the Department of Juvenile Justice is charged with housing juvenile detainees. Local detention centers can house juvenile detainees.

Mr. Livingston inquired if the county has a contract whereby the State provides funding for the county to house juvenile detainees.

Mr. Brown responded that we do not currently have an agreement.

5. **ADJOURNMENT** – Mr. Walker moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. English.

In Favor: Pugh, Walker, and English

The vote in favor was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:31 PM.