

**COMMUNITY JUSTICE TASK FORCE MINUTES****Monday, October 22, 2012****Shields Meeting Room****Brookens Administrative Center****1776 E. Washington St., Urbana****MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Scott Bennett, Lynn Branham, James Kilgore, Julian Rappaport, Michael Richards (Chair), Benita Rollins-Gay

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Mark Driscoll, Sheila Ferguson, William Sullivan

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Patsi Petrie (County Board Member), Carol Ammons (County Board Member), Bobbi Trist, Chris Evans, Linda Lane (Administrative Assistant),

**Call to Order**

Richards called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**Roll Call**

Lane called the roll. Bennett, Branham, Kilgore, Rappaport, Rollins-Gay, and Richards were present establishing a quorum.

**Approval of Agenda****Motion** by Kilgore to approve the agenda; seconded by Bennett. **Motion approved.****Public Participation**

Carol Ammons thanked the members of the task force. She said she understood why it wasn't easy to form this task force because criminal justice isn't easy to talk about. Ammons stated that this task force has been able to expand the conversation beyond areas that are normally talked about. She mentioned that she was glad the County Board has moved the discussion to a needs analysis that will look at not just the facility issue. She went on to say that whenever we talk about criminal justice we must talk about the social impacts on the community. She wanted to impart on Richards and the next County Board Chair that this commission needs to run parallel to the needs assessment. She recommended that the chair make a recommendation to continue the task force for at least six months. Ammons stated we haven't seen the entire picture and that the report will be limited because of that. She continued by saying that Judge Ford would like the resources to expand the Drug Court. She stated the public defender would like an investigator. Ammons noted that the system is being cheated as well as the defendant by not having these resources. She noted the Public Defender's office is way over its legal responsibility according to the Illinois Bar. She stated there isn't enough time under the current process to get to the nitty gritty of this problem. She also commented that she didn't want to use national statistics or figures from other cities; she thought it would be best just to use information from Champaign County that would affect Champaign County. Branham asked Ammons if the committee should put potential recommendations out there before the next meeting, showing reasons for continuing the task force's work, to get feedback from the public and the stakeholders and wanted to know if Ammons thought it was a good structure. Ammons answered that the board has asked ILPP to work closely with the committee and that it would be good to give the Committee of the Whole a progress report. Ammons also stated that she didn't believe anyone on the County Board would object to a continuation of the task force.

Bobbi Trist also thanked the task force for all the hard work and wanted to urgently urge them to request a recommendation that the task force continue. She felt it was imperative that

55 there is a non-administrative body, the “community” justice task force and its imperative there is  
56 a structure alongside the County Board that can be another voice. She would like to see it  
57 continue as long as ILPP is doing their study. She suggested the need for a good supervised  
58 jobs program for people coming out of the criminal justice system, that mental health and drug  
59 courts be expanded, lower bail, and that more people be let out on their own recognizance.

60 Chris Evans stated that he was also here to encourage the continuation of the task  
61 force, noting that this is a unique moment to look at the criminal justice system. He noted that  
62 no such discussion took place when the satellite jail was built. He said that 80% of the mentally  
63 ill inmates are there for low level misdemeanors and that the public needs to be made aware of  
64 that. He suggested the question was do we need a mental hospital or do we need a jail. He  
65 went on to say that the mental health nurse has said that it isn’t good for the treatment of these  
66 people to be in jail. Evans stated that a felony or misdemeanor docket call shows huge racial  
67 disparity; that 70-80% are African American and are being prosecuted by an all white criminal  
68 justice system. He felt it is critical to have proper legal representation. He felt the reason there  
69 are rogue officers, police brutality, etc. is because there is no legal representation on the other  
70 side to catch it. He said that if the task force quits in November that things will be right back  
71 where they began and encouraged that the task force continue. He also suggested possibly  
72 expanding the committee.

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74 **Approval of Minutes – September 24, 2012**

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76 **Motion by Kilgore to approve minutes; seconded by Bennett. Motion approved.**

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78 **Drug Court Information**

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80 Richards stated that there is drug court information and asked Bennett if he had talked  
81 to Judge Ford. Bennett stated he has talked to Judge Ford and said he has indicated a  
82 willingness to meet with the committee, but would like more notice and an idea of what the  
83 committee would like from him. Bennett asked if the committee would like a report/presentation  
84 from him or if the committee wanted to present him with their ideas and get his thoughts.  
85 Rappaport said it was his understanding that a small number make use of drug court compared  
86 to the total number and would like to know from Judge Ford what is needed to significantly  
87 expand it. He also said would like to get the judge’s reaction to the idea that criminal justice  
88 system be thought of as an entire system and not as individual programs. Rappaport would  
89 also like to know Judge Ford’s thoughts about creating a coordinating council. Richards asked  
90 Rappaport if he wanted the judge to give a presentation and then have the committee give the  
91 judge a presentation. Rappaport stated that he would like it to be a discussion format. Kilgore  
92 stated that he would like to hear about other options besides drug court and how they would fit  
93 in with the drug court. Bennett stated that some other states have juvenile drug court.  
94 Discussion continued.

95 Rappaport expressed his concern about putting all the service information the committee  
96 has gathered out to the public because people could see it as the system is great and don’t  
97 need to do anything more. He noted that people need to be made aware that even though the  
98 services are out there, they aren’t tailored or accessible to the criminal justice system.

99 Richards noted that the courts had been asked to have someone appear at this meeting  
100 but that they declined and provided this report (<http://www.co.champaign.il.us/drugcourt>).

101  
102 **Approval of Preliminary Report**

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104 Richards stated that on approval of the preliminary report he wasn’t sure if committee  
105 was pretty close or far away. Kilgore would like to come to a consensus on specific  
106 recommendations for specific issues. He suggested going through each area and consolidate

107 only the items that everyone agrees upon and then move on to the next item. He suggested a  
108 progress report of what committee has done be submitted to the County Board. He didn't feel a  
109 report should be quickly put together with all the specific recommendations, but rather set up to  
110 work with the needs assessment. Richards commented that there will be a discussion in other  
111 business about asking the County Board to extend this. He noted that the Chair did not want to  
112 have the current Board vote on this when it's going to be the business of the next County Board.  
113 Richards said he agrees with Ammons that the County Board will agree to an extension, but  
114 feels it will be harder to convince them if don't have something to give the Board on November  
115 13 to justify being extended. Kilgore stated that he wasn't suggesting they don't submit a report,  
116 but he doesn't want something submitted that not everyone agrees on. Richards stated it is  
117 important to show the Board the programs already in place. He also noted that this committee  
118 has been able to get stakeholders in to talk to the task force that the County Board hasn't been  
119 able to get in. Branham agreed that there are multiple reasons to put together a "preliminary  
120 report" that includes all the items everyone absolutely agrees on and the several areas that they  
121 haven't had the time to discuss fully. She felt those items should be noted at future items for the  
122 task force and the community but that they be limited. She noted that the specifics regarding  
123 race and statistics are beyond the scope of this task force and need to have another body look  
124 into that and have some of the specifics listed in the back.

125 Rappaport stated that he doesn't think the format of Branham's report is going to work.  
126 He suggests something less formal that is straightforward and easy to see. Branham feels the  
127 mental health submission should be listed as potential recommendation #4, that Kilgore's report  
128 bears on the recommendation that a special task force will look at race based issues, and  
129 Rappaport's main principal point about the systemic approach in the introduction. She agrees  
130 that the report should absolutely be as a group with enough specifics to show it is research  
131 based and supports the recommendations for the coordinating council, pre-trial services,  
132 community based sanctioning options, restorative justice, etc., and at the end would be those  
133 recommendations not yet processed by task force yet. Branham also feels it's very important to  
134 identify priority tasks for the consultant. Kilgore is more comfortable with the individual areas  
135 being included without the level of detail. He doesn't like the idea of putting the separate reports  
136 one after the other and submitting it. He feels it needs to be more structured with an introductory  
137 page that says what the committee has been doing. Rappaport asked if could get someone to  
138 go through and list all the people the committee has heard from. Richards said he would put  
139 that list together then have either Deb Busey or Pius send out a link to all the minutes to County  
140 Board members. He felt it could be part of the progress report or introduction. Bennett stated  
141 that a progress report is needed to get an extension from the County Board. Branham  
142 suggested an introduction stating what has been done along with a systematic approach, then  
143 the potential recommendations that says why they are putting them out there and the next steps  
144 for the task force is getting feedback from the stakeholders, and at the back of the report would  
145 be background notes. Rappaport stated the importance to explicitly recognize the need for  
146 genuine community dialog about how to do these things. He felt it's already been worked out in  
147 great detail and could be too far ahead in the game. He suggested recommending some formal  
148 ways for the system to be better coordinated. He commented that there is no benefit to being  
149 authoritative in the report but rather communicate as collaborative. Kilgore said he liked the idea  
150 of background notes and agrees that don't want to get too far ahead of consensus. Keep what  
151 is put out close to what has been collectively discussed.

152 Rappaport is concerned how the mental health services will be viewed, that it has to be  
153 stated that they aren't made for the population the committee is talking about and that there are  
154 holes in the system that need to be pointed out. He said he doesn't want it to inadvertently  
155 seem as if saying everything is great with mental health services. Richards stated that he had  
156 worked with Ferguson last year looking at ways to expand mental health funding. He stated  
157 there are groups that can come up with numbers. He said that can be put in the intro or  
158 prospectus that if had more funds could extend drug court. He reported that public defender

159 says a lot would like to be doing but can't.

160 Rappaport brought the conversation back to how to proceed with this report. He  
161 suggested one person start writing then circulate for others to add to so it's one document.  
162 Kilgore noted that they were talking about three sections; an intro (Bennett suggested including  
163 the current state of the system here) with origins of task force and what it has accomplished, a  
164 second section that hints at areas with recommendations or close to recommendations along  
165 with areas for potential exploration, and a third section that would include background notes that  
166 have been collated with a one page intro. Branham said she is unclear about what would be in  
167 second section, stating that it sounded like they would be starting from scratch. Kilgore stated  
168 that section two would be drawn from the suggestions already submitted but condensed to 3-4  
169 lines per suggestion. Branham noted she has recommendations with sub-recommendations and  
170 suggested put that information in the background notes. She said that way nothing has to be re-  
171 written other than tinkering with the language. Kilgore stated that if supply a background section  
172 of 30-40 pages it won't get read. He suggested a summarization for the background section and  
173 the second section. He noted that a summary of what the committee has done and a  
174 summarization of recommendations would provide a 4-5 page document. Richards stated that if  
175 a 200 page document was submitted would lose some Board members and that it was a good  
176 idea to have fewer pages. Branham suggested a short intro, a prioritization of tasks for the  
177 consultant, and background information. She wanted to get on record how important she thinks  
178 it is to share these details with the public. She sees the report as 4-5 pages followed by the  
179 background notes.

180 Rappaport mentioned a two hour web presentation on pre-trial services that he  
181 attended. He noted it was a presentation on how to get the public behind pre-trial services. It  
182 wasn't very technical but present data in a simplified form and had an emphasis on  
183 communicating. He said that what he learned from listening is that each thing needs to be  
184 translated into everyday language to be taken seriously and a methodology for people to think  
185 about it. He stated the report information should be offered in digestible pieces in order the sell  
186 the idea. He noted that sometimes he found himself unable to pay attention to some of the  
187 presentations and was not necessarily conducive to discussion. There is a fine line between  
188 overwhelming people and giving them information. Petrie voiced that since the committee is  
189 concerned about resonating with the County Board and the public she hadn't heard anything  
190 about the use of visuals. She asked if the slides Rappaport mentioned were public domain files.  
191 Richards stated the PDF and PowerPoint would be good for people to see. He noted that pre-  
192 trial services seem to be important all over the country. He suggested getting information from  
193 the National Association of Counties to put together a PowerPoint presentation. He stated to the  
194 committee that it wasn't required but was common to have some sort of power point  
195 presentation to the Board. Petrie asked if the information could be put on the CJTF website.  
196 Richards said yes and suggested it also be sent to County Board members.

197 Branham agrees with the idea of visuals but noted that the committee hasn't been able  
198 to agree on what to present yet. Petrie suggested making the document interactive to get  
199 feedback from the public once the report is put together. Branham stated they should  
200 concentrate on getting the document done and then worry about dissemination. Richards stated  
201 that should have all the preliminary reports available at all the ILPP public hearings.

202 Richards said he felt there was a general consensus on the shell to be presented on the  
203 13<sup>th</sup>. He asked for volunteers to take on each section. Branham asked if they were using the  
204 recommendations already had, if they are starting from scratch, or using just the items in bold  
205 print. Kilgore felt those items were still too long and complicated and noted that many of the  
206 recommendations stated the council will ensure things. He thinks that's jumping ahead since  
207 there is no council and don't what mechanism it would have to be able to ensure that. He felt  
208 the areas in the bold-face recommendations should be included in the second section but  
209 doesn't think a cut and paste would work. Discussion continued.

210 Kilgore volunteered to do the introduction. Rappaport said he would like to be involved in

211 that part as well. Bennett referred to a myth of jail overcrowding and stated the Sheriff had even  
212 said that it's not a matter of overcrowding but a matter of proper space. He stated he would like  
213 to see in the intro the current state of state where we are with jail numbers and set up. He felt to  
214 leave the downtown jail in its current state is inhumane. He noted that if it is shut down there  
215 isn't enough pod space at the satellite jail to have a whole pod for women or the facilities for  
216 people with mental health needs. Bennett felt that the question should be whether or not  
217 another pod can be added on that reflect the uses needed. He would like one part of the report  
218 to address the realities of the issues. Rappaport noted that the biggest frustration he hears from  
219 officers is that they have to take the people with the mental health issues to the jail. He is of the  
220 idea that if are going to build something, then need to build something appropriate to the  
221 problem instead of just general space. Branham stated that need steps to address in the most  
222 cost effective way, for the short term as well and long term, to deal with deficiencies. Bennett  
223 would like information included in the intro that shows here are the jails and here is the  
224 population so that people understand that it isn't an overcrowding issue but an issue of how to  
225 address the needs. Kilgore stated that opposition to a new building and the reason for creating  
226 the task force was because certain issues weren't being addressed. Rappaport feels there is a  
227 lot that can be done at the County level and feels that should only focus on local policies.

228 Branham commented on getting rid of council language and asked about keeping or  
229 getting rid of restorative justice. Bennett suggested keeping for now. Branham said would take  
230 out all references to core principals and the council. Kilgore noted that there are some areas  
231 that should be in there that the committee hadn't touched on yet. Branham said would make  
232 recommended changes and send out tomorrow. Kilgore suggested race information go in  
233 background information and mentioned that no one had taken the third section yet. Rappaport  
234 said he will do that as well as any editing needed. He would like a list of everybody the  
235 committee received information from. Richards said he will provide. Branham suggested  
236 planting the seed about use of the ¼ cent public safety sales tax and recommendation of  
237 funding.

238 Rappaport mentioned the inclusion of Driscoll's report. Rappaport felt that some of the  
239 bullet points could be listed as recommendations. He sees that as the format for the report  
240 where each bullet would briefly state the point with more details below each. He stated that he  
241 would like the bulleted section of the mental health report to exist by itself and be split into two  
242 background papers. Branham felt Driscoll should do own background that could then be  
243 tweaked. Richards suggested continuing via other means.

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#### 246 **Discussion – Next Step**

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248 Richards felt this was already covered.

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#### 250 **Other Business**

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252 Richards asked for a motion to recommend extension of the task force to the County  
253 Board. **Motion by Branham to recommend extension of the task force; seconded by**  
254 **Kilgore.** Richards stated that the current County Board wants to leave the decision up to the  
255 next County Board. Rappaport asked if members could be added. Richards noted that two  
256 current members will not be coming back. He said could keep the number at nine or expand to  
257 add more voices, and become more diverse. Bennett felt that if seven or eight new people are  
258 added it would be like starting over. He said it would be nice to have other voices from the  
259 community but the committee should be kept to around nine members. Branham asked if any  
260 new members would be coming in before the preliminary report was complete. Richards  
261 answered no. Branham asked for a timeline to get the draft piece out. Richards asked for a vote  
262 to approve the motion before continuing discussion. **Motion passed.**

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266 **Next Meeting Date**

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**Adjournment**

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The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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Linda Lane

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Administrative Assistant