CIC Quarterly Open Meeting - Tuesday January 26, 2021
Zoom Call
Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Chairman Charles Thornton, Katharine Huffman, Nkechi Taifa

Staff Members Present: Executive Director Donald Isaac, Nicole Ukaegbu, Sheila Walker, Patricia Marks, Kareem McCraney, Chrisiant Bracken, Nailah Seabron

Guests: Director Lamont Carey, MORCA

Executive Overview:

A written report was provided to the board prior to the meeting. Today, each staff member can expand on their projects and updates.

Staff Projects:

Chrisiant: Working primarily on the survey and secondarily a letter to the BOP about administering the Covid vaccine and who is being prioritized. Sent out 1750 surveys last year on conditions within the BOP during Covid. Working on 2 reports; qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative (Preliminary findings) has been published. The qualitative report was just sent to the board today. We are printing a follow up survey for around half of the previous amount sent last year. Surveys will still be sent to each BOP facility- just a smaller group this time. Lastly, working on follow up communication with BOP about information from Ft. Dix.

Pat: Finishing up the VOA report from the site visit from November 19th. Focusing on the process of Compassionate Release and how it is working through the courts. There have been more cases and there is a serious need for more attorneys Finishing up with the Hazelton report from a year ago with Nailah, since it was never produced. The upcoming Hazelton report will not include the most recent news from Hazelton that we have been receiving.

Nailah: Annual report has been posted on CIC site and social media channels. Working with Pat on the Hazelton report, should be finished within the next few days. Ramping up social media activity and posting on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram regularly. Checking in with Corrlinks and sending replies and entering into Ragic. The Hazelton report was delayed due to unforeseen staff changes and working on numerous projects.

Kareem: Point person for the DOC. Recently visited the DOC with Pat for an onsite walk through. The visit was limited in scope, but the main reason was to go into the jail physically and walk through 2 housing units within the CTF and the CDF. The goal was to find out what accommodations were in place for the residents since the DOC has been on lockdown since the beginning of the medical lockdown. After meeting with the DOC we were told there were tablets being used within the facility in order for residents to communicate and play games etc. After the walk through, it was confirmed that tablets are

being used. There are still no social visits. They have video legal visits at this time. The main issue most of the residents are having is that there is no outdoor recreation. Working on the report now and sent to Nicole for edits. In terms of Youth Act, there has not been any movement. Joined a committee along with JPI to oversee anything happening with the Youth Act, there is a strategic plan, but there has been nothing done and we are at a stand still because there is no movement on any of the strategic planning.

Mr. Thornton: Concerned about the DOC residents continuing to be on lockdown because they are under stress and practically in solitary confinement. Even though our posture is to monitor, we still need to understand why the DOC is still on lockdown, which is going on a year now.

Director Isaac: It is time to get together with the DOC and we would like to invite any of our board members. We are supposed to be having a quarterly meeting with the DOC and the BOP. We have an MOU signed with the DOC and we should be able to get some movement happening at the DOC. We will touch base and make that happen in the month of February. Kareem also sent out a summary of BOP complaints, which was sent to the board for review. We currently have 2 analyst positions available, but we have 7 on staff now. Looking to onboard the 2 new positions this fiscal year. Both positions will be available by the end of January. We are primarily focused on the data position. Will send job announcements to the board when the positions are live. It is projected that the budget will go through some changes for the next fiscal year. Planning to ask the council for money for internal advancement during the upcoming performance hearing (Feb 11th- virtually).

Ms. Walker has had some medical issues but has been a trooper and still doing great at managing the CIC's affairs. Maurice Cotton is now a full-time employee of the CIC after coming to the CIC from Project Empowerment. Maurice has shown great teamwork and adaptability, especially during the pandemic and we are happy to finally have Maurice on board to continue his career path.

Nicole: Working with DCHR on onboarding Maurice and posting new positions (2 program analyst positions). Working on staying current on performance measures. Making sure that we acquire all the necessary PPE and for staff and for any visits etc. Providing all editorial feedback for all outgoing publications. Currently working with Kareem on the DOC walk through report. Once the Hazelton report is complete, will start those edits. We are primarily teleworking; however staff goes into the office periodically to pick up items and work on projects.

BOP MOU:

We have been in an inactive posture since our last board meeting. The BOP has been reaching out to us to find out what our status is for completion. We are not comfortable with the issues within Section 9, which touches on the fact that we cannot perform additional inspections until we have completed any reports from previous inspections, among other items. We have communicated with the Director of the BOP (Michael Cobb) and he is responsive about the concerns and that we are not prepared to proceed with the language at this time. We are also prepared to see how the Biden administration plans to handle issues on criminal justice and how that may affect the BOP. A separate conversation (follow up) will be held next week with the CIC and board members to discuss the MOU at length and come up with a working plan. 2/5/21 (Tuesday) is an agreeable date @3pm. Nailah will send a calendar invite with the

zoom link for that day. The board has expressed wanting to be involved in a more “real time way” so that we are all working together for the common goal that works best for us to inspect facilities. Any staff and board members can be on the call to discuss strategy and get on the same page.