

**Date: February 27, 2020**

**Subject: Meeting Minutes, CUSP Personal and Public Safety Committee**

**Location: Creekside Counseling, Idaho Falls**

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Dr. Janet Allen, Committee Chairwoman.

In attendance:

- Dr. Janet Allen, Chairwoman
- Paul Allen
- Brad Landes
- Rolanda Bjornson
- Amy Gamett (co-chair)
- John Ferguson
- Not in attendance: Anthony Tirino (co-chair); Carol Mascarenes
- Captain Sam Hulse, Bonneville County Sheriff's Office (BCSO), guest speaker

A quorum was in attendance, and there two participants from the public (both students).

Members briefly reintroduced themselves to Captain Hulse.

Chairwoman welcomed everyone, explained that Anthony Tirino was unable to attend and therefore unable to report on the meeting he attended for all CUSP Chairs, and we'll hope to hear from Anthony at the next meeting. She then turned the time over to Captain Hulse, explaining she had invited him to share his perspectives on priorities from the BCSO regarding Personal and Public Safety.

Captain Hulse:

Introduction and his background

1. Drug Use/Abuse/Addiction – Opioids are a growing concern, deaths are occurring in IF/Bonneville County. What we see happening in bigger cities is almost always an indicator of what we can expect to see here. Fentanyl is a growing concern, and carfentanil is coming with even greater potential for lethality. Mixing of fentanyl with heroin a growing concern. Meth and cocaine remain concerns as well.
  - a. Marijuana use is increasing, likely a function of the legality of marijuana in surrounding states. Particularly a concern for adolescents, and Captain Hulse doesn't feel like we're doing a good enough job in helping adolescents understand that the risks for them are more dangerous than they realize or believe. Noted that Colorado has seen a 200% increase in marijuana-related deaths. Cited a study that indicated that in simulated driving tests, those participants using marijuana took greater risks and made poorer decisions than participants not using marijuana. Recommended that we watch "Chronic State" on YouTube.

- b. Noted that pill diversion (i.e. selling excess prescription pain killers or other meds on the street) is decreasing as a problem due to better control by physicians and pharmacies, but the consequence has been an increase in heroin usage as pills come off the street.
  - c. Believes education continues to be essential to help minimize the incidence of drug usage and building community resilience in the face of drug usage. Noted that school district 91 has replaced the DARE program with a new program (name not known), but that the BCSO continues to support D-93 in the implementation of the DARE program for their 5<sup>th</sup> Grades. Acknowledged that it's very difficult to measure the usage of drugs that was avoided because of DARE, but Captain Hulse continues to believe it is valuable.
  - d. Believes that one of our best strategies is to note where large urban areas are struggling in this regard, and try to fix those issues before they are a problem here. His philosophical orientation toward addressing community drug use and addiction is to find the middle ground between being a tyrant (throw everyone in jail) versus being an enabler (let them get away without consequence or changing behavior). Looks to west coast cities, Seattle and Portland in particular as places where too much enabling may have been permitted.
2. Gangs – IF, BC and the surrounding communities have been infiltrated by a variety of gangs. BCSO tries not to be terribly vocal about it in an effort to deny the gangs a degree of notoriety by keeping gang affiliation out of the media. However, the BCSO always tries to identify gang affiliation, notes tattoos or other indicators of various affiliations.
- a. Indicates that we principally have “Soreño-based” gangs (i.e. “southern”) as opposed to “Norteño-based (i.e. “northern”). The Soreños identify with the color blue and number 13, while the Norteños identify with the color blue and the number 14. Additionally, there is a branch of the Gangster Disciples, which is unusually primarily of Hispanic affiliation in our area, as well as the Aryan Brotherhood, Skinheads, and biker gang affiliates.
  - b. Gangs tend to use juveniles to run their drugs and other gang-related work because the juvenile criminal system is much less severe.
  - c. Gangs in our area are also promoting prostitution and sex trafficking.
  - d. Goal of BCSO is to incarcerate gang members as long as possible to keep them off the streets as long as possible, as recidivism among gang members is very high.
  - e. Gang violence in area tends to be over territory disputes, or collecting drug debts.
3. Mental Illness – Of particular concern is the chronically mentally ill, recognizing that drug/alcohol-related crimes and mental illness have roughly an 80% overlap.
- a. Jails have become de facto mental health “treatment” centers, though Captain Hulse notes that often what the mentally ill need most is some interaction with humans, while the jails simply isolate them, often causing a degradation of the mental illness. And while there is a clinician at the jail that can assist in diverting a severely mentally ill person to the State Hospital, it is generally inadequate as an intervention.
  - b. Treatment centers, on the other hand, are not generally equipped to deal with violence from a mentally ill person. Jails can impose a drug therapy to calm a violent person down, whereas a treatment facility generally can't.

- c. Noted that Idaho is last in the nation for providing resources to the chronically mentally ill, such as housing, medical and mental treatment needs, transportation, work assistance, etc.
  - d. Indicated would prefer to see a criminal justice system that focuses on the people who are actually of criminal mind and intent, like gang leaders, drug dealers, etc. rather than the two-bit players like juveniles, addicts and the mentally ill.
4. Population Growth – IF among the fastest growing cities in Idaho and the nation. Suggested we watch “Seattle is Dying” to see how the west coast cities have done some things we could learn from. Noted that, at least anecdotally, it appears that a large influx into Idaho Falls area is from CA, OR, WA and CO. Need to be especially mindful of the rising cost of housing, which makes it increasingly difficult for young people, or economically disadvantaged people to find adequate housing.
5. Infrastructure – Believes we’re about 20 years behind in Bonneville County in order to keep us viable. Notes that people will come with the problems people come with. Should consider plans that are longer than the next election cycle.
6. Theft Rings – Noted that they are here and we’re having to deal with them. Internet scams as well.

Chairwoman asked how well networked the various law enforcement agencies are regionally to address matters like theft rings, gangs, etc. Captain Hulse noted that “Fusion Center Networks” are facilitating coordination. Crime analysts are becoming increasingly accessible to local law enforcement and helping coordination by identifying trends and sharing them across networks. Also Joint Terrorist Task Forces (JTTFs).

At this point, Captain Hulse handed out a white paper on the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) Program that helps with recidivism by redirecting addicts/drug users to programs and treatment rather than just incarcerate them. The message of LEAD, as he sees it, is that “We will be compassionate and provide help, BUT we will not enable your addiction or your criminal behavior.” Captain Hulse envisions enacting such a program whereby addicts who commit a crime are charged, but depending on the charge, could be dropped if they complete a treatment protocol. He sees this as different from Drug Court, because the Prosecuting Attorney’s office is in charge of LEAD, and makes the discretionary calls. He noted that the State Office of Drug Policy has a \$4 million grant that is to be used to set up such a program, and hopes to get it going here, needs support of city and other resources to keep it going. He indicated that at the moment, the only resource we have locally is the Center for Hope that can be a place for law enforcement to take someone who needs a safe place to go.

Committee member noted that the INL site has numerous professionals who could assist in grant writing. Also noted that if the city teams up with Ft. Hall that the services can often be provided to both communities, but utilize the grant money that is set aside to assist under-served tribal communities.

Captain Hulse indicated that the white paper claims a 56% reduction in recidivism, and that LEAD represents an important opportunity to make IF/BC a “community of healing.”

The Chairwoman asked if Idaho Falls has a “drunk tank.” Captain Hulse answered “not really.” The Crisis Center, which is co-located with the Center for Hope is a place that intoxicated persons can be taken, or the ER, and functions as a bit of a relief valve to take the pressure off the hospital and jail. They see 2,000-3,000 “episodes” per year.

Chairwoman asked if there has been an uptick in reported sex abuse instances. Captain Hulse noted that he is aware of such an increase, but not informed as to what to attribute that to, i.e. is it better reporting, increased awareness after #metoo, etc. He indicated that child pornography dwarfs the other sex crimes in terms of the magnitude of the problem and the resources available. Likened it to fighting a forest fire with a water bottle. The Sheriff's office has 2(?) detective who work a 5-year maximum stint trying to take down the biggest players in the child pornography rings. Requires mandatory annual psych eval to protect their well-being.

Committee member asked how close IF was to implementing LEAD? Captain Hulse indicated "a few months," looking for support of IFPD. In order to work, needs the support of law enforcement, prosecutors, and the mental health providers.

Committee member asked if it made a difference that we have been designated as a High Intensity Drug Activity (HIDA) region, which Captain Hulse notes is due to our proximity to I-15 and I-86/84 which promote interstate trafficking. Pocatello is the main hub for dealing with the HIDA enforcement.

Committee member asked whether BCSO uses "data-driven patrols." Captain Hulse indicates "yes and no," i.e. law enforcement has access to coordinated information, such as known suspect lists, etc, but they are not using computer statistics in their patrols just yet.

Committee member asked Captain Hulse what he sees as the priorities that might be relevant to our CUSP committee for consideration. Sam's answer was to "destigmatize mental health, and open discussions about mental illness and drug use," because those issues, if addressed well, pay off downstream in all areas of law enforcement and public safety. He indicates that our systems have to be better designed to facilitate separating the "real criminals" from those who are just mentally ill, or servicing their addiction. The criminally minded need to be "locked up", whereas the mentally ill and drug addicts need support to better transition them back into society, or at least out of the legal system.

Chairwoman asked if we had homeless camps? Captain Hulse indicated not really, though they do crop up from time to time. But we're not like Seattle.

Next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Wednesday or Thursday, March 11 or 12, 2020 at 7:00 at Creekside Counseling, 550 W. Sunnyside Ste. 1, Idaho Falls. We anticipate a report from Anthony Tirino regarding the CUSP Chair meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.