WELCOME...

Embracing the Transitioning Workforce Into the Civilian Work Force
About Your Speaker...

- Eric Pethtel, CPM, PWLF
- Director of Public Works – City of Fishers
- Fishers DPW - Only APWA Accredited agency / Indiana
- Married to wife Lisa
- Six grown children and two hounds
Looking back…
How did a transitional workforce come into existence?

- A by-product of the City of Fishers Mental Health Initiative
  - A simple conversation between our Mayor and a Police officer on an overnight ride along
  - The officer’s biggest concern were...ID’s
  - Mayor soon learned that our Public Safety had little to no training to identify individuals who posed an immediate health / safety threat to themselves or those around them
  - A partnership with local schools, medical community and faith based community was established
    - Goals were set:
      - Improve Education and Training
      - Enhance Local Resources and Access to Services
Weekly intelligence emails to Mayor Fadness look like this:
One week in September 2015. All calls listed were 18 years of age or younger

- Juvenile male made comments regarding wanting to end his life
- Non responsive juvenile female (12yrs) grabbed a bottle of prescription pills and swallowed an unknown amount
- 12 year old female ingested six tablets of Benadryl along with cutting her forearms
- Suicidal subject sent concerning death message to his girlfriend
- Male subject intentionally overdosed on medication in attempt to harm himself
- Female subject suffers from alcoholism and is a prescription drug addict
- Individual reported being robbed by someone in his vehicle. Subject suffers from many medical issues and hallucinations
How can Public Works participate?
Fishers RISE Program

RE ENTRY INITIATIVE THROUGH STRUCTURED EMPLOYMENT

MISSION STATEMENT:
TO RECRUIT, ASSIST AND EQUIP THE TRANSITIONING WORKFORCE OF HAMILTON COUNTY, INDIANA IN THEIR PURSUIT TO REESTABLISH THEMSELVES AS PRODUCTIVE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY
Who is the Department of Community Corrections?
- They are not the Hamilton County Jail
- They are a stand alone department within the Hamilton County government
- They are an option for the legal system to use as offenders transition back into society
  - In lieu of jail or prison they are a tool in the county's tool box to use when an offender is given a second chance
- They administer the electronic monitoring program and they have an in-house residential component

Vision
- “As leaders in the rehabilitation of program participants we will change behaviors using innovative approaches that will enhance personal growth”

Mission
- “We provide cost-effective, treatment-focused programs incorporating evidenced-based practices that generate positive change in participants”
Is a Transitioning Workforce Program Necessary?

- Things to Consider
  - Unemployment Rate = Record Low Responses to Job Postings
    - In 2009 the rate reached 10.7%
    - In 2015 it was down to 4.9%
    - In 2017 it was 3.3%
    - Like many of you we are not getting applicants for posted positions
  - Costs of Incarceration
    - In December 2014 Indiana had 25,269 adult offenders in 23 facilities
    - Each institution receives $54.28 per diem per day for every person
    - Taxpayers fund $1,371,601 per day to house our prison and jail population
  - Policy Decisions were made....
    - Ignoring an opportunity to aid in the rehabilitation of a fellow citizen is not an option
What is Recidivism?

“The tendency to relapse into a previous condition or mode of behavior; especially relapse into criminal behavior”

- A positive by-product of employing the transitioning work force is the potential of reducing recidivism
- We believed one way to address the low response rate to job postings was to tap into a largely overlooked piece of our population
Recidivism

- Things we know about recidivism:
  - As the level of education increases, the likelihood of a past offender gaining employment increases
  - As employment increases, recidivism decreases
#1 Predictor of Recidivism is EMPLOYMENT or the lack of....... 

Notice the relationship between education, employment and recidivism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education at Release</th>
<th>Return Rate: Employment Post Release</th>
<th>Return Rate: No Employment Post Release</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED/HS Diploma</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below GED</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This program did not occur overnight and it did not happen without a lot of thought:

- Met with the Director of Administration for Community Corrections staff on October 4th, 2015
- Met with Judge Steve Nation on October 12th, 2015
- Met with the Executive Director of Community Corrections on November 6th, 2015
- Toured the Community Corrections Facility on December 8th, 2015
- With each conversation we gained confidence in the program
- Goal is to have participants identified and ready to begin work in the first quarter of 2016
Job Fair

- Conducted on site at Hamilton County Community Corrections with Fishers DPW and HR representatives
- We interview anyone interested in the program regardless of their offense
  - Why? We believe it helps give the participants practice in a formal interview and builds self-esteem
- Identified candidates as we would in any interview
  - Considerations
    - 1. Severity / Nature of their Offense
    - 2. Past work experience
    - 3. Transportation
- Community Corrections personnel will help guide our selections
  - They cannot share HIPPA and mental health testing results
  - They review our tentative “short list”
  - They provide an opinion of our choices based against the protected HIPPA information they have
- We thought it would be desirable to have 6-10 candidates but soon realized that was too many
Identified Roles for Program Participants

- Identify specific tasks / jobs in any given division that could benefit from the workforce

- Determine specific properties the workforce can perform duties at:
  - Parks / Schools – Needed to identify what offenses, if any, that would allow for participants to work in parks and schools
    - Will be determined on a case by case basis and will require prior approval from the school district
  - Facilities Maintenance – we needed Public safety buy in to allow participants in their facilities if a participant had a skilled trade and could assist with work orders
    - Must contact Chief Thompson (PD) or Chief Orusa (FD) prior to commencement of work
  - Water Quality – Labor pool or heavy equipment operations
  - Streets – Most likely will have most interaction with program participants
Training

- **RISE employees**
  - Program employees shall be included in all safety and training meetings
  - Establishment of strict expectations/ground rules
    - Zero tolerance on tardiness, attitude, quality of work etc.
  - Soft skills training *
    - The plan was to formulate an exhaustive life skills training regimen that program participants would be required to attend. Full time employees would be encouraged to attend as well
      - Basic financial management, customer service training, servant leadership, CDL training etc.

- **DPW employees**
  - We sought out internal “Pro Social Role Models” of the program. Ones who were willing to affect change and be a positive influence
  - Soft skills classes would be available for all DPW staff as subject matter warrants
The City of Fishers has a field service coordinator assigned to us and keeps in contact with DPW management. Coordinators keep close track of the following:

- Attendance/tardiness
- Engagement
- Attentiveness
- Quality of Work
- Ability to follow directions
- Eagerness to perform duties
- Attitude/temperament
- Adaptation to a work culture
Year End Program Evaluation

- Was it worth the effort?
  - Input from participants
  - Input from DPW employees

- After completing the 12 month program what did the participants receive that fills our mission statement for the program?
  - Participants learned the responsibilities of maintaining steady employment
  - Participants will be eligible for a letter of reference from Mayor Fadness
  - Participants would have had the opportunity to obtain a CDL license
  - Participants had a steady income
  - Participants are eligible for future employment as available
For consideration:

- If you feel your agency would entertain a transitional workforce program
  - Reach out to your local legal system
    - Especially the court system
    - Sit with your local judges to discuss your vision
  - Your staff will be crucial to the success of your program.
    - Include them in the conversation as early as possible
    - Keep them informed as you develop your program
  - Identify pro-social role models within your staff that will partner with the chosen participants.
    - Ones who will provide clear instructions, provide words of encouragement
    - Ones who will be an example of what a good work ethic looks like
In order to put your own program in a position to be successful, you need to have a firm foundation of which to build upon.

- Consider a small first recruitment class.

Be sure to meet with your local Police Department as early as possible.

- Discuss your mission / vision of the program.
- Plan on sharing with them the names of the candidates after initial interviews.
- They may be hesitant, but reducing recidivism is a goal for them too. Make this your selling point.

Most importantly, your organization must understand that with any transitional workforce program:

- There is a level of acceptable risk your agency must be comfortable with.
“I applaud Mayor Fadness and his Public Works staff in Fishers for creating the RISE Program and for coordinating with the Hamilton County Courts and the Hamilton County Community Corrections to implement this innovative new approach to rehabilitation.

This program provides not only needed services to our communities but helps individuals acquire life and business skills, and develop career paths so that they may stay out of jail and give back to the community.”

Judge Steven Nation
Hamilton County Superior Court #1
Wrap Up...

Questions?
May 6th – 9th, 2018
Indiana Convention Center

Winter Maintenance Supervisor Certification Course • Accreditation Self-Assessment Workshop
Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Responder Course

Stop by the Indiana Chapter APWA booth in the LTAP room to learn how your agency can receive up to a 69% discount to the exhibition floor

Register before April 7th and receive $100 discount

We are looking for volunteers