

Reentry Task Force Meeting

July 24th, 2017

Present: Shawn Stover, Peggy Lee, Erin Phillips, David Brennan, Larry Fisher, Marianna Carson, Laura O'Neil, Jessie Schmitzer, Jamie Northup, Amanda Ailiff, Diane Pfaff, Scott Weaver, Nick Dioguardi, Ted Linscott, Charles Cohara, Susan Douglas, Becky Filar, Nancy Stotts, Trent Eskey, Melissa Vance, Sarah Macy, Sheila Shafer, Cate Matisi, Jared Butcher, Allene Kilgore, Madison Yee

Shawn Stover begins the meeting by introducing Peggy Lee & giving her the floor for Fair Housing presentation.

Peggy Lee: Senior staff attorney of the Southeastern Ohio Legal Services (SEOLS) in the Athens Region. The presentation was in conjunction with the Appalachian Ohio Fair Housing Initiative of Ohio State Legal Services Association and made possible by an outreach grant from the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). Peggy discussed implicit bias that exists within the housing industry and outlined how various legislation, such as the Fair Housing Amendments Act and the Violence Against Women Act are providing legal security to individuals facing housing discrimination. Peggy asks that anyone who works with clients that may be currently experiencing or are at-risk for housing discrimination contact the SEOLS office for further information and guidance.

Dave Brennan: Owner of Brennan's Plants in The Plains. Dave provided perspective from the standpoint of layperson community members who might be hesitant in offering employment to ex-offenders. He has recently been hired as the new Horticulture Director at the Southeast Correctional Facility in Lancaster and is excited for helping inmates to gain valuable employment skills to prepare for their release. His position may also include a partnership with the Ronald McDonald House with the exchange of assistance in furnishing their growing house for providing fresh, healthy foods to the Ronald McDonald House.

Larry Fisher: Executive Director of Appalachian Center for Economic Networks (ACEnet). ACEnet recently submitted a small business administration grant in pursuit of receiving funds for direct services to the reentry population. Earlier this month, Larry attended a statewide corrections conference with Shawn Stover where they were able to network with other reentry service providers. Larry expressed interest in researching the Second Chance Act grants that he remarked tend to favor urban areas in order to find a way that the grant could possibly be applied to the rural model of Athens. Additionally, Larry and Madison Yee will be working throughout the year to research and optimize the existing network of interactions between reentry service providers and clients in order to create a more efficient community of professional support. In August, Larry and Madison will be at the Noble Correctional Institution to present about entrepreneurial opportunities available from ACEnet to ex-offenders upon release.

Marianna Carson: Supervisor of the Athens Parole Authority (APA). The APA supervises approximately 700 people in Athens with a total of seven officers serving in the area. Many of the parole officers refer their clients to different service providers within the Reentry Task Force and they work closely with the reentry program regarding employment services.

Laura O'Neil: Outreach Services Manager for Athens County Library. Laura was recently appointed this position and is seeking to resurrect the Library's homebound book delivery initiative. This was her first task force meeting and she hopes to learn how to build a connection with the ex-offender population that visit the library after release from SEPTA or the jail.

Jessie Schmitzer: Athens County Mobility Coordinator for the Hocking Athens Perry Community Action (HAPCAP). She is looking to identify gaps within Athens County for transportation needs, including those that the ex-offender population experience.

Jamie Northup: Social Worker at the Athens Public Defenders office. Jamie has helped many people coming into the court system with resources through the Justice Assistance Grant(JAG). The grant ended in July and due to her experience and good work she was hired on full time at the Public Defender's office.

Amanda Ailiff: Southeastern Ohio Regional Jail (SEORJ) Liaison for Hopewell Health Centers in the Athens, Hocking, and Vinton counties. Amanda has been busy linking people in jail with needed treatment and resource to try and prevent future relapse and jail time. The majority of the people that she helps are working through mental health issues and in need of much support.

Diane Pfaff: Community Services Manager for the Athens-Hocking-Vinton 317 Board. Diane invited Task Force members to apply for capital projects to develop new recovery housing options. The funding can be used to cover up to 75% for the purchase, renovation, or new development- only for "bricks and mortar" costs, not for operations or staffing. The proposals are due to the AHV 317 Board by 5:00PM Monday, August 28th. Please contact Diane with any questions or discussions of potential projects.(see attachment)

Cate Matisi: Local psychiatrist representing Women for Recovery. Cate announced that Women for Recovery has secured the residence for their new sober living house. The house, which will accommodate up to eight people and, is situated on six acres of land with the hopes of creating a garden for the residents to grow their own harvest. In addition to currently accepting financial and in-kind donations, the Women for Recovery are hosting a fundraiser on Friday, October 13th at the Dairy Barn to continue gathering support for the new house. More details on the fundraiser to come.

Jared Butcher: Community member interested in problem solving to fill gaps in the system regarding helping reentry clients. Jared is active with the Kiwanis Club and many other volunteer activities to help communities to become stronger and help those in need.

Allene Kilgore: Community member interested in learning more about the Athens reentry population and potential involvement with the United Methodist Church (UMC) located uptown. She is very community oriented and wants to learn more ways to help people in poverty and reentry.

Ted Linscott: Executive Director for United Appeal for Athens County & Athens County 211. Ted encouraged members of the Task Force to look up their organization on the Athens County 211 database and to provide updated contact/agency information if needed. 211 has been very active with the Reentry Task Force and assisted with providing information listed in the Athens County Telelog that is available on their website and the Reentry Task Force website.

Nick Dioguardi: Behavioral health Specialist at Integrated Services. Nick has been working with participants in the Community transitional Housing Program that includes the reentry population in addition to collaborating with Athens' veteran services for helping veterans receive needed services.

Scott Weaver: Interim Director for Southeastern Probation Treatment Alternative (SEPTA) Correctional Facility. Scott announced that the facility has recently increased security including upgrades to the fencing and back recreational area .He reminded the Task Force that they are always welcoming new organizations and programs for referrals. SEPTA have been very good with scheduling their residents to meet with Reentry oriented agencies prior to release.

Erin Phillips: Former AmeriCorps VISTA with ACEnet & OhioMeansJobs Athens County. Erin thanked the Task Force for her year of service in supporting her projects and growth. She is looking forward to beginning law school at the University of Cincinnati and hopes to get involved in the Ohio Innocence Project. Erin has created some amazing outreach projects/ideas through the Reentry Task Force and we all hope that she can continue to be a part of the Task Force.

Sarah Macy: Prevention Specialist at Health Recovery Services. HRS has been very active with referrals for treatment and they have been doing a wonderful job helping people through their programming to stay on the right path. Sarah attended the meeting to be able to learn more about reentry, support the Task Force, and gather information.

Melissa D. Vance: Drug and Alcohol Counselor for TASC. Melissa provides counseling and case management free of charge and can provide medical card assistance for the reentry population. TASC has been very active with the Veteran's Court and working with the Reentry population. They provide good intensive case management and support to people who struggle with addiction.

Charles Cohara: Staff Attorney for Southeastern Ohio Legal Services - Athens Office. Charles has been with SEOLS since 2014 and specializes with consumer protection work and was formerly a public defender. In correlation to the Fair Housing presentation, Charles shared that his line of work leads him to working with victims of domestic violence and also helps with housing legal services. Charles has provided guidance to Reentry participants regarding sealing of records and various legal issues. He also attends Reentry events in the prisons to provide inmates with information about services.

Susan Douglas: Recently hired as the Community Services Director at Athens Co Job and Family Services. Susan has over 16 years of experience working in the Child Support area of Athens Co. Job and Family Services. She has much experience with the difficulties that people with a felony face regarding driver's license suspensions and difficulty finding employment. Susan's new position involves overseeing the Reentry Program at the OhioMeansJob Center- Athens County AKA-The Work Station.

Nancy Stotts: Employment Counselor at OhioMeansJobs Athens County. Nancy passed out flyers for the Athens Area Stand Down that will be taking place on October 6th. She informed that Task Force of the event's need for in-kind donations, organizations hosting booths, and/or providing services. Nancy additionally announced that the OhioMeansJobs Athens County would be hosting a reverse job fair in which job seekers will be setting up a table with their employment information available and have employers approach them with job interest. If interested in being invited to the event as an employer, please contact Nancy at 740-677-4240.

Becky Filar: Director of Community Justice Programming for the Athens County Prosecutor. On June 21st, Becky and the Prosecutor's Office hosted a graduation for individuals who had completed the Vivitrol program with 33 total graduates. The event exceeded the expectations of the staff and was standing room only, made possible with partnership with the Ohio University College of Health Sciences & Professions that provided a room for the graduation free of charge. Becky also organized a community treatment informational event on July 11th with several other service providers at the OMJ/Work Station, Library and JFS Rt. 13 office. Attendance was less than expected but Becky is eager to restructure the events for implementation in the future and welcomes ideas on how to get information to people who could benefit from their programming. The Athens County Prosecutor's office also made a significant donation to The Women's Recovery House earlier this month and will provide much needed ongoing support to help them succeed.

Trent Eskey: Athens County Empowerment (ACE) Officer of the Athens County Prosecutor's Office. Trent works in conjunction with Becky and the reentry population at the Athens County Municipal Court. He is also an active member of the Veteran's Court.

Shawn thanked everyone for attending and reminded the Task Force to keep an eye out for the next newsletter and future emails regarding Reentry. It is also recommended to check out the Athens Reentry Task Force website for previous newsletters, events and minutes.

The next meeting will be on **September 25th at 9:30am** at the Athens County Job & Family Services main office located at - 13183 St Rt 13 Millfield, Ohio 45761. **There will NOT be a meeting in August.**