

**MINUTES of the
Maricopa County
Commission of Justice System Intervention for the Seriously Mentally Ill**

**Wednesday, August 31, 2005
Old Courthouse – 125 W. Washington
6th Floor Central Conference Room**

Commission Members in Attendance: Supervisor Don Stapley, Chair; Supervisor Andrew Kunasek; Secretary of State Jan Brewer; Bill Amato; Judge Louraine Arkfeld; Chris Bradley; Shelley Curran; Eric Edwards; Dr. Michael Franczak; Lindy Funkhouser; Chief Deputy David Hendershott; Steve Lessard; Jeremy Mussman; Judge Karen O'Connor; Mary Robson; Luis Valdez

Other Persons in Attendance: Rory Hays – Maricopa County Lobbyist; Thelda Williams – Maricopa County Sheriff's Office; Alicia M. Brown – Triple R Behavioral Health; Judi Buff; Gretchen Thomas, Sheriff Ralph Ogden – Yuma County Sheriff's Office; Paula Collins – Maricopa County Superior Court; Sue Gerard – Arizona Department of Health Services; Cheryl Werner – NAMI Arizona; Cheryl Koch-Martinez – Arizona Center for Disability Law; Sherri Walton – MHA/HRC; Penny Stinson – Maricopa County Adult Probation, Pretrial Services; Deanne Poulos – Maricopa County Board of Supervisors Press Secretary; Amy Rex - County Manager's Office/Staff to Commission

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Don Stapley called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. and welcomed Amy Davis. Ms. Davis received an Honorable Mention in the Morrison Institute's Young Steward of Public Policy essay contest, for her article entitled "Rethinking mental-health services."
2. **Approval of minutes from June 30, 2005 meeting:** As there were no changes or additions noted by the Commission, the minutes were approved unanimously.
3. **Discussion of "In Our Own Voice: Living with Mental Illness":** Mary Robson introduced the moderator for the "In Our Own Voice" discussion as her husband Dick Robson. Mr. Robson offered a brief description of the program and its purpose, to educate people about mental illness through the use of storytellers. He introduced the storytellers as Patty and Ron. Patty outlined the presentation, explaining that a video would be shown to begin each area of discussion, then she and Ron would offer examples from their own lives.

Ron introduced himself, saying he was born with a learning disability and behavioral problems. He came to Arizona when he was 11 and was in juvenile hall a year later. He hitchhiked around the country, abusing drugs and alcohol, stealing to support his habits. He spent time at the Arizona State Hospital where he was diagnosed with a mental illness. However, he has not been in jail or the hospital for over 22 years.

The first segment of the video was entitled "Dark Days." Each person named their diagnosis and the ways it has affected them. Patty then spoke, saying she was diagnosed with bi-polar disorder three years ago. Although she was genetically predisposed, she missed signposts indicating something was wrong. After being arrested for trespassing at her place of employment, her Dark Days continued for two years until medication and prayer helped her. Ron described his Dark Days as not having freedom and being depressed.

Dick asked Patty to describe an episode when she was in a restaurant, talking to someone who was not there. Patty explained that she knew this person and clearly saw them. When this happened, she had been awake for a day and a half. A member of the audience asked if she knew this was a manifestation; she answered no. A question and answer period followed, during which Patty said that although she was observed in jail, she was left alone which she appreciated. She was in jail for eight days and was judged a danger to herself. She denied counseling. Patty indicated that she was force-medicated in jail once. She commented that, prior to being incarcerated, her family was visiting from out of town. Although her sister and neighbor noticed odd behavior, she said they could have listened more. Patty denied ever becoming violent. She indicated that it was comforting that the security guard did walk throughs but did not stare at her. She said that jail was an unwelcome interval and would have appreciated being somewhere where they spoke her language.

Ron indicated that he is diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. As a result, he violated his parole condition of seeing a psychiatrist because he thought the psychiatrist was trying to kill him. He indicated that years ago, in the Arizona State Hospital, the doctors did not help him; they simply overmedicated him.

The video was shown to introduce the second segment of "Acceptance." People talked about their friends' and families' reactions. Patty then explained that she realized she had a problem when she was in the hospital. Ron indicated his diagnosis was not hard to accept because of his previous difficulties with learning disabilities. Ms. Robson asked what professionals can do to encourage those with mental illness to take medication. Patty answered that they need to have compassion.

The next segment of the video was "Treatment" during which people discussed their medications and therapy. Patty spoke about her treatment team, made up of a psychiatrist who regulates her medication; a therapist who is a life consultant; and a job coach who helps her maintain employment. Ron indicated his treatment is good now; however, when he was first in the hospital, he was mistreated with medication.

Chief Hendershott asked what in the support or treatment system ensures that Patty and Ron stay on their medications. Ron answered that he takes his medication because it makes him feel better. Patty indicated that her psychiatrist follows up with her on a regular basis. Dick mentioned it is often hard to take medications because they are a reminder of the illness. Patty described her Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), part of which is devoted to setting up a plan in the event of crisis. It also includes a daily maintenance plan, such as taking a shower, brushing teeth and taking medications, even if she does not feel like doing those things. Penny Stinson asked who advocated for Patty and Ron before they advocated for themselves; Patty indicated her treatment team, Ron his mother and Alcoholics Anonymous. Patty further explained her treatment team, saying her therapist has been consistent. However, her case manager has changed three or four times, as has her job coach. When her doctor changed, her medications would also change. Ms. Stinson asked about their experience with law enforcement on the streets. Ron indicated he deserved being arrested, but mentioned being in jail for several months without seeing a judge or public defender.

The next sections of the video dealt with "Coping" and "Success." People talked about their sense of humor, children, family, and having a routine. Patty said her coping involves following her daily maintenance plan, volunteering at the library, and attending small groups through her church. Her success is that she has been employed for over two and a half years. Her hope is to graduate from school. Ron indicated that his coping is getting out and staying busy. His dreams include getting well, finding a good job working with the SMI and alcoholics, finding a wife, and traveling.

4. **Additional SMI Issues for Discussion:** Supervisor Stapley took this item out of order, as he had to leave the meeting early. He mentioned the August 8 Newsweek article on methamphetamine. A copy of the article was provided to all Commission members. The National Association of Counties (NACo), realizing the meth epidemic is a major issue with tremendous impacts on county spending, has made it a priority for this year. Supervisor Stapley also recognized Susan Gerard in the audience.
5. **Action Plan:** Supervisor Stapley asked the Vice Chair, Supervisor Kunasek, to chair the remainder of the meeting. Supervisor Kunasek asked Rory Hays to provide an overview of the Action Plan she has developed.

Ms. Hays explained that, since the beginning of the year, the Commission has educated itself on many issues surrounding individuals with SMI. Now an action plan needs to be developed so priorities are established and everyone has clear tasks to accomplish. She mentioned that she and Ms. Rex have applied for a NACo grant to help further the Commission's efforts, including establishing a central collection point for data.

Ms. Hays reviewed a document laying out potential intervention points in the criminal justice system. Each intervention point has several things in common, including a need to explore budget, access to information, and exactly how SMI is defined. The first intervention point is through initial contact with law enforcement, often

through Mobile Crisis Teams. A discussion ensued about adding crisis teams through law enforcement agencies or better funding the existing ValueOptions crisis teams. Chief Hendershott indicated the Sheriff's Office is very interested in the mobile crisis teams as modeled in Los Angeles. Ms. Stinson commented that the concept of a clinician and law enforcement officer team helps guide the contact so it does not result in increased behavior problems; it also helps increase safety for all involved. Mr. Edwards said that local law enforcement does have access to ValueOptions but information is required to help with decision making.

As an initial start, the following people were assigned to workgroups. Leaders are to include others as necessary. Ms. Hays will send out guidelines for what each group is to explore.

Law Enforcement: Leader – Chief Hendershott; Judge Michael Jones, Dr. Franczak, Ms. Curran, Mr. Bob Sorce from the Attorney General's Office, Mr. Lessard, Mr. Edwards

Pre-Booking Triage: Leader – Mr. Funkhouser; Chief Hendershott, Court representative to be assigned by Judge Jones, Mr. Amato, Mr. Mussman, Ms Curran, Dr. Franczak

Pretrial Services: Leader – Ms. Penny Stinson; Diana Clarke from Court Administration, Lt. Henry Dean from Sheriff's Office or his designee

Mental Health Court: Leader – Judge O'Connor; Mr. Sorce, Ms. Curran, Judge Arkfeld, Mr. Mussman, County Attorney representative, Commissioner Michael Hintze

SMI Probation Teams: Leader – Steve Lessard; Ms. Robson, Ms. Curran, Ms. Clarke

Incarceration and Discharge: Leader – Sheriff's Office; Thelda Williams, Chief Hendershott, Mr. Funkhouser, Ms. Curran

Ms. Hays indicated that by the December Commission meeting, an action plan should be adopted that will prioritize actions for the coming year.

6. **Future Meeting Schedule:** Supervisor Kunasek announced the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, October 26 at 1:30 p.m.
7. **Call to Public – Commission Member Comments:** A member of the public indicated she is glad this Commission has been formed. She has a family member with a mental illness and said it is important to train police officers and judges. She commented that often a person must break the law to get help, but the law takes precedence; therefore, that person must serve time before he or she is offered help. She also said that the public needs to be educated on how to obtain help. That information is not readily available.

Sheriff Ogden, from Yuma County, commented that they are experiencing the same problems and he attended to try to learn new solutions.

Chief Hendershott indicated that Alpha II has been officially funded by the Office of Management and Budget.

A member of the public asked that the Commission, as it breaks into workgroups, remember what today's speakers said about the importance of respect, understanding, and compassion. Those aspects are often missing from law enforcement because the mindset is different. In addition, there needs to more focus on advocacy.

8. **Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Presented to the Commission by Staff:

Amy A. Rex, Justice System Coordinator

Approved by the Commission:

Supervisor Don Stapley, Commission Chair