

Community Justice CBAC

TO: Chair Deborah Kafoury and County Board of Commissioners (3) pages
FROM: Community Justice CBAC
DATE: March 6 , 2017
SUBJECT: Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) Report & Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The CBAC for the Department of Community Justice endorses the Department's approach to the FY18 budget. DCJ has thoroughly vetted all their programs to find inefficiencies, and continues to look both outward and inward to discover ways to focus their efforts and achieve better results. They are willing to cut longstanding and politically popular programs, and they strive to provide services that the clients at highest risk of recidivism receive nowhere else. They test each program and implement it when it's proven to work.

We have prioritized our requests for additional funds below. The top three are:

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| 1. 50032B | Expanding the CHI initiative to young African-American men | \$326,299 |
| 2. 50054D | Creating a floater position in the Juvenile Detention Center | \$80,641 |
| 3. 50021B | Using Community Health Specialists to address clients' life issues | \$217,443 |

DCJ CBAC PROCESS:

The Citizen Budget Advisory Committee to the Department of Community Justice met seven times to familiarize themselves with departmental activities and review FY18 budget proposals and changes. DCJ staff members included: Joyce Resare, Budget/Finance Manager; Kimberly Bernard, Ph.D., Research and Planning Manager; Truls Neal, Deputy Director; Scott Taylor, Director.

Additionally, CBAC members were invited to the Juvenile Division's Farm to Table dinner, and DCJ's annual Learning Day, where we were able to meet with Department staff responsible for specific programs.

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EMERGING ISSUES & CHANGES:

This is a difficult budget year. The budget cuts mandated by the County Commission, as well as uncertainty around state and federal funding, require reductions in services that are more essential than ever. DCJ provides demonstrably effective and the most cost-efficient approaches to reducing recidivism. This work keeps people out of prisons, which in turn saves State monies. More and more, their work helps justice-involved individuals to change their lives, to heal themselves and to contribute to their communities. Those benefits are incalculable.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

In the Department's internal budget process, staff members within each division identified programs that were underperforming or off-target with the department mission, as well as those where increased investment would be most effective. Budget cuts and new requests were then prioritized by consensus within, and then across, divisions. This inclusive, thorough process impressed us, particularly with its reliance on evidence and results. We concur with the cuts they have recommended and the priorities they have set.

DCJ has requested restoration of two of those programs: Londer Learning Center for a final year to accommodate their current base of students, and the Courtyard Café, which is a popular meeting place for visitors and members of the Juvenile Justice system.

The Out-of-Constraint budget requests are equally evidence-based and designed to further the Department priorities – concentrating resources on high-risk clients, reducing racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system, employing the most effective and cost-efficient sanctions, and improving measurement and reporting of results.

Our specific recommendations are as follows, in priority order:

- 1. 50032B Adult Community Healing Initiative (CHI) **\$326,299****
The Community Healing Initiative (CHI) is a family- and community-centered collaboration providing culturally specific and evidence-based services to at-risk youth and their families. It has been fully implemented in the Juvenile Services Division [Offer 50065] since July 2015 and has proven effective. Offer #50032B would expand the program to 17-25 year-old African-American male clients. We believe that CHI would be equally effective with this young-adult population.

- 2. 50054D Detention Floating position **\$80,641****
The addition of a floater in the Juvenile Detention facility will result in savings in overtime pay. More importantly, it will provide better supervision for youth in custody who are at risk of self-harm or suffering mental health issues.

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- 3. 50021B Community Health Specialists \$217,443**
As the DCJ has transitioned away from a focus on enforcement of parole and probation conditions, and toward providing services and tools that reintegrate former offenders into the society, they have developed new skills and expertise. This program offer reflects that fundamental transformation of the Department mission. It proposes a small team of Community Health Specialists who can work with clients, their families, communities, and healthcare providers. They will provide guidance on the personal and structural issues that are key to successful reintegration but up to now have been outside the scope of DCJ's work.
- 4. 50002B,C,D OTO software development expenses \$285,845**
In order to continually improve its reporting and analysis of performance and results, DCJ needs efficient methods to track and report data. The three program offers proposed as OTO expenses would streamline and standardize the data capture.
- 5. 50028B Londer Learning Center restoration up to \$663,313**
The Department's decision to close down the Londer Learning Center is emblematic of their results-based approach to budgeting. They have shown that this long-standing and popular program has not kept up with the Department's increased focus on high-risk clients. While we agree with this decision, we would request the Londer Center be wound down gradually, getting current students through the current semester and navigating them to educational programs elsewhere in the community. The Department requested an additional year of funding, but it may be possible to transition their students out in six months.
- 6. 50054C Courtyard Café restoration \$106,613**
In the last budget, DCJ Juvenile Services Division took the difficult decision to shut down the Courtyard Café, the on-site restaurant at the Juvenile Justice Complex. Because of its popularity among visitors, staff, and Juvenile Justice partners, it was restored to the budget for lunch service only, as an OTO expense. This offer would continue the lunch service on an ongoing basis. While this program does not advance the DCJ's departmental priorities (except as an occupational training opportunity for the youth), it does provide a service to the Juvenile Justice system at large. Currently, the Courtyard Café self-funds about half its operating expenses.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The Committee would like to thank all the Department of Community Justice management and staff for their commitment to the work.