



Hennepin County

An Equal Opportunity Employer

Jeff Spartz, County Administrator

July 14, 1999

To Whom It May Concern:

In May of 1998, the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners approved a resolution to hire the services of The Institute for Law and Policy Planning. The Executive Director of ILPP, Dr. Alan Kalmanoff, presented a workplan to survey the "flows" and conduct "population analysis" across the major functional entities of our criminal justice system: Police, Sheriff/Jail, Pre-Trial Services, Prosecution, Defense, Court Services, Corrections & Probation. Additionally, his plan examined the cross-jurisdictional areas of multi-disciplinary coordination efforts and the respective information systems supporting the criminal justice processes in the County.


Dr. Kalmanoff had the daunting task of interviewing high-level elected or appointed officials in the justice system and making assessments of their operations. He spent a good deal of time listening to judges, police chiefs, politicians and many criminal justice practitioners in order to sort out the issues plaguing our crowded and over-burdened jail and courts. Ultimately, after interviewing and gleaning data from each participant, Dr. Kalmanoff and his staff produced a draft report. He worked carefully, listening and responding to participants, to work through issues of contention and misunderstanding in the draft.

In November, Dr. Kalmanoff delivered the final report of his study. The report was widely distributed and discussed in many forums. Despite an array of recommendations in this report, some embraced and others dismissed by the local justice leaders, all readers found useful and meaningful analysis and suggestions therein.

Perhaps to Dr. Kalmanoff's greatest credit, despite producing sharp criticism and direction for change in Hennepin County, the criminal justice leaders agreed in 1999 to re-hire him to lead their cooperative effort in producing Strategic Improvement Plan for Criminal Justice. Officials, appointed and elected, respect and trust his judgement, his experience and, moreover, his sense of fairness when dealing with members individually, and respectively in the larger view.

We were pleased with the services provided, and moreover the County Board of Commissioners was pleased with the progress made and their respective interactions with Dr. Kalmanoff. He is now leading a Strategic Planning effort to identify and implement broad system changes, which we believe will deliver greater effectiveness in criminal justice at a lower cost.

Sincerely,


Sandra L. Vargas
County Administrator

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