



**Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Meeting Minutes  
February 27, 2019  
Judge Menahan's Courtroom, Courthouse Building  
12:00 p.m.**

**Mission: The CJCC exists to promote the safety of the citizens of Lewis and Clark County, the efficient and just treatment of defendants and offenders, the protection and healing of victims, and to work toward prevention of crime and the reduction of recidivism.**

**1. Call to Order & Reading of the Mission**

Judge Mike Menahan called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

Members present: Judge Mike Menahan, Commissioner Susan Good Geise, Chief Troy McGee, Suzanne Seburn, Christin Thennis, Mayor James Schell, Leo Gallagher, Ana Cortez, and Sharon Tregidga.

Members absent: Justice Michael Swingley, Judge Bob Wood, Sheriff Leo Dutton, and Jenny Eck.

Others in attendance included: Jillian DeAmicis-Danesi, Kiley Gage, Tom Cordingley, Gina Rasmussen, Captain Alan Hughes, Sergeant Scott Ferguson, Jason Sexton, Roger Baltz, Stephanie Ballenger-Brooks, Dr. Gary Mihelish, Judge Jim Reynolds, and Judge Kathy Seeley. Staff in attendance: Jocelyn Olsen on behalf of Gloria Soja, and Kellie McBride.

**2. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

The minutes from the January 23, 2019 meeting were approved with the correction on the second page: "Commission" to "Commissioner".

**3. Criminal Justice System and Mental Illness – Judge Menahan**

Judge Menahan provided an overview of mental health in Lewis and Clark County's criminal justice system. He first explained civil cases regarding mental health and presented the statutes which outline the parameters in which an individual may be involuntarily committed to a mental health facility. Judge Menahan spoke directly to the fallacy that District Court Judges do not like to order community commitments by explaining the barriers within the process, sharing examples from his bench, and highlighting State statutes.

Involuntary community commitments are ineffective for defendants who do not want to be treated and/or do not want to take medications. The Montana State Hospital, Warm Springs, is the only facility in the state that may involuntarily administer medications. The District Court Judges are amenable to voluntary community commitments when the defendant is willing follow treatment and medication requirements.

Judge Menahan then explained, citing legislation and State statute, how mental health affects criminal matters by speaking to the involved process that must be completed to determine whether a defendant is fit to proceed. Benefits of the Crisis Intervention Training for local law enforcement were also discussed.

Judge Menahan closed this discussion by addressing the possibility of starting a Mental Health Treatment Court in Lewis and Clark County. He spoke to the lack of money in the budget this legislative session and whether the need is great enough in this area to warrant such a program. Judge Menahan also explained the time required of a judge to run a Mental Health Treatment Court stating that other counties have been able to resolve this issue by having a special Master preside over their program. A few years ago, the four District Court judges in Lewis and Clark County requested a special Master but were denied.

**4. Dashboard Update on Criminal Justice Services – Kellie McBride**

Kellie McBride introduced Jillian DeAmicis-Danesi to the council. Jillian is the Criminal Justice Services Department's Behavioral Health Coordinator. Ms. McBride explained the role of this position and shared a recent success story that was possible with this new position.

**5. JMI Data Contract Update – Kellie McBride**

Kellie McBride reported that Justice Management Institute will be presenting their findings and recommendations regarding what Lewis and Clark County should do to ensure complete data collection regarding the criminal justice system. This will occur on March 6, 2019 at 9 am in the first floor conference room of the Courthouse.

**6. NNCJCC Annual Conference – Kellie McBride**

Kellie McBride informed the CJCC that the National Network of Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils will be having their annual conference on June 20 and 21, 2019 in Portland, Oregon. Ms. McBride encouraged all CJCC members to attend.

**7. Citizens Advisory Council – Curt Chisholm**

Kiley Gage, CAC Co-Chair, advised the Council that the CAC discussed mental health at the last meeting and have begun to reach out to mental health service providers in the area.

**8. Public Comment**

A member of the public, Stephanie Ballenger-Brooks, presented a question about whether certain forms of therapy could be mandated to individuals by the court. Ms. Ballenger-Brooks disclosed concerns she has for individuals involved in the criminal justice system who need mental health assistance and also spoke to some personal experiences. Judge Menahan explained that individuals charged with a crime, but not yet convicted, cannot be ordered to complete mental health treatment unless the situation rises to a level necessitating an involuntary commitment. Only at the time of sentencing can a judge order mental health treatment. Suzanne Seburn referenced the "fitness to proceed" process and reiterated the importance of communicating issues with the defense attorney.

**9. Next Meeting: March 27, 2019**

**10. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

*Minutes approved 3/27/2019.*