

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Behavioral Health Subcommittee
Meeting Summary for February 16, 2021

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1. Call to Order

Committee Co-Chair Dan Hammill / Mike Parker called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The remote-only virtual meeting was held via Zoom webinar.

Members Present: Megan Ballew, Nathan Bajema, Chris Cochran, Doug Chadwick, Arlene Feld, Heather Flaherty, Stephen Gockley, Dan Hammill, Mike Hilley, Britta Johnson, Perry Mowery, Mike Parker, Donnell Tanksley, Brien Thane

Members Absent: Seth Fleetwood, Byron Manering

Committee members introduced themselves.

2. [City of Bellingham electronic home monitoring \(00:06:06\)](#)

Darlene Peterson, City of Bellingham, reported and read from a presentation on reduced incarceration at the City using electronic home monitoring through Friendship Diversion Services, including the history of the program, GPS devices and secure continuous remote alcohol monitoring (SCRAM) devices; program fees, and; enrollment statistics.

Kathy Smith, City of Bellingham, continued the presentation:

- Changes and challenges due to Covid-19
- The drop in GPS device use and increase in SCRAM device use in 2020
- Conditions in which the City uses GPS and SCRAM devices
- Program statistics on: enrollment, number of days on electronic home monitoring, overall compliance, and percentage of sober days

Committee members and the presenters discussed diversion options; the need for more in-patient treatment centers in the community; charges that allow pretrial GPS in lieu of bail, including domestic violence; how to examine and expand resource inventory, such as unarmed response to behavioral health calls; whether participation in the City's monitoring program impacts recidivism; race and ethnic statistics for the program; and how the court supports offenders who are wearing a bracelet to access mental health services.

3. [Shelter+Care vouchers and housing for LEAD and GRACE Members \(01:01:52\)](#)

Parker and Gockley reported on the possibility of targeted housing interventions for individuals in the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) and Ground-level Response and Coordinated Engagement (GRACE) program, using housing vouchers. Additional case managers would be required to provide behavioral health services. A small core team of stakeholders are working on whether this would be feasible.

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The committee discussed whether the vacancy rate in Bellingham impacts the program, the need to attract more specialized case managers to the area, and pending State legislation that may provide funding for behavioral health services.

4. [House Bill \(HB\) 1590, a new 1/10 of 1% sales tax to provide up to \\$5 million per year for mental health services, 60% of which must include housing \(00:53:57\)](#)

Hammill reported that he would like to table this item until jurisdictions have signaled their intentions to move forward. He moved to table to the next meeting. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously with members present at the time of the vote: Stephen Gockley, Brien Thane, Britta Johnson, Perry Mowery, Nathan Bajema, Chris Cochran, Doug Chadwick, Mike Hilley, Arlene Feld, Dan Hammill, and Heather Flaherty.

5. [How to use the Government Alliance on Race and Equity \(GARE\) Toolkit in decision-making \(01:18:00\)](#)

Parker reported on the IPRTF history of adopting the GARE Toolkit, figuring out how it would work operationally, the benefits of GARE membership,

6. [Next Meeting \(01:21:00\)](#)

Hammill listed the items scheduled for the next meeting as shown on the meeting agenda.

7. [Other Business \(00:58:17\)](#)

Jackie Mitchell, Health Department, reported on two items:

- The application to the Health Care Authority for a new opiate treatment program from Acadia Health Services
- The new recovery house from Lifeline Connections upcoming fundraiser on April 27

[\(01:21:55\)](#)

Flaherty spoke about SCRAM monitoring tool, diversion, and focusing on incarceration reduction and prevention. She also spoke about the GARE toolkit, the County's plan to join GARE, the Racial Equity Commission, and gathering racial equity data on the SCRAM program.

8. **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

9. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 a.m.