



## **Criminal Justice Advisory Committee Minutes** **Tuesday, September 24, 2024**

**Members Present:** Dawn Baxton, Dr. Angeloe Burch Sr., Quanesha Archer, Lao Rubert, Maggie Clapp, Ben Haas, Tonia Rogers-Dixon, Dorothy Hairston Mitchell, Mike Sstrom, Dr. Rodney Jenkins, Eric Johnson, Walter Tate

**Guests:** Richie Mendoza, Herb Trippert, Trevor Logsdon, Judge Kendra Montgomery-Blinn, Ryan Smith, Abena Bediako, Irene Lawrence,

**Staff:** Roshanna Parker, Marc Strange, Ontario Joyner, Janice Williams

**Excused Absences:** Nikki Harris

### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Dawn Baxton, Chair, called the meeting to order, welcomed all attendees and asked all in attendance to introduce themselves.

### **II. Approval of Minutes**

Chair Baxton called for a motion to approve the March and May 2024, minutes. Dr. Rodney Jenkins so moved; Dr. Angeloe Burch Sr. seconded. The motion to approve the March and May 2024 CJAC minutes was unanimously carried.

### **III. TROSA Presentation:** presented by -Trevor Logsdon, Government Programs Administrator, Herb Trippert, Associate Director of Graduate Services, and Richie Mendoza, Admissions Department Manager

Mr. Logsdon shared his justice-involved background and the impact TROSA has had on his life by stating that he himself has gone through the TROSA Program. Mr. Logsdon went on to state that TROSA is a comprehensive, evidence-based program that assists individuals in not only getting sober but building social and coping skills. TROSA has created a support system throughout the community to help rebuild lives.

TROSA = Triangle Resource Options for Substance Abusers founded in 1994. It is a state-licensed, multi-year, voluntary, residential program that uses evidence-based practices for substance use disorder treatment. The average daily population is approximately 400 residents at the Winston-Salem and Durham campuses for both men and women where there are no costs to the residents. Life skill-trainings are provided to all residents such as GED classes and practical, everyday life skills. TROSA subscribes to a model of behavior change and living a sober life.

Mr. Richie Mendoza stated that the majority of TROSA's residents are coming from a justice-involved background and environment. Approximately 40% of the current population are on probation. The majority of residents identify with poly-substance use disorder with 30% being opioid use disorder. TROSA offers a safe, comprehensive therapeutic environment including stable housing, food, clinical care, medicated assisted treatments, educational opportunities, meetings, community assignments, seminars, and assistance with reinstating their driver's license. All of these referenced components are utilized to teach residents how to live life in recovery.

Mr. Herb Trippert stated that he too is a graduate of TROSA having become a staff member since 2013.

Mr. Trippert reported that Trosa's program is designed in stages:

- **Stage 1: Intern:** the 1<sup>st</sup> month of treatment where the rules of the program are learned, and peer relationships are built
- **Stage 2: Freshman:** the 1–6-month period where residents participate in a series of classes which outlines the beginning stages of recovery
- **Stage 3: the 6–21-month period** where residents are considered 'senior residents', receive professional counseling and skills training for certification in counseling in preparation for leaving the program
- **Stage 4: at 21 months** residents have a choice of remaining a senior resident or opt into a 'work-out' program where employment is gained outside of TROSA. At this stage, residents can now earn a wage and learn how to manage money which further prepares them for living outside of the TROSA community
- **Stage 5: Graduate:** after completing the program, residents can choose to become a staff member (remain and work at TROSA provided job opportunities exist) or exit the program. Those who choose to exit are assisted with obtaining outside housing, acquiring a vehicle from TROSA (if available) and furnishing their new homes.

A question was asked if TROSA is working with the JSD and the county diversion programs as referral sources for their program, to which Mr. Logsdon replied that in recent years, TROSA has been working on building these relationships. TROSA has developed and maintained relationships with probation departments across the entire state of NC as well as nationwide where residents can admit themselves to TROSA in lieu of incarceration. While TROSA is an adult-only care facility, it works in conjunction with family court systems for residents who are trying to regain custody of children.

A question was asked, what is TROSA's maximum capacity, to which Mr. Logsdon responded that the Durham campus can house 550-600 residents, and the Winston-Salem campus can house up to 220.

A question was asked about how referrals from Durham are handled, to which Mr. Mendoza replied that TROSA is always open 24/7 for anyone who wants to be admitted to the program.

#### **IV. Family Treatment Court:** presented by Judge Montgomery-Blinn, District Court Judge

Chair Baxton introduced Judge Montgomery-Blinn and stated that the judge would be speaking to the expressed interest and need in re-establishing a Family Drug Treatment Court here in Durham to assist in reuniting families.

Judge Montgomery-Blinn stated that one of the courtrooms that she is currently assigned to is the Abuse, Neglect and Dependency (AND) Courtroom where Child Protective Services (CPS) petitions are handled. Also, cases where DSS has removed a child from their home are heard in the AND Courtroom as well. The purpose of this court is to get to a place of permanent placement for children via one of the following processes:

- Reunification: where the child(ren) are returned to their home
- Guardianship: where the child(ren) placed with a relative as they age out where they will then go into an 18-21 program
- Termination of Parental Rights: where the child(ren) will be adopted

The large number of these cases are due to substance use in the home(s). Parents are unable to receive assistance for underlying struggles/issues such as obtaining housing and/or maintaining a steady source of income until they have successfully received and completed substance abuse treatment. In Durham, community support systems have very long wait lists due to high provider turnover and/or the program's lack of intensity. The AND court strives to move as quickly as possible for unification because any delays in treatment will result in children being removed from their home.

The state discontinued funding for the Family Treatment Court in Durham some years ago and the county was unable to pick up that funding. Durham currently has a very active Criminal Drug and Mental Health Treatment Court that are staffed by the Justice Resource Center. The Family Treatment Court, as defined by the Federal Government, would serve families that are involved in the child welfare system where parental substance abuse is a contributing factor to the child being abused or neglected. Nationwide, 80% of the substantiated child abuse and neglect cases that come through the Abuse, Neglect and Dependency courts involve allegations of substance abuse by a parent or guardian. This percentage is consistent with Durham's statistics.

Family Treatment Courts are voluntary programs where parents can receive treatment with less barriers in obtaining that treatment than they might have otherwise. In a 2016 the National Drug Court Institute study showed that parents who participated in Family Treatment Courts, were 25% - 35% more likely to complete the substance use disorder treatment program than those who have gone through the regular court system. The study also showed that the children were returned home 3 – 6 months earlier than parents who went through the traditional court system. The parents were 15% - 40% more likely to retain their parental rights and regain reunification.

What are we doing in Durham to bring back the Family Treatment Court?

- a. The Justice Resource Center is willing to take on the management of the treatment court and to staff it; what is needed is funding for staffing, which has been determined to be three (3) staff members.
- b. A group of stakeholders were assembled on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, to explore options to create an ideal model of an FTC for Durham

Funding Options:

1. State funds
2. County Budget funds
3. Opioid Settlement Funding (it would be expected that the county would pick up the funding once the settlement monies are depleted)
4. Federal Grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) who are expected to release grants this Spring. An application is currently being prepared to apply for this grant, however, this is a very competitive grant – only 9 agencies nationwide received this grant for 2024.

What can the committee do to facilitate this effort?

1. Speak with Orange County colleagues/connections to see how funding is obtained there for Family Treatment Court.
2. Please share any information you have regarding the distribution of the Opioid Settlement funding.
3. Keep giving support to the Justice Resource Center

A question was asked whether the parents who have been through the AND Court system are a part of the Advisory Group to which Judge Montgomery-Blinn responded yes and the emphasis is on peer mentorship.

Ryan Smith stated that the city's finance department will release a request for proposals on how the city can use the Opioid Settlement Fund, which he will submit to CJAC when the request is released.

Dr. Rodney Jenkins stated that there is an Opioid settlement manager, Jason Smith, who is housed in Public Health. Dr. Jenkins will schedule Mr. Smith to speak at a future CJAC meeting to provide an update on the settlement fund. Currently, the Opioid settlement is working with the Detention Center, Sheriff Birkhead, the Office of Emergency Services and Public Health in distributing Naloxone. Dr. Jenkins will touch base with his connection in Orange County to gain an insight as to their funding structure.

**V. Familiar Faces Initiative Update:** presented by Ryan Smith, City of Durham

Mr. Smith explained that Familiar Faces is a collaboration between the Justice Services Department and Community Safety, however, it also includes other partners such as Alliance, DSS and others.

The pilot program was meant to work with a small group of neighbors who are repeatedly justice involved due to repeated 911 calls and frequent incarceration. For the past six (6) months, there has been a small team working approximately 20 hours a week with 5 – 6 neighbors. The most common characteristics of this group of neighbors are that they are currently living in shelters and/or have severe mental illnesses and disorders.

What is urgently needed at this time is immediate access to non-congregate supportive shelters. While there are shelters like Urban Ministries and Rescue Ministries, the neighbors are not willing to utilize these facilities because they do not feel safe. Familiar Faces is working with the Homeless Services Advisory Council and others to figure out how to prepare proposals to get more non-congregate shelters in the community. There is also a need for more supportive, permanent housing because there are approximately 170 single adults waiting to get into a shelter in Durham.

**VI. Local Re-entry Council Update:** presented by Ontario Joyner, LRC Council Coordinator

Mr. Joyner reported:

- LRC is now fully staffed with two (2) new hires, Antoan Jeffries, Employment Case Manager and Rasheda Royster, Housing Case Manager.
- In August LRC held an Entrepreneur Seminar in partnership with the local library, LRC's Employment Subcommittee and four (4) local business owners, to present employment options to clients

- The Supportive Services Subcommittee has been providing food boxes to clients once a week - mostly those in transitional housing. The committee is looking for assistance from volunteers to help distribute these food boxes.
- LRC will participate as vendors at two (2) resource fairs: One being the Butner Federal Prison in partnership with the PROUD Program and the other at Orange County Correctional Facility
  - LRC will sponsor a resource fair sometime in December that will be open to the public as well as clients
- Clients Served in September:
  - received 87 referrals
  - completed 44 intakes
  - 17 clients gained employment with an average salary of \$16.05
  - 4 clients enrolled in GED classes at Durham Tech; 1 client enrolled in a carpentry class; 9 clients enrolled in Kramden Institute where upon completion of the computer literacy program, they will receive a refurbished laptop
  - 5 clients enrolled in the on-site employment class
  - 1 client completed a Vehicle Inspection Certification Course at Durham Tech

**VII. Brief Member Updates/Announcements:**

Ms. Roshanna pointed out that the next scheduled meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 26<sup>th</sup>, which is the week of Thanksgiving, and asked Chair Baxton for a general consensus on whether or not to move it to November 19<sup>th</sup>. All agreed.

Mr. Joyner stated that the final LRC Meeting for the calendar year will be held November 20<sup>th</sup> and invited all to attend.

Dr. Burch announced Zappa 176 and District 20 Masonic District will host a Night Out on October 1<sup>st</sup> at 2312 S. Alston Avenue at the Zappa Temple.

**VIII. Next Meeting Date:**

- November 19, 2024

Chair Baxton Adjourned the meeting at 5:22pm