



King County

Public Defense Advisory Board Meeting

Thursday, June 6, 2019
9:30 a.m. – noon

Dexter Horton Building, Conference Room 245

MINUTES

1. Welcome

Attending in person – Chair Paul Holland, Vice Chair Kim Ambrose, Sharon Armstrong, Marc Boman, Adam Chromy, Lou Frantz, Sophia Byrd McSherry

Attending remotely – Safia Ahmed, John Strait

Not Present – Jeffrey Robinson, Matt Adams

Meeting called to order by Paul Holland at 9:34 a.m.

2. SEIU Report

Abbey McMahon, president of the local SEIU chapter, noted that the union now has 23 people in leadership positions, a remarkable change from even a year ago. She also said the union has formed a social justice committee and is looking at its pension portfolio through the state, which includes investments in the bail bond industry. The union would also like clarity about the role of PDAB.

3. Possible Changes to the Charter

Jennifer Giambattista, a County legislative analyst, discussed the work of the King County Charter Review Commission (CRC), which reviews and makes recommendations for amending the County Charter every 10 years. Board members expressed concern about whether the language in the charter governing DPD ensures adequate structural independence for the department. The CRC meets on June 26 and will likely be close to a final list of recommended amendments at that time. Paul will talk to Bob Boruchowitz to see if he has suggestions for language to propose to the CRC; Paul will let the rest of the board know what he learns.

4. Department of Public Defense Director's Report

Director Anita Khandelwal said she and other members of her management team would discuss the following topics:

- Training Update

- Policy Update
- Budget Update
- Employee Engagement Survey Results

Training Update. Tara Urs discussed DPD’s new summer interns, 20 third-year law students who begin June 10 with four days of training led by several DPD attorneys. These interns are the first to be paid by the county. She also discussed recruitment efforts for the 2020 class of interns, which will entail attendance at minority job fairs in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and elsewhere. She discussed ongoing training that is underway, including some special sessions for non-attorneys, and planning for the annual conference, which will focus on connecting with our clients.

Policy Update. Katie Hurley discussed several policy issues and updates. Among them:

- ORCA Lift Passes: DPD is working with researchers who are assessing whether issuing pre-loaded ORCA passes to clients who are incarcerated will lower Failure to Appear rates.
- Court date reminders via text messaging: This new program will roll out soon as a pilot with our SMC clients.
- LEAD expansion: The program is expanding to include more clients. There is also a LEAD calendar at SMC, where harm-reduction principles come into play.
- Expansion of juvenile diversion: A bill passed last year that increases the number and kinds of cases that can be diverted. We’re working with the court and the PAO on how to implement this.

Budget Update. Gordon Hill and Anita discussed our work with the Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget (PSB) over our FTE level. PSB had wanted to reduce our FTE count by eight for this current biennium (agreeing to postpone the reduction while we explored the issue). After numerous meetings and a reexamination of our data, PSB agreed to not implement those reductions and to possibly add some FTEs. This is an excellent result.

Employee Engagement Survey Results. Leslie Brown briefly went over the results of the 2019 employee survey, which showed a high commitment to DPD’s mission, as well as a high level of stress, especially when compared to the rest of the County. Anita and other members of her management team are visiting all the units to have discussions about the results as well as other issues people wish to discuss.

5. Discussion of Proposed Changes to Code and Charter

Board members discussed some other potential changes to the code or charter governing DPD, including the way the County recruits new members to PDAB, a requirement for only one annual report from PDAB, and other issues. Lou, who marked up the current code to explore some of these possibilities, will get a clean draft to board members to make the proposed changes clearer.

6. Election of PDAB Chair and Vice Chair

Chair Paul Holland, whose term expires in June, is not seeking reappointment. This was his last meeting. The board nominated and approved the following chair and vice chair.

- Kim Ambrose, chair

- Lou Frantz, vice chair

7. **Executive Session:** The board goes into executive session at 11:32 a.m.

8. **Adjourn:** 11:50 a.m.