

New Hampshire Justice Involved Veterans (JIV) Task Force

The mission of JIV is to serve justice involved veterans by promoting and supporting the development of veteran-centered programs throughout the State

Wednesday, January 24, 2018
9:00 – 11:00am, Room 460, DHHS

MINUTES

Dial-in Number: (515) 739-1015 Meeting ID: 288-605-054 Host PIN: 1157

Thank you to Alex Casale for sponsoring our conference call!

In Attendance: Karen Barilani, Counselor, Riverbend/Graduate Assistant, Office of Veterans Affairs, New England College; Sheena Bice, Executive Clinical Director, Veteran and First Responder (VFR) Healthcare; Adam Burritt, Director, Service to the Armed Forces & International Services, New Hampshire & Vermont, American Red Cross; Ed Drury, Military Liaison, Lakes Region Mental Health Center; Trooper Seth Gahr, NH State Police; Bill Gilding, Director of Alternative Sentencing, Grafton County (by Phone); Eric Golnick, Chief Executive Officer, VFR HealthCare; John Hattan, Program Specialist IV/Military Families Liaison, NH Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS or Department), Division of Child Support Services (DCSS); Shawn Jones, Child Support Officer, DHHS/DCSS; Dora Lavigne, Unit Manager/Corrections Officer, Merrimack County Department of Corrections; Dan Marcek, President, Vetflix, Inc.; Deanna Monroe, MS, CAMT, Military Liaison/Care Coordinator, Military and Veteran Services, Easterseals NH, Inc.; Jo Moncher, Bureau Chief, Community Based Military Programs, DHHS; Jill O'Neill, Court Liaison, Greater Nashua Mental Health Center; Michael Owens, Veteran Justice Outreach Coordinator, White River Junction (VT) Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Center (by phone); Warren Perry, Deputy Adjutant, NH National Guard; Lara Saffo, Grafton County Attorney (by phone); Lisa Snowman, Veteran's Advocate (by phone); Susan Stearns; Deputy Director, NAMI-NH; Lindsey Thornton, Grafton County Alternative Sentencing (by phone); Larry Vogelmann, Director, Legal Boots on the Ground/Veterans Law Project; Lon Weston, North Country Justice Involved Veterans Team (by phone); and Ronald R. White, Executive Director, NH Association of Counties.

I. Welcome & Introductions – All present introduced themselves and their professional affiliation.

- Jo Moncher introduced **Lisa Snowman** (who was on the phone) – Jo had met Lisa through the North Country JIV Team.
- Lisa's brother had gone through the experience with the WRJ VA. She had seen the "Justice for All" video, and stated her brother went through much of the same experience as the video. He was "so far gone" and, at one point, had been involuntarily committed by family members. Nothing stuck though and he slipped away even more. He was never "asked the question".
- Mike Owens stepped in and helped tremendously. She states her brother has a drinking problem and that she advocates for her brother. She does a lot of behind the scenes work advocating for him. Mike Owens travels all over the place – and had been significant in coordinating care and support for Lisa's brother.
- Mike Owens stated that Lisa was invaluable for her support of her Veteran brother. Mike thanked her for her assistance. Lisa stated she was not a good public speaker, but was a good over-the-phone speaker.

II. Approval of Minutes – Thank you to Ron White! Larry Vogelmann motioned to accept the minutes. Warren Perry seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

III. Justice for All - Plymouth State University – Monday, Feb 26, 6:30pm Start – Plymouth State had been advertising the event. So far, eleven people had signed up, of which two people were JIV Task Force members. Jo noted that event was a little strapped for resource table space, but that anyone who wants to have a resource table should contact her and she would share that info with the PSU organizers.

III. Justice for All - Plymouth State University – Monday, Feb 26, 6:30pm Start (continued)

- She stated that the room was currently set up for 100 people, but could go up as far as 150 people. Jo stated that it was good geography for the event in that it was not close to where the prior film events had been and asked everyone in JIV Task Force to please publicize it.
- She noted that there was a totally different panel than the prior two “Justice for All” events. Plymouth State students were working on it as well as various academic entities.
- It was noted that in getting a Veterans Track in the North Country we may have to align with the drug courts, rather than the mental health courts.
- In introducing a possible North Country Veterans Track, we need to tread carefully and begin establishing relationships and partnerships.
- Lindsey Thornton and Bill Gilding were currently working on putting on another event in North Country.
- Mikes Owens would focus on WRJ VA publicity.
- Plymouth State Criminal Justice professors were advocating for student attendance. Dan Marcek stated he was working on getting other scholarly disciplines involved.
- Ron asked what areas in the North Country we were talking about as possible venues: Littleton, Berlin/Gorham, Colebrook, Lancaster, Conway were all mentioned as possibilities.
- Lara Saffo stated that last night she had reached out to David Bates at Dartmouth about possibly hosting an event.
- It was also stated that to a certain extent, the local site must own event.

IV. 2018 JIV Goals – Approved at Last Meeting

- Help to establish at least 1 Veterans Track in the North Country – best way to align this is with a Drug Court
- Support additional Veterans Tracks as needed – in response to community interest
- Support additional Justice for All events across the State of New Hampshire
- Promote military culture training (and greater understanding of our military) across “site areas” and across NH
- Promote “Ask the Question” – in collaboration with JIV work
- Pursue funding to support the JIV mission – what is it we need money for? Organizational piece?
 - Big roadblock is court capacity. Are there places where we build our agenda? Create a 501 3c? What enables our mission?
 - There is a national organization out there called Justice for Vets, might be something to leverage.
 - Bill Gilding stated he would reach out to the Grafton County Friends of the Court, now a statewide 501 3c and their fundraising is phenomenal.
 - Jill O’Neill asked what we are looking for? She stated that in the long run we wanted to make Veterans Tracks sustainable.
 - Eric Golnick stated there were some national models available as resources.
 - Ron White asked what kind of strategic planning the JIV Task Force wanted to do; how we wanted to address that.
 - Dan Marcek stated he was working with Channel 11 but they feel project was incomplete and that it does not address the whole package. Dan stated that he is looking for this to be put on public television. As the film is shown on television, people may want to contribute.
- Susan Stearns asked if we should do another conference similar to the one we had sponsored 2 years ago.
- Jo asked if the committee wanted strategic planning as part of the 2018 goals as well as part of the State Plan. Jo is also a Liaison with SAMSHA. State planning was part of the process that introduced a need for a “leadership entity” that lead to HB 636. As HB 636 evolves, the work for a State Plan may become more clear.

IV. 2018 JIV Goals – Approved at Last Meeting (continued)

- Public Hearing regarding HB 636 had been filled with inaccuracies. Bill would change.
- Larry Vogelman stated that the JIV Task Force had been nimble in reacting to things as they'd happened throughout the state. Stated he wanted substance over form, but that a lot is changing.
- Warren Perry stated the group might want to talk about precedence and priorities, i.e., which goals were the most important.
- Continue inter-agency coordination
- Continue to support the Courts and work to secure sufficient Judge(s) to serve the needs of Justice Involved Veterans
- Develop and coordinate evaluations to validate effectiveness of JIV programs
- Continue to educate those involved with Justice Involved Veterans

V. Leadership Transition

Quick Update

- Co-Facilitators Confirmed: Jill O'Neill and Larry Vogelman
- Secretary: John Hattan
- JIV Task Force Agreed on the Term Co-Facilitators (not Chairs)
- JIV Task Force Agreed on Keeping Mission Statement As Is (on top of agenda)
- Jo's Last Meeting as Facilitator: Feb 28, 2018
- Jill and Larry's 1st Meeting as Co-Facilitators: March 28, 2018
- Jill, Larry, and Jo had met earlier this week.

DHHS Commitment for 2018

- Host meetings
- Attend & Support Meetings
- Support Justice for All events
- Support North Country work
- Maintain JIV info on DHHS Military Webpage
 - *Fact Sheet*
 - *Legislation*
 - *Programs Guides*
 - *Ten Key Components in a Veterans Court*
 - *Minutes (from last 5 years)*

Leadership Transition Meeting – January 22, 2018

Jill & Larry

Jo thanked Jill O'Neill and Larry Vogelman for stepping up.

- Location of meeting earlier that week had been at Nixon Vogelman Barry Slawsky & Simoneau in Manchester – Larry's assistants, Jennifer Robertson & Linda Sutton, had attended the meeting. The following issues were discussed:
 - Don't expect things to be different; group will try to continue the work that is already being done.
 - Don't expect things to be the same. They are not Jo. They will try to mimic what Jo does.
 - Will what JIV does evolve over time?

V. Leadership Transition (continued)

- Change in monthly meetings? Do we need every month or every other month, with a smaller executive committee meeting every second month?
- Rational behind meeting every other month is to give people a break.
- Colonel Perry stated every other month is better but parties must still contribute to dialogue
- Lara Saffo stated there might be other Subcommittees to address other issues.
- Jo Moncher stated we must be careful to not make things too complicated.
- Larry Vogelman cautioned against creating any standard subcommittees
- The question was raised regarding what happens to JIV in the context of HB 636, in effect, the big picture.
- Larry shared that Executive Committee would be formed by fiat, for instance, Ron White, Lara Saffo, Susan Stearns, Colonel Warren Perry, etc.
- Colonel didn't see anything changing to our work based on HB 636
- Larry Vogelman stated we are self-created body
- Jill O'Neill stated that there would be bumps
- Larry Vogelman stated we've broken all the rules and gotten really good product
- Trooper Seth Gahr says the need is great within the Veterans Community and that we need Veterans Tracks so that veterans can plead guilty and still get the help they need.
 - Berlin is a different situation. Do not have a lot of transportation to get Veterans to White River Junction VA in VT; that it requires a day off for all parties to get somebody over there.
 - Hardest thing about being a Veteran is coming back and readjusting.
 - He stated that the JIV Task Force is a great organization, whereas something such as this has not been there in the past. He stated that some individuals felt that being in Army reserve was one step above welfare.
 - Stated the meetings are important in the community. Having meetings like this sends a profound message throughout the State.
- Jill O'Neill advocated for a strategic plan which engages the private sector as well as state and federal resources.
- Jo stated that one of the benefit of meeting monthly is momentum.
- Jo asked the committee if it wanted to change the meeting schedule so that the entire group met bi-monthly with the "Executive Committee" meeting in between monthly meeting. The consensus amongst the group was that the group meets bi-monthly, and that the schedule begins in April 2018; meeting every other month after that.
- Potential Executive Team members will be contacted and asked soon per Larry Vogelman
- Jill invited Trooper Seth Gahr to the Executive Committee

VI. Veteran Track Sites - Updates

- Nashua Veterans Track – Deanna Monroe stated that in Nashua, Easterseals has four, with an additional couple in process and another couple that have fallen through. Deanna stated that they must work on education piece with public defenders. She still thinks some public defenders haven't gotten the message.
- Larry Vogelman stated he could facilitate a meeting with public defenders. Easterseals may not have resources for training.
- Manchester Veterans Track – Deanna has two individuals in the Manchester Track, while Glenn Kazan also has two.
- Rockingham Veterans Track – Deanna not certain what was going on in Rockingham.

VI. Veteran Track Sites – Updates (continued)

- Grafton County Veteran Tracks (Three!) – currently serving three veterans in Grafton’s Mental Health Courts. There are always the questions, and they are holding out hope that State will fund Veterans Tracks. Mike Owens stated that there was a fourth in the works.
- North Country Veteran Tracks – partnership must be supportive of any actions in the North Country.
- Bill Gilding would like to get a Letter of Support from JIV Task Force which he will draft for the general support of drug courts, Veterans’ tracks, and also for more judges.
 - I. Possible Alignment with Drug Courts
 - II. Justice for All events – to introduce & promote Veterans Tracks

VII. Evaluation & Tracking

See below info on Drug Courts from Alex Casale (as a sample of what we could start to collect/package)

- *In 2016 NH passed a bill to fund and operate a drug court in every superior court in the state.*
- *By Feb of 2018 there will be a drug court in 10 of 11 superior courts.*
- *In 2017 the active drug courts served about 290 individuals*
- *In 2014 there was a 10 year recidivism study on NH Drug Courts. They found 22% recidivism 3 years post-graduation.*
- *All of the active Drug Courts have had a graduation to termination rate in 2016 of 56% - with some programs as high as 62%-66%. And a retention rate of about 83%.*
- *8 Babies born to sober mothers in 2016*
- *99% of Drug court participants are on insurance during the program.*
- *90% of graduates were employed at the time of graduation*
- *6-7 months average sober time upon graduation*
- *352 graduates total*
- The question was raised of whether Drug Courts can provide identifying data? Currently courts not doing it. Mental Health Centers are.
- Jill O’Neill stated we needed to know what entities were providing tracking data and how they were being tracked.
- Ed Drury stated that it would be helpful if Drug Courts were providing data, but the recognition would probably have to happen within the Court system. Stated Mental Health Centers had recognized the assistance tracking Veterans and Military members provided to MHCs.
- Deanna stated she is just starting to get veterans and service members to call her based on police officer’s recommendation.
- Trooper Gahr stated that Police officers can “ask the question”, but that in a lot of instances the question had to be asked by other stakeholders.
- Ed Drury stated that the process of collecting data had been supported by the Community Mental Health Center system, and that it might be able to be modified.
- Justice Nadeau had supported this, not necessarily through the Courts but through the mental health systems.
- It was noted that any strategic planning would have to include an understanding of what the Veteran landscape will look like in New England in that it might decrease due to attrition.
- Nine years ago when Jo started, NH had 130,000 veterans; now NH has 105,000.

VIII. Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 28, 9:00am – 11:00am; Room 460 in the DHHS Brown Building

Thank you for your leadership and support to NH Veterans, Service Members & their Families!