

CITY OF SHORELINE
SHORELINE CITY COUNCIL
SUMMARY MINUTES OF WORKSHOP DINNER MEETING

Monday, June 25, 2007
6:00 p.m.

Shoreline Conference Center
Highlander Room

PRESENT: Mayor Ransom, Deputy Mayor Fimia, and Councilmembers Gustafson, Hansen, McGlashan, Ryu, and Way

ABSENT: none

STAFF: Bob Olander, City Manager, Julie Modrzejewski, Assistant City Manager, Tony Burt, Police Chief, Mary Reidy, Teen Recreation Coordinator, Rob Beem, Community Services Manager

GUESTS: Matthew David, Area Manager, Partnership for Youth Justice Diversion Program, King County Superior Court and Paul Allen, Volunteer and Chairperson of the Shoreline Community Accountability Board

Mayor Ransom called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm.

Matthew David provided an overview of the Partnership for Youth Justice Diversion Program. He stated that the state formalized the program in 1978 and it requires that all first time juvenile offenders be referred to the diversion program. The program is most successful with low-level offenders and when youth are offered this alternative, Mr. David stated that most of them take it.

Rather than going through the juvenile court system, the youth and their parents, meet with the Community Accountability Board. The board is made up of community volunteers - a background check, in person/phone interviews, and 10 hours of training are conducted for the volunteers. There are about eight volunteers in Shoreline; two to three volunteers staff each board meeting, which occur a few times per month. They meet at the Shoreline Courthouse.

The board meets with the youth and family together and then hold individual interviews with each of them. They discuss the offense, their involvement in school, their family and community involvement. The board tries to get a picture of what is going on in the youth's life. The youth is required to sign a diversion agreement, which is a legal contract. The agreement promises that their confidential criminal history can be destroyed if they are successful.

June 25, 2007

The program has a 93% success rate and studies have shown that youth are less likely to offend and those that do offend do so less frequently. Additionally, a program evaluation was done several years ago and it involved two groups of youth who were followed for two years. Those youth that went through the juvenile court system showed that 48.7% remained crime free compared to those that went through the diversion program - 70.2% remained crime free. Likewise, with the severity of the offense - those going through the juvenile court system were more likely to commit felonies or higher level misdemeanors than those who went through the diversion program.

The board can require up to 40 hours of community service; 10 hours of counseling; and 20 hours of class instruction. In addition, the agreement could include restitution/fines of up to \$900. The program provides offense-specific resources such as anger management, anti-shop-lifting, etc. Mr. David went on to say that the cost of the program is approximately \$172 per youth - this fee was set in 1998. They charge a sliding scale and the lowest fee is \$40. They have never turned a youth away for their inability to pay. The term of the agreement is for six months. There is a monitor who makes sure they follow through on the agreement.

Mr. Allen stated that youth want to be treated with respect; they want to know the rules and the boundaries. He continued by saying that often the youth will tell them the truth, which can be a different story from what they have told their parents. He said that they choose diversion because they want to be accountable. He said that most youth are crying for help - they come from a broken home; they have sick parents; or parents don't know what to do. The board is able to make a good assessment of the situation. Mr. Allen added that this program gives the family closure.

Mr. David stated that as part of the board's assessment, if there is a victim, they want to involve them. They are not at the meeting; however, they provide an impact statement. In addition, for the assessment, the board reviews a copy of the police report.

Mr. David showed a short video that summarizes the program.

In summary, Mr. David stated that the youth do not have to admit to guilt, but they must be held accountable. The program aims to make the youth responsible for their choices.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Julie Modrzejewski, Assistant City Manager