

1-23-17

MEMO to CCP Workgroup
From: Mary E. O’Gorman
Subject: Community Engagement

With few exceptions, Santa Barbara County’s Community Corrections Partnership has not had the benefit of community engagement beyond an occasional member of the public, or representative from an advocacy group such as Families Act attending one of its meetings. The CBO representatives on the CCP are representative of larger, “capital C” organizations. What is missing is a process or program to engage and inform a wider segment of the community about the goals of CCP/AB109, and seek their input on program development/implementation funding decisions and other justice system reform efforts.

The author of the recently completed Evaluation of SB County’s realignment plan, JFA Consultant James Austin, met with several individuals who discussed their ideas and perspectives on the use of CCP monies for more treatment and rehabilitative services.

Some counties in California have established “Community Advisory Boards” who identify programs to assist in recidivism reduction or reentry efforts, and these Boards make funding recommendations to the CCP. For example, Contra Costa’s CAB is made up of: “12-members with expertise in adult education within a correctional setting, domestic violence prevention, workforce development, behavioral health issues, post-release reentry services, services for reentering women, criminal and drug court, and law and policy related to issues of the formerly incarcerated and crime survivors. All members live or work in Contra Costa County.”

Some counties have issued rfps for proposals on programs to engage ex-offenders, promote family reunification, neighborhood outreach, etc. As noted by Dr Austin, the original intent of “justice reinvestment”, an integral part of the AB109 legislation, was to invest resources directly into the communities impacted by recidivism.

At this time, it is proposed that an ad hoc committee of CCP be established, comprised of representatives from the Re-Entry Steering committee, and CCP workgroup, along with community members who have expressed interest in the subject. This committee would report back to CCP by April 2017 with specific recommendations on enhancing community engagement in the goals of recidivism reduction. For the purpose of the draft CCP Budget, an amount of \$75,000 should be adequate pending specific proposals on possible activities such as community forums, neighborhood outreach, etc.