

Lebanon County Criminal Justice Advisory Board

Minutes of the Meeting of April 7, 2025

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Place: Second Floor Conference Room, MH/ID/EI, 220 East Lehman St., Lebanon, PA, 17046

Present

Holly Leahy, MH/ID/EI Administrator and CJAB Chair; Honorable John C. Tylwalk, President Judge; Stephanie Axarlis, Court Administrator; Jamie Wolgemuth, County Administrator; Audrey Fortna, Director of Probation Services; Jeffrie Marley, Sheriff; Jonathan Hess, Chief County Detective, Police Chiefs Representative; James Donmoyer, Director, Drug and Alcohol Commission and CJAB Vice-Chair; Tina Litz, LCCF Warden; Daniel Lyons, Director, Housing Authority; Glenda Folsom, Offender Reentry Coordinator; Briana Reigel, County Coroner's Office; Stephanie Hamersky, Domestic Relations; Joseph Duke, Lebanon Branch #26AA, N.A.A.C.P.; and, John P. Shott, CJAB Planner.

Absent

Pier Hess Graf, District Attorney; Robert J. Phillips, County Commissioner; Megan Tidwell, Chief Public Defender; Erin Moyer, Director, Children and Youth Services; Carla Cyr, Veterans Justice Outreach; LeAnne Burchik, Executive Director, Domestic Violence Intervention; and Kimberly Mackey, PCCD Regional Representative.

Voting proxies entered for the record: Stephanie Hamersky, Case Manager, for Michael Anderson, Director of Domestic Relations; Briana Reigel, Deputy Coroner, for Dr. Jeffrey Yocum, County Coroner.

CJAB Chair Holly Leahy called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Presence of a quorum noted. Self-introductions by members.

Minutes of Meeting of February 10, 2025-- February's minutes should note that Stephanie Axarlis, Court Administrator, was present at the meeting. Minutes approved, with that change, on a motion by Detective Hess, seconded by Warden Litz.

Welcome to New CJAB Member--The Chair welcomed the Board's new core member: Mr. Daniel Lyons, Director of the County Housing Authority.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

D.U.I. Court--At present, 26 offenders are participating in the program, with two offenders about to be accepted into the program. The court team is currently reviewing three applications. Waiting for official referrals from other counties.

Prison Reduction—The current Average Daily Population (ADP) at LCCF is 238, with an average length of stay of 19.32 days. At present, LCCF has 17 vacancies for full-time correctional officers. Only 11-15 inmates are involved in work release, which is low. The County is accepting applications for a work-release coordinator. LCCF's treatment team has implemented a life skills class focused on inmates who are preparing to leave incarceration. The lower ADP is welcome news and a main goal of intermediate punishment. The downside is that fewer inmates are available for work detail at the courthouse and other county properties. The County has put out bids for landscaping in response to this situation.

Mental Health—Team M.I.S.A. continues to meet on a regular basis. No diversions since February's update. Since February 2024, MH/ID/EI has dealt with 277 incarcerated individuals who either have an open or have had an open case with the office. Of these 65 have been incarcerated more than once during the reporting period

As of 3-28-25, the County reports three suicides in 2025. Statistical breakdown: 3 males, no females; average age, 74.3, the youngest being 66 and the oldest being 89; one by firearm, two by asphyxiation; one veteran; three county residents; two had a known mental health history, no victim had a known substance use history, no victim known to MH/ID/EI; three Caucasian.

At present, three women reside in the County-owned cottage (full capacity). Three residents have graduated from the cottage. Since their graduation, one woman also graduated from Drug Court in January and continues to be successful. One individual is on target to graduate from DUI Court. The third individual has not had any incidents with the police and continues to participate in mental health services.

As a follow-up to the Behavioral Health Summit in Hershey last October, those who attended from the county will be meeting on April 11 at 1:30 p.m. to continue discussions based on the topics addressed at the summit. Focus will be on three priorities: early identification of offenders with mental health needs, establishment of a mental treatment court in the county, and housing options for offenders with mental health challenges.

Veterans' Court--At present, 12 offenders are active participants in the program, with two slated for acceptance. The review team is discussing four applications, three of which involve offenders from other counties.

Drug Court—23 offenders are currently participating in the program with two pending. Some offenders have already graduated from the program. The review team is considering five applications.

CJAB DEPARTMENTS: REPORTS AND ISSUES OF INTEREST

Heroin Task Force Report—The County has confirmed three overdose deaths so far this year. Statistical breakdown: three males; two white, one Hispanic. No deaths attributed to opiates-heroin. The County reported 21 overdose fatalities in 2024 and 31 in 2023. The lower number of deaths this year could be attributed to several factors, including Narcan giveaways and the methadone clinic in Lebanon.

Upcoming events: 4/25—Narcan distribution at Lebanon Family Health Services, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; 4-26—Drug Take-Back Day, in front of City Hall, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.; 6-12—Recovery BBQ at Recovery Center (hosted by case management, not the Task Force); 8/28—Overdose Vigil, Courthouse steps, 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Offender Reentry—The Reentry Coalition is active and has met four times since Ms. Folsom became the coordinator. The Reentry Simulation event planned for May has been canceled. The Coalition needs to be more established before engaging in such an event, which involves 40-50 stakeholders. PCCD wants any of the Coalition’s planning meetings to be in-person instead of virtual sessions. This might not be practical. A major topic of discussion for the Coalition is recidivism: how to define it and what statistics are available from the Court or Probation Services.

ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS—

Nothing to report

NEW BUSINESS

Intermediate Punishment (IP) Grant Application for FY 2025-2026—No official word from PCCD about IP grant funding for the new fiscal year. In previous years, PCCD had released the grant announcement and funding guidelines in March. April’s CJAB meeting is when the Board would then authorize the submission of the IP grant application. Although that is not the case this year, it might behoove the Board to take as many proactive steps as possible at this meeting since the Board is not slated to meet again until June 23. A strong possibility exists that PCCD will not release a new funding announcement until after the General Assembly passes, and the Governor signs into law, the new State Budget. On a motion by President Judge Tylwalk, seconded by Ms. Fortna, the members authorized Mr. Shott to prepare an application for IP funding for the new fiscal year when funding is made available.

IP Treatment Plan for 2025-2026—PCCD expects counties to update their IP Treatment Plans as part of the application for continued IP funding. Mr. Shott provided the members with an advance draft of a plan for 2025-2026. It is not a finished document. Members are encouraged to offer any suggestions. Mr. Shott requested that the Board approve the plan with the understanding that he will continue to update and revise the document before submitting it to PCCD. Members approved this request on a motion by President Judge Tylwalk, seconded by Ms. Axarlis.

Support Letter from CJAB Officers—The IP grant application usually requires the CJAB officers to sign a letter of support on behalf of the Board. On a motion by Mr. Donmoyer, seconded by Ms. Fortna, the members authorized Mr. Shott to prepare a letter to be signed by the officers and submitted to PCCD as part of the IP grant application.

ADJOURNMENT—With no further business to conduct, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

NEXT CJAB MEETING—Monday, June 23, 2025, 9:00 a.m., MH/ID/EI.

