

JRAC meeting minutes

Location:	Wells Circuit Court Jury Room, Wells County Courthouse
Date:	May 19, 2026
Time:	11:30 AM
Attendees:	Greg Werich, Probation, Chair Judge Andrew Antrim, Wells Superior Court, Vice Chair Judge Kenton Kiracofe, Wells Circuit Court, Secretary Scott Holliday, Wells County Sheriff Karen Thompson, Wells County Jail Madison Hake, Director of Wells County Community Corrections Kurt Jack, Ossian Police Department Kyle Randall, Bluffton City Police Jeffrey Steinberg, Wells County Prosecutor's office Not Present: Vicki Andrews, Wells County Council (Absent) Michael Vanover, Wells County Commissioner (Absent) Jinny Broderick, Park Center (Excused)

Agenda Items

Minutes

- Minutes of February 17, 2026 were presented via email on May 1, 2026. No corrections were noted. Judge Kiracofe made a motion to approve. Scott Holiday seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Quarterly Electronic Monitoring Report

- Madison Hake presented the first quarter Electronic Monitoring Report, which was submitted to State JRAC on May 1, 2026. A summarized copy of the report was distributed to committee members prior to the meeting. Kyle Randall made a motion to approve. Karen Thompson seconded the motion. The report was approved unanimously.

Justice Counts Project

- Greg Werich reported that the IUPUI Justice Counts project, led by Professor Eric Grommon, has been completed for the Spring semester. A report on findings is anticipated but had not yet been received, as Professor Grommon was out of state and unable to present at this meeting. The matter was tabled pending receipt of the report.
- Werich also reported that on approximately May 8, 2026, he received an email from a representative of the Council of State Governments Justice Center regarding a federal grant opportunity related to justice data collection. The application deadline for the initial indication of interest is May 20, 2026, with a full application due approximately June 3, 2026. After discussion, the committee consensus was that Wells County is not currently positioned to pursue the grant, given the short timeline and the complexity of the application process. The matter may be revisited in the future. Werich will retain information on the grant for reference.

Community Supervision Committee

- Previously Tabled. No report.

Juvenile Services

- Judge Kiracofe noted that a save-the-date announcement had been received from the Juvenile Detention Initiatives (JDI) regarding an inaugural Youth Justice Conference scheduled for October 2026. Details are forthcoming. Further discussion will follow with relevant staff.

Mental Health Committee

- Tabled. No formal report presented.
- Sheriff Holliday discussed the ongoing challenges presented by inmates with serious mental health issues at the Wells County Jail. He noted that the jail currently has several individuals with significant mental health needs and reported on discussions at a recent Indiana Sheriffs' Association conference regarding the state mental hospital system. Key issues raised included: the significant wait time for beds at the state hospital—which can extend 60 or more days after a commitment petition is filed—the high daily cost of state hospital placement (approximately \$1,000 per day), and the growing number of referrals statewide (approaching 800 in the most recent year). Werich noted that legislative alternatives are being considered, including diversion pathways for low-level misdemeanor and Level 6 felony defendants, as well as regional treatment facility models to reduce jail wait time.
- The committee discussed the re-entry coordinator role and noted that Valorie Runyon has been effective in facilitating placement of individuals into treatment programs, including coordinating transportation and confirming program acceptance prior to release. Judge Kiracofe expressed appreciation for the coordination Runyon provides at the time of sentencing.

Sequential Intercept Map Project Committee

- Previously Tabled.

Old Business

- Sex Offender Out-of-County Placement: Judge Kiracofe raised the issue of challenges posed by sex offenders who are not Wells County residents being placed on probation. He noted that plea agreements calling for suspended sentences with probation are unworkable if out of county defendants do not have housing. Currently, these defendant's are unable to be transfer to another county. Discussion followed regarding the importance of resolving housing arrangements prior to sentencing. Werich noted that neighboring counties (Adams, Huntington) have generally been cooperative with transfer requests, though some challenges remain with Adams County regarding the 1,000-foot residency restriction tool. Out-of-state placements remain particularly difficult and require advance approval. Judge Kiracofe emphasized that housing must be confirmed prior to sentencing in these cases, and that the prosecutor's office become aware of the issue going forward.

New Business

- **Public Defender Vacancy:** Judge Kiracofe advised that the Public Defender position on the JRAC committee remains vacant. Werich reported that attorney Andrew Carnall, who had been nominated to the Community Corrections Advisory Board but was not approved by the County Commissioners, subsequently indicated he was not interested in serving on JRAC either. Discussion was had regarding whether the JRAC bylaws require the position to be held by a public defender specifically, or whether an attorney with criminal defense experience would qualify. It was noted that the current contract public defenders are all from out of county and present only on court days. The committee discussed the importance of having representation from that role; however, no local attorneys, except for Carnall, practice criminal law. Werich will follow up on the eligibility criteria.
- **2025 Local JRAC Annual Report Survey:** Werich presented the 2025 Local JRAC Annual Report Survey (distributed May 1, 2026) for committee review and discussion. He reviewed the questions with the committee, noting that answers to several items had already been submitted and others were presented for committee input. Key discussion items included: (1) the county's two highest priority areas for change—identified as data collection/gap analysis through the IUPUI justice data initiative and improving consistency in identifying candidates for evidence-based programming; (2) the potential impact of tax reform on the criminal justice budget, which the committee agreed is uncertain at this time and may be better addressed at the August meeting when budget figures are more available; (3) the absence of a certified pretrial services program, a problem-solving court, or formal local performance measures; (4) programs deemed most impactful, including the re-entry coordination facilitated by Valorie Runyon, the Community Transition Program (CTP), and the MRT program (noting current low enrollment); and (5) service gaps, including mental health treatment, housing, and transportation. The committee also discussed the value of requesting technical assistance from the state to assist with data mapping and system analysis, and agreed to invite that outreach. Werich will finalize and submit the survey by the end of the week.
- **Related to the Annual Survey was a discussion regarding:**
 - **CTP Transfers to Allen County:** Allen County has had a longstanding policy of declining Community Transition Program transfer placements from other counties. The committee noted that this policy prevents individuals with Wells County convictions who will be returning to Allen County from benefiting from the CTP program. Hake indicated she may reach out to Allen County to inquire whether the policy has changed.
 - **MAT (Medication-Assisted Treatment):** Sheriff Holliday advised that a meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 21, 2026, with the jail's medical contractor to discuss the current status of medication-assisted treatment options within the jail. No decision has been made on implementation; the meeting is informational.

No other new business was discussed. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Next meeting is Tuesday, August 18, 2026, at 11:30 AM in the Wells Circuit Court Jury Room.