

Project Longevity – Executive Committee Meeting

Friday, November 22, 2019

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Co-Chair, Under Secretary Marc Pelka, *Office of Policy and Management*; Co-Chair, Assistant U.S. Attorney Peter Markle, *United States Attorney's Office*; Chief Tony Reyes, *City of New Haven*; Chief Armando Perez, *City of Bridgeport*

Others Present:

Brent Peterkin, *Project Longevity Statewide*; David Kennedy, *John Jay College of Criminal Justice*; Laurie Grieco, *John Jay College of Criminal Justice*; John Durham, *United States Attorney's Office*; Michael Gustafson, *United States Attorney's Office*; Sherry Haller, *Justice Education Center*; Laura Whitacre, *Justice Education Center*; Ron Schack, *The Charter Oak Group*; Greg Mills, *Project Longevity Hartford*; Charlie Sherwood, *South Central Chiefs of Police*; Karl Jacobson, *City of New Haven*; Stacy Spell, *Project Longevity New Haven*; Harold Dimbo, *Project Longevity Bridgeport*; Brian Foley, *Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection*; Eleanor Michael, *Office of Policy and Management*; Ivan Kuzyk, *Office of Policy and Management*; Kendall Bobula, *Office of Policy and Management*; Nichole Howe, *Office of Policy and Management*; Steve Moniz, *Office of Policy and Management*

I. Opening Remarks

- Co-Chair Marc Pelka thanked US Attorney John Durham and David Kennedy for their efforts on Gun Violence Intervention (GVI) and travels to Hartford for the meeting.
- Co-Chair Peter Markle, gave thanks to everyone gathered for participating in regular meetings.

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Sherry Heller to approve the minutes from September 13th, 2019. It was seconded by Brent Peterkin. Minutes were later amended without objection.

III. David Kennedy, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Mr. Kennedy indicated that John Jay likes to work with people who like to work. Connecticut was one of the first to apply the Group Violence Initiative (GVI) at the state level through Project Longevity. GVI remains the most effective approach to address violent crime. He indicated that it is not a cure for violence, but a violence prevention effort.

He talked about several recent report analyzing the effectiveness of the Project Longevity model. For example, Gifford's Law Center issued a report featuring Project Longevity. There was also a recent report issued about Oakland, California, where they tried to do Project Longevity three times and failed, until they tried to do it the right way. After five years, violence, arrests and the use of police force is down by 50%, 70% of homicides have been solved. Formal evaluations of the Project Longevity model are all positive, and people

finally starting to believe this. There was an evaluation out of Chicago that demonstrates that the message delivered in the call-in is heard. There are 2 published evaluations out of Peoria, Illinois and Detroit, Michigan and a third one out of Las Vegas, Nevada, indicating that sitting in call-ins result in a 50% sustained reduction of violence by the people in these call-ins. Also, those associated with those in the call-ins show significant reductions.

His message to Project Longevity sites is that if you keep doing the work, it works. Stick with the process and don't be perturbed or deterred by the inevitable moments when bad things happen.

IV. Discussion

The participants agreed that the Project Longevity model must be adhered to. There was general discussion about the markers and metrics we need to track to ensure fidelity to the GVI model, but it seems that currently, not all sites are adhering to the model. If communities are interested in receiving funds, they must adhere to the model.

V. Budget Update

Eleanor Michael, Office of Policy and Management, stated that each site has submitted approved revised 12-month budgets. Only JEC has submitted quarterly reports so far, but that is because of a revised timeline for their submission. She indicated that there would be more in-depth information about expenditures to date at the next Project Longevity Executive Committee meeting.

Ms. Michael introduced a timeline for next year's budget development process to ensure that all budgets are submitted and approved in advance of July 1, 2020. She indicated that sites should proceed under the assumption that awards for next year will be funded at the current level. If this changes during the 2020 legislative session, she indicated she will keep the sites informed. She explained that there will be no backdating of grants next year – that this was done in FY19-20 because of confusion caused by the potential 4th site and because OPM is committed to the program, but by making the grants retroactive to July 1st, OPM has opened itself up to a potential audit finding, and we would like to avoid doing this going forward.

VI. Discussion

There was general discussion about the potential for a Waterbury Project Longevity site. It was asked whether the Waterbury funds could be divided among the three active sites because Waterbury was not up and running yet. It was determined that this could not occur because of the legislative intent that funds be allocated to the City of Waterbury.

Executive Committee and meeting participants further discussed Waterbury's similarities and differences compared to the existing three Project Longevity sites.

VII. Police Chiefs Updates

Chief Armando Perez, Bridgeport – Chief Perez indicated that Project Longevity is back up and running – they are back to doing meetings and will be having a call-in on December 18th. The next Executive Committee Meeting will be in Bridgeport on February 28, 2020.

Chief Tony Reyes, New Haven – Chief Reyes offered a clarification to the September 13th meeting minutes, which indicated his disappointment that Waterbury had been added as a site when the need was to perfect the work in the existing three cities. Also, for the Waterbury site to receive same amount of funding as the existing three cities suggests that further budget analysis is needed. Based on Chief Reyes' input, the September 13th minutes were subsequently amended to reflect his clarification.

Chief Reyes described his efforts to ensure that Project Longevity site leadership is communicating. He has a meeting next week with Brian Foley from DESPP and Chief Spagnola in Waterbury. He is happy to continue to help to ensure site fidelity to the GVI model.

Chief Reyes indicated that New Haven saw an increase in violence this year. He wants to know GVI's effect on preventing future violence. He is confident with the work they are doing and that Project Longevity works. Other programs should work in tandem with Project Longevity. He would like to see more engagement and wants to create an alliance of leadership across the state.

VIII. Statewide Coordinator Update – Brent Peterkin

Have conducted 7 interviews for the Hartford Project Manager. The two that scored the highest are recommended for final interviews with OPM, Project Longevity personnel and Chief Thody. Mr. Peterkin wants to do the interviews next week. He wants the Project Manager confirmed as a hire before the Hartford Call-In.

Apricot software is being put into place and will improve data reporting. Four forms have been developed and reporting features will satisfy Ron Schack's needs.

Yale did an updated evaluation in New Haven. He wants to do one in Hartford and Bridgeport. Bridgeport is in the process of hiring an Administrative Assistant, so Project Manager can ramp up his activities in the field. There have been difficulties in the hiring process due to the number of applicants that applied, and that the position was not posted with the City of Bridgeport. He will ask Chief Perez to request a waiver from the City Council of certain City hiring requirements.

IX. Project Managers Update

Brent Peterkin, Hartford - Hartford has a scheduled Call-In for December 3rd. There have been 37 attempted custom notifications, which is about a 30% success rate. The goal is 70%. They often have a bad address, or no one is at home. There have been 110 non-fatal shootings and 17 fatal shootings. Brent and Greg Mills are part of two teams that go out in the community to serve these custom notifications. There was a group audit last October in

the North End district. He believes the audit could be more substantive. There will be a group audit December 16th in the South End district.

Discussion

There was general discussion indicating that further work is needed for Bridgeport and Hartford Project Longevity sites to meet the GVI model.

Harold Dimbo, Bridgeport – Mr. Dimbo strongly defended the work the Bridgeport Project Longevity site is doing to serve the community. He indicated that Project Longevity in Bridgeport worked until several key personnel in the Bridgeport Police Department retired. He shared that Bridgeport received recognition from Senator Blumenthal, Congressman Himes and Mayor Ganim. He shared about the work they are doing in Bridgeport to provide food to the community, including distributed donated turkeys for Thanksgiving. There was discussion that although this is valuable work, this is not a primary function of Project Longevity, and that the police department needs to be engaged with the community for there to be fidelity to the model.

Mr. Dimbo stated that Bridgeport has a juvenile problem. He said they started a youth component of Project Longevity called “Mothers Take Charge.” He talked about Aquil Crooks, who is one of the Bridgeport success stories. He was selling drugs and shooting guns, and then ultimately came to work for Project Longevity. Unfortunately, he is now leaving to take another job.

Stacy Spell, New Haven – He started five years ago and some things have not changed. New Haven had Call-Ins during the first quarter and the third quarter. They have one planned for the fourth quarter. Folks in New Haven have been indoctrinated. We have a deep bench of uniform ranking officers, plainclothes detectives and young hard charging cops doing power point presentations. The buy-in is there. They are showing the Henry Louis Gates film *Reconstruction* to help address the issue of race. They are also doing a showing for law enforcement officers only.

Mr. Spell indicated he is still owed some of his salary. He stated he worked 207 hours and was paid for 160. He claims to be energized, but he needs to be paid.

Discussion

Mr. Pelka pointed out that timelines for budget development for the three sites were established and disseminated for a July 1st program start date, but those timelines were not met. That was that reason that the grants started late. He pointed out that OPM recognized the hardship faced by employees, and therefore asked Secretary McCaw to sign off on backdating the grants for backpay to be granted. He stated that his staff have been working on revised budgets, and that they are all finalized now. He said that if there are still issues that need to be resolved, we are available to discuss them. He suggested that the sites might want to consider other sources of funding in addition to the state appropriation for their programs.

X. Research and Data Analytics – Ron Schack

The data is flowing from all the police departments. Mr. Schack created a draft quarterly report. It needs to be updated and shared. Hartford and New Haven have agreed to do a social network and Shot Spotter analysis. There have been preliminary conversations with Bridgeport. Mr. Schack said it would be great if participants data from last year's report could be given to Ivan Kuzyk from OPM for him to match that data with court records.

XI. Closing Remarks

Mr. Pelka praised Mr. Durham's recommendation that Project Longevity sites establish markers on outputs and outcomes be tracked.

Mr. Peterkin indicated he e-mailed the GVI rubric to the sites.

Mr. Pelka would like these rubrics brought to the Executive Committee for review and tracking at future meetings. Actual markers speak for themselves in demonstrating impact. Sites shouldn't feel obligated to do Project Longevity if the model isn't optimally helping the cities reduce group and gun violence crime. He would even be receptive to opening up Project Longevity as a competitive grant to ensure that the model makes sense to the needs participating sites.

Mr. Markle stated that this meeting shows the need for markers and we will be able to see our accomplishments as well as our failures.

Mr. Schack said that the best fidelity to the model is peer review of the problem. He suggested having someone from New Haven reviewing what is done in other cities.

Mr. Durham feels we are moving in the right direction.