

**Community Advisory Board Meeting**  
**Wednesday, October 19th, 2022 at 4:00 pm**  
**VIA ZOOM**

**Board members present (via zoom): Harmony Bourgeois ; Jan Appel; Mareesa Miles; Ben Joseph; Paul Talley; Kendra Wolfe**

**Board members absent: Greg Young; Paula Kane**

**Guests present: Lee King (joined 4:18 pm)**

Meeting began at 4:04

1. Welcome– Check in

What is one thing you love about October?

Board members took turns listing their favorite parts of October. A few highlights were colorful leaves, colder weather, and fall clothes.

2. RJC Updates from Harmony

-Circle work with Brenda Gagne

Harmony Bourgeois discussed the origins of circle work within Abenaki culture, and Brenda Gange's work educating people on Abenaki history.

-Interview with the Messenger

Harmony Bourgeois sent the link to board members after the meeting.

-Interview with WPTZ news channel 5

Harmony said the experience was very positive, and that a few volunteers were found through exposure and getting the word out.

-Staff Presentation- Lee King Restorative Reintegration Specialist

Harmony Bourgeois let the board know that Karen would be stepping down from the board due to scheduling conflicts. She told the CAB about Nakuma, someone Jan Appel has suggested to replace Karen. Harmony Bourgeois told the board Nakuma would be attending next month's meeting.

3. CAB Update:

- Candidate Forum

Harmony Bourgeois updated the board on the outcome of the forum, and thanked Ben Joseph and Kris Lukens for their help. The estimated number of attendees was 50-80 people. Harmony suggested that during the next forum, questions could be staggered to space out subjects and opinions better.

4. COSA Program with Lee King

Lee King joined the meeting at 4:18 and board members introduced themselves. Lee King introduced COSA, which is a program that helps people during the transitional period following incarceration. The program stays in touch with clients for about a year to provide assistance and resources. She explained that the most important part to her is getting to know the Core Member, or client, and building an individual plan that fits their adjustment needs. The focus of a COSA is often community building and accountability. Lee King said that she

frequently meets with Core Members and Parole Officers to assess a Core Member's individual needs and risk areas. She said that each COSA is different depending on the people involved. King explained that COSAS are usually set up through referral and typical first meetings can take between one or two hours, and during these meetings she identifies their risk areas and family support systems to help direct Core Members towards what will best fit their needs. COSAS are fully voluntary, and Core Members are able to control whether or not they attend meetings or use the services provided.

Lee King explained that they are grant funded to start 3-6 COSAS during a year. They currently have 3 running, and Lee King said she was looking to start 4 more by the end of the fiscal year. Lee King explained that she has about 12 fully trained and available volunteers at the moment and that she is looking for 6 more volunteers to be more able to match Core Members to volunteers they will work well with. Lee King explained that all volunteers must be at least 18 years old and go through an application process, including a background check. Lee King explained the requirements for being a Core Member. She said that the program is focused on people with higher-level crimes or who are likely to reoffend. They also need at least one year under supervision, since the program is for people currently under supervision, and the program usually focuses on community members. Core members also are required to take some form of accountability in order to be on a COSA.

Jan Appel asked for Lee King's perspective on the effectiveness of the program, and what could help make it more effective. King shared that being on a COSA reduced recidivism by 33%, and agreed to share a published study on the COSA program with Harmony Bourgeois.

Harmony Bourgeois mentioned a desire to get direct statements from Core Members, which is proving difficult following anonymity rules. Lee King said she could see about helping find statements.

Lee King explained that, in transitional housing, there are 10 available beds. There are two 4-bedroom apartments and two 1-bedroom apartments. People can stay for up to a year, rent-free, and they are required to save half of what they make in order to save for their own apartment.

Lee King left the meeting at 4:58 pm.

## 5. CAB Discussion

- Organizational Effectiveness- a responsibility of the board, what does that mean?

Jan Appel introduced the item of Organizational Effectiveness and asked board members to provide their opinions on what this should mean. The board discussed their various ideas.

A few key points were:

- Connection between RJC and community needs
- Financial distribution
- Looking at concrete data to measure impact

Jan Appel asked Paul Talley if it would be beneficial to invite members of law enforcement to discuss restorative justice. Paul Talley said that there were some differences in perspective present that could cause conflict. Jan Appel said she would still be interested in meeting for the sake of sharing opinions and hearing out members of the community, and

potentially teaching more about what restorative justice is about. Paul Talley agreed that this could be effective if officers were on board.

6. November Agenda

Next Meeting Nov 16th

Jan Appel adjourned the meeting at 5:35 pm.