

Process and Evaluation Workgroup

Meeting Minutes

October 4, 2023

In attendance:

- **Rodney Brooks**, Alameda County Public Defenders Office
- **Janene Grigsby**, Alameda County Probation Department
- **Gina Temporal**: Alameda County Probation Department
- **Jason Sjoberg**, Alameda County District Attorney's Office
- **Nancy French**, Alameda County Probation Department
- **Rick Wood**, Rubicon Programs
- **John Jones III**, Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency
- **Mac Hoang**, Asian Prisoner Support Committee
- **Charles Turner**, Alameda County Workforce Development Board
- **Puja Pascal**, Alameda County Probation Department
- **Karen Chin**, The Justice Reinvestment Coalition
- **Jamaica Sowell**, ROOTS Community Health Center
- **Thanh Tran**: The Ella Baker Center
- **Ayana Cruz**: Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency
- **Alex Garcia**: Alameda County Probation Department
- **Darryl Stewart**: Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley's Office

A brief summary of the September meeting was provided, followed by an introduction of how the October meeting is designed to build on what has been discussed previously. A document was distributed summarizing the issues raised during the September meeting regarding the implementation of current contracts; space was also provided to list the suggested changes moving forward.

The attendees introduced themselves.

The September minutes were reviewed, it was requested that "John Jones" be changed to "John Jones III." The second change was to replace "provide" with "co-locate" when referring to the CORE contract. After accepting the changes, the minutes were approved.

Attendees via zoom were divided into two groups to brainstorm solutions to the issues raised in September. People who attended in person were the third group tasked with developing solutions.

The groups returned at 11:05, a summary of the discussion and proposed solutions is below.

Discussion Summary:

- Provide “cheat sheets” for all vendor staff working on contracts so everyone understands the deliverables.
- Have a kickoff meeting with all staff who are working on the contracts.
- The new Coordinated Reentry Services Program (CRISP) contract allows for the measurement of time spent coordinating and building relationships.
- Allow for the documentation of deficits in resources i.e., an inability for clients to send emails, since case workers need to address these types of issues.
- Employers need to connect people to pathways that lead toward careers, as a way of addressing generational poverty.
- Intentionally and continuously state that clients are in a safe space.
- The system, not just Probation, needs to be client focused; make everything easier for the clients, instead of the CBO and government agency staff.
- Healing circles can be used to address trauma; it is difficult to “check a box” as a way of addressing trauma.
- Incentivize people to fill out client surveys.
- Develop cohorts where people may feel more comfortable voicing issues, so they don’t feel like they are exposed.
- When conflicts happen, the contractor can just say, there was a conflict, and it was resolved, no names or details are provided, and just report the number of incidents.
- Provide Probation staff to work with vendors who are having issues in submitting data. According to Probation staff, they already do this.
- Adjustments to the RFP process: the expectations are not feasible for grassroots organizations. Longer contract periods would allow for stability for smaller organizations.
- Provide a “lovable wage” that is higher than the non-profit market rate.
- The onus of collecting data needs to be on the County not the contractor.
- Use a central database allowing organizations to share information and not repeatedly ask people the same questions.
- RFPs need to be designed that will allow new players to be successful.
- The client ratio needs to be specified in contracts.
- Contractors need to understand what Probation can offer for technical assistance.
- Auxiliary funding should be available to address what is not covered as a result of the “scarcity model.”
- RFPs are written asking for the minimum, Probation is hoping that organizations will show their innovation and go beyond the minimum when submitting a proposal.
- Organizations can ask for “more” in the contract but need to justify the innovation.
- In many cases Probation does not decide who evaluates the RFP’s.
- Contract extensions often do not allow for innovation, based on what you have learned, innovation needs to happen in the initial bid response.
- Find ways to “define the harm” if you are looking to stop normalizing it.
- The number of referrals needs to be reasonable if the contractors are going to meet the agreed upon benchmarks.
- The amount of time staff spends understanding how to reach the contract deliverables, takes time and resources away from being innovative.

- Probation does not have an answer for how many clients will be referred to a service provider. The Probation Department has an expectation that service providers will estimate the number of people they intend to serve based on the budget.
- It was suggested the Behavioral Health, and the Community Development Agency should be involved in this discussion.
- Internal discussions between service providers and Probation need to improve.
- Additional funding and resources beyond the AB 109 allocation need to be accessed.
- Dispel the notion that it is acceptable to pay non-profit staff less than their counterparts in the private and other employment sectors.

Next the participants had a brief discussion about the agenda for our yearly evening meeting.

Summary of discussion about the Evening Meeting:

- The purpose of the evening meeting is to allow people to attend who are unable to come to our regular meetings that are held during the day.
- In prior years we have summarized the activities of the Workgroup and used the meeting as a recruitment tool. Question: Should we stick to our regular agenda, or should we tailor the meeting for people who usually don't attend?
- The consensus was to keep our regular format so new commers can see how the Workgroup attempts to address the issues related to implementing AB 109.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM.