

Law and Justice Council (LJC)

Date: July 31, 2019

Time: 1200 hrs. to 1315 hrs.

Location: Benton County Commissioners Conference Room – Kennewick

Business

Motion to approve last month's meeting minutes by Rusty Morris

2nd by Andy Miller, Prosecuting Attorney

Sergeant Linda Finley with BCSO note taker for purposes of this meeting

Guest Speaker

Carla Prock, BSN with Healthy People & Communities presented an overview regarding the Nurse-Family Partnership which is an evidence based, community health program with over 40 years of evidence showing significant improvements in the health and lives of first-time moms and their children. Nurses start visits home visits when the young mother to be is at 28 weeks gestation and continue visit until the child is 2 years old. This program originally started with Franklin County in 2013 with 4 full time nurses and started on 11/28/2016 in Benton County. They are currently serving 47 families and have worked with 97 family's over all in Benton County. Benton County has funding for 50 families, so they are just about at capacity. They have shown that regular family visits cause a reduction in child abuse and neglect, less behavioral and intellectual problems in children to age 6, fewer convictions of mothers (measured when child is 15), increase in months employed, fewer hypertensive disorders, fewer ER visits, more Dads involved and fewer pregnancies. Most referrals to the program are forwarded from the WIC office.

Discussion

Sheriff Hatcher asked if referrals have been forwarded from the jail and if there was a program that would work with expectant mothers that are incarcerated and could the program be expanded with more funding? Carla state she would get additional information regarding existing pilot programs in the state.

Discussion – Message Campaign

Need to create a robust campaign to focus on different ways to get positive messages out to the community about the PST and to build momentum for the next PST vote.

Mayor Brent Gerry was nominated by Sheriff Hatcher to chair the committee

2nd by Andy Miller, Prosecuting Attorney

Chief Ben Majetich tasked with contacting Mayor Gerry.

The campaign should consist of both written materials and media.

- Possibly have the media do a multi-part story showcasing the positive uses of the PST, use of social media such as posts on Facebook.

- Sheriff Hatcher provided a template for the Benton County Sheriff's Office highlighting what the PST has been used for and the benefits to the community. This could be used as a two-prong approach to get information out to the community, one broad to all of Benton County and then agency specific. Send ideas, additions, deletions regarding the template to Jason Erickson.
- Speaking engagements

Any additional ideas regarding the positive communication matrix need to be forwarded to Mayor Gerry.

Presentation of Names for Citizen members of Law and Justice Council

- Al Wehner interested is either a contractor or employed part-time with the City.
- Robb Francis expressed strong interest with KONA Radio
- Laura Powell is very involved in the community and has ties to civic organizations. Josie Delvin will be contacting her.

Andy Miller expressed concerns regarding the need for diversity and that a decision needed to be made as to how many members would be a good fit for the council. And the ability to reach out to the community to get additional applicants.

Andy Miller recommended to Commission Small to discuss possibly changing the wording in Resolution 00-427 (g) which states currently: "A minimum of three additional members from the public at large who are Benton County citizens not employed by Benton County or any city in Benton County..." to address part-time employees and/or contractors.

No decision was made, they will be considered at the next meeting when there is more time and possibly more names.

Identify current and future needs to be funded out of PST

ICAC -Captain Jeff Taylor has identified a need for the mental wellbeing of Detectives assigned to the ICAC unit. He suggested using funds from the PST to set up a mandatory program where a licensed specialist would travel to the area once a month to meet with the detectives individually and in a group since they are having to continually view extremely graphic materials dealing with child abuse and sexual exploitation of children. Suggested that local agencies could also use the specialist for their agencies at a lower cost since the specialist would already be in the area. Approximate cost per year \$26,000.00.

Commissioner Small thought this was a good idea and would be another useful tool for Law Enforcement.

School Resource Officers - Chief Ben Majetich there is a need School Resource Officers in the Middle Schools. Due to budget cuts in the school districts the PST could be used to help fund their portion of the cost. He argued that more officers are needed in the Middle Schools.

Andy Miller would be interested in the School Districts expenditures for personnel/attorney costs. It was noted that Kennewick and Richland School Districts seemed to push more toward mental health professionals in the schools instead of law enforcement.

Talked about possibly starting a mobile mental health program that would go to the schools that could partner with law enforcement

Metro Drug Task Force will be addressed at the next meeting when Chief Hohenberg can attend and because of time restraints.

A request was made to hold off guest speakers for a few meetings due to the time constraint and not being able to get through all the agenda items.

The guest speaker will be skipped next meeting so items needing to be presented to the Commissioners can be addressed.

Next meeting last Wednesday of month 1200 hrs. to 1300 hrs. w/agenda

End of Meeting.