

**Hamilton County Community Corrections  
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
March 4, 2021**

The meeting, with approval of the Board of Commissioners, was virtual using Microsoft TEAMS. The following members were present: Honorable Gail Bardach, Jim Barlow, Bob Bragg, Lee Buckingham, George Buskirk, Roger Drayer, Honorable Paul Felix, Mike Fogarty, Susan Ferguson, Stephenie Gookins, Kia Ireland, Sheriff Dennis Quakenbush, Krista Radican, Steve Schwartz, Barbara Scott, R. Daniel Stevens, and Kylene Toney. Darren Murphy served as a proxy for Honorable Richard Campbell

A quorum was present. Executive Director Ralph Watson was also in attendance.

Board President Jim Barlow called the meeting to order.

Mr. Barlow called for the approval of the February meeting minutes. Judge Bardach made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Sheriff Quakenbush seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Watson reported that information needed to complete the February fiscal had not reached our agency in time to have the report prepared for this meeting. He will plan to present it for approval at the April meeting. He could report that our Project Income revenue collection was below projections for the month of February.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Director's Report**

A written report was submitted and reviewed by the Executive Director.

**Old Business**

There was no old business.

**New Business**

Mr. Watson presented the Agency's 2020 Annual Report for review and approval. The report, once approved, must be sent to the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) and the County Board of Commissioners. He also plans to provide copies to the Hamilton County Council and members of the local Judiciary. Prior to summarizing the report, he expressed his appreciation to Director of administration Kevin Mulroony for his work on the report. Once the Table of Contents was briefly reviewed Mr. Watson provided more specific details contained within the report. The pandemic in 2020 resulted in the agency experiencing a number of different challenges that impacted data and the agency also revised some data collection methods.

Following his noting several key findings Mr. Watson inquired if there were any questions. Hearing none he presented the report for approval. Mr. Barlow called for approval of the report. Judge Bardach motioned to approve the report as submitted. Stephenie Gookins seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. There were positive comments offered regarding the content and format of the report.

The next item on the agenda was a review of House Bill 1068. The proposed legislation directs the State Justice Reinvestment Advisory Council (JRAC) to review the Indiana Code Provisions for Community Corrections and make recommendations to improve operations, as well as creating a local JRAC. Mr. Watson had included a copy of the document in the material sent to the Board members and proceeded to review the proposed language. After a review of the proposed responsibilities, as well as the proposed Council membership, Mr. Watson asked if there were any questions. He noted that passage of the legislation currently appears likely, and upon passage the Advisory Board members will need to determine if they choose to serve as the Hamilton County JRAC. Judge Bardach, following a summary of the proposed responsibilities, suggested that responsibilities be carefully reviewed prior to such a decision. A local JRAC will be expected to be involved with more than what the current Board has as its mission.

Hamilton County employees currently have monetary overtime restrictions that have been established by the County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Watson explained the staffing challenges that the agency encounters because of the restrictions and our limited ability to control mandatory overtime. In 2011 he had requested for an exception to the restrictions based on the Agency overtime requirements and it was granted. In 2016 he once again requested that the monetary overtime limits for the agency be increased, as changes that had recently been made with position classification compensation levels seriously challenged our ability to comply with the guidelines. It was approved. In 2021 challenges have once again arisen due to our difficulty in controlling mandatory overtime coupled with the compensation benefit levels for many senior employees. Mr. Watson is seeking permission to approach the County Board of Commissioners and request that monetary overtime limits for our agency be raised to \$15,000 for Living Unit Coordinators and \$10,000 for Field Services Coordinators. It was noted that the challenges encountered were with the monetary limitation and not the total overtime appropriation. Dan Stevens made a motion to approve Mr. Watson going before the County Board of Commissioners and requesting that the limits be increased to the amounts presented. Judge Bardach seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

The final item on the agenda was a request from Mr. Watson to dispose of assets. The items are two laptop computers that are obsolete and have been replaced. Lee Buckingham made a motion to approve the disposal of assets as presented. Sheriff Quakenbush seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

There was no further business to be brought before the Board and the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be **April 1<sup>st</sup> at 12 noon** at Hamilton County Community Corrections.