

**Report from the**

# **Ontario Halfway House Association Membership Visioning and Planning Day**

**February 24-25, 2009**

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**Ontario Halfway House Association**

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# OHHA Membership Visioning and Planning Day

Four Points Sheraton – Kingston, ON

**Tuesday February 24, 2009**

**Location:** Four Points Sheraton Hotel  
**British American Room**

## Welcome to Participants

Mr. Larry Cook – Executive Director

Larry Cook welcomed the group and thanked everyone for their participation. He indicated that this was a time for our Membership to come together in order to discuss the issues that are of mutual concern.

Other Notables:

### Travel Assistance:

- OHHA has received financial support from CSC in order to pay for the February 25, 2009 hotel overnight

### Reading of the Mission:

The OHHA is a member organization dedicated to promoting information, education and leadership for its membership and the community in order to contribute to a more effective justice system.

### Challenge:

In developing this agenda together it became clear that there was a lot to discuss. Apologies were expressed to those presenters that will be kept to the clock to ensure we tackle all discussions.

## Opening Comments – Outline for Vision and Planning Day

Mr. Art Rasmusson – OHHA President

Art Rasmusson welcomed the group and made the following comments:

- This is a very important and worthwhile process
- This is an opportunity to establish the road map for future OHHA direction
- CSPC has been very active over the past couple of years and appears to be moving issues/agendas forward
- Thanks were expressed to the Executive Committee
- Hopes that OHHA can follow up on the recommendations from the last Vision and Planning Day
- Suggestion that OHHA continues to play a vital role in other Regional Associations by hosting the third national meeting of regional associations in order to share our experiences
- OHHA has received an improved contract to provide professional services to CSC
- OHHA continues to conduct the Offender Identification project and has met with over

300 offenders coming up on Statutory Release requiring assistance obtaining their Canadian Birth Certificate and/or Social Insurance Number

- Goal of creating understandings of what we do
- What's working?
- OHHA continues to work with integrity amongst the key stakeholders
- Many accomplishments have been completed:
  - Increased Connectivity
  - OHHA Staff Training Conference – 7<sup>th</sup> Annual event is scheduled for September 2009
  - Engaged in the Parole Officer Training
  - Community Strategic Planning Committee – Involved and engaged – Present realistic situations later in the week

Regional Halfway House Associations of Canada met recently and had many discussions including:

- Are CRF's Sustainable?
- What things are being done – what else could be done
- PRHHA has a similar staffing Model as OHHA – Looking for staff for all regions
- Need to keep it 'local'

**Outcome Goal: To have a greater understanding**

### **Group Round Table Discussions/Check In**

Mr. Larry Cook – OHHA Executive Director

Larry Cook went around the table and posed the following three questions:

**What is the value of meetings of this nature?**

**Responses:**

- Networking Opportunity
- Good to see other agencies
- Enjoy the work and hearing from others
- Looking at others ideas
- Great opportunity
- Brainstorming is necessary
- Looking for the broadening of awareness
- Explore trends
- Sustainability – What will CRF's look like in 10 years?
- Need for this larger discussion
- Women's services discussions
- Funding
- Dealing with the myths
- Different contractual practices – lack of consistency
- Funding methods

- Need for more discussions and clarification
- Supporting why we do this work
- Collectively Approaching the issues is the mechanism that should be used

**What are your current agency challenges?**

- Single staffing issues – difficult to meet the clients needs
- Taking a more high risk population
- Accessing Program Integrity funding
- Accessing the Personal Support funding
- Mental Health Worker Access
- Managing the staffing needs under the current funding arrangement
- Agencies running a deficit for many years
- Many reports of good relationships with CSC
- Housing Challenges
- Getting to know the people involved is key
- Staff back filling is difficult
- Entering casework records – time would be better spent actually engaging the client; worry of entering the wrong information; difficult for building trust
- Hoping to hear more from those that do interviews at the institution
- Managing the changing client
- Diversity in programs
- Building infrastructure -The buildings are getting older
- Lost a key staff recently
- A CRF is required to meet both agency and CSC standard requirements
- Bed utilization is chronically low in some areas
- Women’s sustainability in an ongoing issue
- Possible expansions locally could have a an impact on utilization
- Need for more CSC staff accountability
- Statutory Release with Residency is changing the atmosphere
- Its becoming a 7-day role – lower number of clients on weekend passes
- Funding needs to accommodate the client – In one CRF 75% of the population are Statutory Release with Residency and Long Term Supervision Orders
- Managing the Core Program availability
- Lack of flexibility available in program delivery
- Lack of Program availability in remote location
- Lack of offender ability to integrate and access community services
- Need for Parole Officer to be on the same page in managing case
- Takes along time to get CSC security clearance
- What happened to Day Parole in the CRF?
- Finding available services for mental health clients
- Waiting list Issues in some areas
- Staff turnover

- Area Director is not clear in every area
- Selection Criteria reviews
- Accessing appropriate training
- Other services in the community do not want to provide services for the client
- Dual diagnosis issues
- No district psychiatrist and the CRF's are being asked to accept the cases that require these services
- Recruiting, retraining and training key mature staff
- Client has changed – Offenders are less motivated
- Release of untreated offenders
- Last minute requests – Client coming tomorrow
- Difficult to get response from CSC when needed
- Struggling with Offender Management System Training
- CSC does not recognize/accept the Community Programming works
- Difficult for offenders to get their programming in a timely matter
- Population Management Issues
- Contracting Process clarification
- Oral commitment turns to 'back-peddling'
- Language and culture issues need to be addressed
- Staff lay off staff have occurred due to the lack of revenue
- Economy is changing
- Integrity staff is not doing what we were hoping – Lack of communication and efficiency
- New ripples on the Electronic Monitoring
- Lack of community consultation
- CSC invoices are not paid in a timely matter

**What is unique about your agency/services?**

- Taking an unknown client – require upfront double staffing
- Judi Burrill offered a tour of Elizabeth Fry Kinston
- Outreach worker for the community work with clients
- Employment Program – Auction House
- Double staffed in the evenings – still need more
- 95% are employed in one CRF
- Good internal bridging
- Shared services
- Meal/feeding Services
- No incident in many years
- May 2008 – Information Session/Community Forums
- Extra shifts being covered
- Employment Program
- Local communities have many services including a CCC

- Developing not traditional relationships in the community
- Employment counsellor
- Temporary employment agency
- Lots of procedures and regulations in place over the past several years
- Day Reporting Centre – Alternatives
- Multiple use beds on site
- Dedicated Mental Health Beds
- Multi Use Facilities
- Reintegration Program – staff to assist offenders being released to the community
- Multi Funded faculties
- Substance Abuse – More long term
- Onsite – Methadone clinic
- Pilot Project – Therapy Training
- Managing the Client needs
- Spent \$100,000 to complete Accreditation of the facility
- Mother - Child Program: Satellite Apartment
- Institutional visits have been very helpful
- Relationships are growing

**Common Themes/Comments:**

- Staffing Challenges
- Need for more/ongoing training
- Funding challenges – Consistency
- Moving forward agenda
- Funding is available for Community Forums
- Invoicing challenges
- Active vs. Reactive Strategies
- Room for development

**Appendix ‘D’ Statement – Statement of Work: A Review for Comments**

Mr. Larry Cook – OHHA Executive Director

Larry Cook reported on the historical overview going back to the last contract year. Concerns were raised regarding the timeline and OHHA met with the CSPC to allow an opportunity to review the document

**Comments:**

- Are we a CCC or a CRF and what does that mean in terms of funding?
- With the current language of Appendix ‘D’ many CRF’s are challenged sign the contracts
- Many fundamental issues
- Could OHHA look for a long-term consultation?
- Concerns from some regions being identified

- Offender Privacy and CRF liability in question
- Group to make a recommendation through CSPC and have OHHA circulate Appendix 'D' to the CRF's allowing the time for a proper review and feedback
- Different views across the region and country
- OHHA drafted a letter in Ontario – March 2008 - Art Rasmusson reviewed the letter with the group with the main concerns:
  - Timeliness to study and comment on changes
  - CSPC recommended that all contracted agencies would be reviewed to address the language and agency uniqueness
  - Supported by CSPC and OHHA
- RHQ is making the changes
- National Issue – Not just Regional
- We understand local communication vital
- Issues of increased responsibility without increased resources
- Other program contracts are moving much quicker than the CRF contracts
- What we need to know is:
- Funding
- Important changes
- 2001 Funding matters – Reviewed the Increased Accountability with increase
- Lots of analysing has occurred
- Not just a Corrections issue
- Larger picture is a most important
- Where is community and client safety being addressed
- Economic Climate Study was completed
- Plan - Need for a meeting with the new Minister – Peter VanLoan
- Local relationships are invaluable
- Feels like a denigration of uniformity
- Incredible fear of something sensational occurring
- Men's services is also seeing the growing challenges
- Higher staffing levels is not all that is needed to manage the changing profile – staff is to meet the needs of the offender transitioning to the community
- Contracting process/management – need for the same accountability for the CSC
- Agency rapport is critical to manage difficult issues
- Hard questions are being asked – these issues should be brought to CSPC

**Next steps:**

1. Confirm with other Regional Association regarding their status
2. Request that CSPC be used for ongoing follow up
3. Language and tone is getting more problematic – More wanted without the resources or partnership
4. Everyone is unique and everyone does good work – cookie cutter process is unacceptable
5. Proactive Approach to resolve
6. Want for this to be addressed and resolved

**Priorities in Message:**

- Under resourced
- Need a Champion of the Cause
- Uniqueness of Operations

**Need to know:**

- What is available – Master list of availability?
- Provision for enhanced services funding – money must come from CRF contract funding

**For OHHA:**

- Collective Approach to take the load stance to manage the exposure – contract compliance and changing profile of offender – It is a mutual exposure
- Package this message in Community Safety
- 100% unity – CSC needs to help us manage the offender
- Funding: In Reach; Necessary Links
- Women's Issues – Changing Needs to Client
- Potential opening of CRF without planned communication – New beds being created without the forecasted utilization being addressed – lack of stakeholder consultation
- Strengthening the CSPC

**Offender Barriers or Bridges to Release**

Mr. Art Rasmusson – OHHA President

Art Rasmusson began the discussion talking about many different and unique process examples include Community Assessment Teams and indicated that getting to know the key people that make decisions was critical.

Increased institutional involvement assisting with offenders gaining acceptance was very important as well.

**Examples of Success:**

- Community Assessment Team Development
  - Presentation – Parole Officers to present in a particular matter
  - Who presents first practices
  - Timely process
  - Agency tours prior to involvement on CAT
- Understanding the key stakeholders realities
- Early awareness of applying offender
  - Educate process
  - Better for CAT
- Building Personal Relationships
- Providing the offender with 'hope'
- Police – Forging a positive working relationship with police on your CAT
- Sharing the Terms of Reference for Community Assessment Team

- Staff took parole training
- Pre-Release Workshops
- Building community bridges – Make an impact
- Case management conducted with the Women
- Good relationship with the agency practices – Parole Officer is fully aware of situation
- Lots of staff and parole officer interaction right on site
- Relationships are key
- Retention at the Community Assessment Team
- Use of Escorted and Unescorted Temporary Absence
- Review the case prior to CAT to include staff input:
  - Requires time to manage
- The view that the case is coming to our community anyway
- CAT should be called Community Admissions Team
- Receiving information of recently sentenced offenders from Parole Office
- Parole Officers attend weekly review meetings – gives a better understanding of CRF management
- Agency presentation at Institutional Visits
- Took community representatives on a tour of the institutions and with National Parole Board
- In reach work is critical for a more accurate picture
- Beds are assigned earlier in some cases to ensure availability

**Challenges:**

- The Parole Officer starts the meeting with, ‘You won’t accept this guy’
- Managing Additional Conditions
- Setting the offender up for failure
- Past issues with Community Assessment Team – Terms of Reference
- Institutional Challenges:
  - Important reports not available
  - Staff turnover
  - Available meeting space
- Offender identification
- Different case management strategy
- Time and resource constraints
- Geographical issues
- Police working with Correctional Services Canada seems to have difficulty
- Multiple Parole Officer’s supervising at the CRF’s
- Late receipt of Community Assessment files
- OMS information is often lacking any updates
- Communication issues
- Concerns were raised regarding accessing Grand Valley Institution
  - Communication

- Meeting spaces
- Need for a collective voice

### **Next Steps:**

- Collective for Institution Engagement – Breaking the Barriers
- Collect data from the agencies:
  - Problem Identification
  - Strategy development – Next Steps
- OHHA will send a survey to Members looking for Institutional Identification Issues
- Look for endorsement from the Warden and Deputy Warden – Executive Order
- Develop a process – Opportunity for us to do something about it
- How can we do better work?
- Presentation of options in institutional class room

## **Canadian Association of Women’s Residential Options**

Ms. Heather Kerr- Stonehenge Therapeutic Community

Heather Kerr reported the exciting news/announcement was circulated recently and the membership is growing. A more official information handout will be circulated in the near future.

The Association conducted its first Board meeting in Montreal, QC earlier this month. The groups initial challenge will be to looking at building the connections and finding away to move agendas forward.

Women’s Training occurred recently at the OHHA Conference and was very valuable experience.

## **CRF Contract Funding Review**

Mr. Art Rasmusson - OHHA President

- The group agreed that anticipated 2.25% increase is lower that the true costs of agencies and suggested that this mechanism have the ability for annual reviews
- The Atlantic Region Halfway House Association reported a CRF funding freeze for the coming year
- OHHA continues to work with the CSPC to move this issue forward – concerns are is this a one-time deal and would prefer an annual review - How does this work with future years within the model?

A review of the Contractual Process occurred:

- Problems scheduling meetings with the Area Director
- Problem with process is the wording is empowering the Area Director to negotiate and it appears that they do not have the ability
- Need to nail down the process and commitment to ensure that the negotiations can be occurring
- Need a process to offer respect

- Opportunity for OHHA and CSC in order to have a transparent review annually, also need to have an ability to negotiate
- Look at fixing the Contractual process to ensure that the document usable
- Agencies need the ability to know what to expect
- Capital Upgrades/Needed:
  - City of Toronto provided some monies
  - Formula should be capturing capital cost improvements
  - Real Estate Concept – Was to be for capital upgrades
- Different practices from agency to agency
- Some monies were received from CSC for accessibility issues as well as OMS security
- Amount we are getting is not enough
- It appears that some Statutory Release with Residency are receiving additional funding
- Different proposals from different CRF's
- Staffing measurements/numbers
- Property Assessment reviews should be completed by an approved company
- Most upgrades are done outside of CSC funding
- Was an attempt to line the salaries with CSC personnel

OHHA to identify a comprehensive list of what is available:

- Integrity funding
- Not in every contract
- In Reach Worker

## Managing High Risk/Need Offenders

Mr. Larry Cook – Executive Director

The discussion began with agreement that High Risk offenders were not only those designated as Statutory Release with Residency, sexual offenders or those serving long time sentences. CRF's are looking at ways to manage the risk and to assist the offender on focusing on ways to make a better life for themselves.

The funding does not meet the needs of servicing these offenders and a need to look at a structure to manage the offender through appropriate staffing.

### Areas for discussion:

- We are finding that CSC is pushing more and more of this type of offender at the CRF
- Fewer weekends passes due to some limited community support
  - Managing risk by relationship building – key
- Different from men to women due to different offences
- Difficult issue when they are just looking for a bed
- Using the in reach to the CCC assisting to cascade from CCC to CRF – someone who has stabilized for 30 days
- Clients ability to self regulate their behavior
- Ability of the staff to assist the offender to regular the behavior – this requires a qualified and well-trained staff

- Funding is a key element – as the bar is raised in accepting offenders – the bar must raise the bar for funding and staffing

**Needs:**

- Dedicated staff for offender needs
- What could we do to balance the communication?
- Earlier intervention/file information in order to review the cases
- Building relationships
- Need to look at ways to motivate the offender's release
- Issue with the offender arriving from the institution to the CRF – Should be a better transportation strategy (this is geographical issue)
- Changing Funding should include the offender basic allowance
- Need to follow the research and have the offender released in a more timely manner

**Other notes:**

- Indication that CSC was going to assist with training – limited numbers; should not just be CSC, agencies should look at other options
- Having agencies do training together in order to get the numbers up and assist with costs
- Lines of communication appear to be one way – need for community and CSC to be more in concert
- Indication that even communication is problematic within CSC
- Limited case planning
- CRF is attempting to go in and meet with offenders as early as possible
- High risk is measured in many different ways
- One agency indicated that they sent an agency staff
- On a weekend and invoiced In Reach
- Addictions issues are significant and profile is changing
- Services need to properly resources in order to do the services required
- Recruiting, retaining the right people and provide a framework to support the changing client to look at community safety
- Basic Allowance has not changing – offender lack money is problematic
- Need to look at funding and continuing develop to relationships
- Recent mental health training in Toronto

## **OHHA Vision and Planning and Preparing OHHA Outcomes for Community Strategic Planning Workshop**

Mr. Art Rasmusson – OHHA President

The report would advise that the Members of OHHA spent the last day discussing issues of mutual concern. The focus was on 7 key elements:

- 1. Opening Comments – Outline for Vision and Planning Day**
- 2. Appendix ‘D’ Statement – Statement of Work: A Review for Comments**
- 3. Offender Barriers or Bridges to Release**
- 4. Canadian Association of Women’s Residential Options**
- 5. CRF Contract Funding Review**
- 6. Managing High Risk/Need Offenders**
- 7. Other Notables**

### **Outline for Vision and Planning Day**

- This is a very important and worthwhile process
- This is an opportunity to establish the road map for future OHHA direction
- CSPC has been very active over the past couple of years and appears to be moving issues/agendas forward
- Thanks were expressed to the Executive Committee
- Hopes that OHHA can follow up on the recommendations from the last Vision and Planning Day
- Suggestion that OHHA continues to play a vital role in other Regional Associations by hosting the third national meeting of regional associations in order to share our experiences
- OHHA has received an improved contract to provide professional services to CSC
- OHHA continues to conduct the Offender Identification Project and has met with over
- Reviewed Challenges and Uniqueness of CRF’s

### **Appendix ‘D’ Statement – Statement of Work: A Review for Comments**

- With the current language of Appendix ‘D’ many CRF’s are challenged sign the contracts
- Many fundamental issues
- Could OHHA look for a long-term consultation?
- Offender Privacy and CRF liability in question
- Group to make a recommendation through CSCP and have OHHA circulate Appendix ‘D’ to the CRF’s allowing the time for a proper review and feedback
- Different views across the region and country
  - Timeliness to study and comment on changes

- CSPC recommended that all contracted agencies would be reviewed to address the language and agency uniqueness
  - Supported by CSPC and OHHA
- Issues of increased responsibility without increased resources
- Incredible fear of something sensational occurring
- Men's services is also seeing the growing challenges
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- Hard questions are being asked – these issues should be brought to CSPC

**Priorities in Message:**

- Under resourced
- Need a Champion of the Cause
- Uniqueness of Operations

**Need to know:**

- Package this message in Community Safety
- 100% unity – CSC needs to help us manage the offender
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- Most upgrades are done outside of CSC funding

- Was an attempt to line the salaries with CSC personnel

OHHHA to identify a comprehensive list of what is available:

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- Not in every contract
- In Reach Worker

Fragmentation of Services

### **Managing High Risk/Need Offenders**

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#### **Areas for discussion:**

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- Fewer weekends passes due to some limited community support
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- Funding is a key element – as the bar is raised in accepting offenders – the bar must raise the bar for funding and staffing

#### **Needs:**

- Dedicated staff for offender needs
- What could we do to balance the communication?
- Earlier intervention/file information in order to review the cases
- Building relationships
- Need to look at ways to motivate the offender's release
- Issue with the offender arriving from the institution to the CRF – Should be a better transportation strategy (this is geographical issue)
- Changing Funding should include the offender basic allowance
- Need to follow the research and have the offender released in a more timely manner

#### **Other notes:**

- Indication that CSC was going to assist with training – limited numbers; should not just be CSC, agencies should look at other options
- Having agencies do training together in order to get the numbers up and assist with costs
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in concert

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- Addictions issues are significant and profile is changing
- Services need to properly resources in order to do the services required
- Recruiting, retaining the right people and provide a framework to support the changing client to look at community safety
- Basic Allowance has not changing – offender lack money is problematic
- Need to look at funding and continuing develop to relationships

**Other Notables:**

- Accessing the Program Integrity Fund – To more access the institutions
- Personal Support Funding available for up too 15 hours per week – Paperwork can be challenging
- Need for full time Mental Health Worker
- Agencies running significant deficits to manage the CRF
- Employment Programs include – WHIMUS and Fork Truck Certification
- Need for increased staffing
- Aging infrastructures
- Invoice payments from CSC are behind
- Sustainability – Requires review
- Increasing services feasibility (Kitchener)
- Changing client profile
- Need for more proactive public education/partnerships
- Managing OMS
- Need for increased specialized training

What is it that CSC is looking for from the Community?

- Where from here...
- How do we achieve this?

**Closing Remarks**

Mr. Art Rasmusson – OHHA President

Art Rasmusson thanked the group for their involvement as we discuss issues of mutual importance. He suggested that forums like this were invaluable as we try and move the agenda forward.

## Participant List:

Bryonie	Baxter	Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa	(613) 237-7427	(613) 237-8312	<a href="mailto:bryonie.baxter@efryottawa.com">bryonie.baxter@efryottawa.com</a>
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## **Appendix A**

### **Contracting Process**

This contracting process sets out timeframes for Area Directors to meet with Executive Directors of contracted agencies within their area of operations, a schedule for CSPC meetings between District Directors and Representatives of Contracted Agencies, and identifies timeframes for the major milestones that are required in order for the contracts to be requested, negotiated and completed before the commencement of the new contract period. Multi-year contracts are encouraged whenever possible.

Area Directors are responsible for identifying service requirements, negotiating contracts, preparing scope of work documents, submitting requests for contracts, providing agency evaluations and maintaining effective working relationships with community agencies and contractors. Normally, Area Directors and Executive Directors will meet on a regular basis as required. At a minimum this will occur on a quarterly basis in order to provide advice and support to CSPC meetings and to ensure the timely completion of signed contractual agreements.

District Directors are responsible for ensuring that the Contracting Process has been followed, timeframes are met, contracted services are appropriate and are in accordance with CSC priorities and policies. Normally, CSPC meetings with Representatives of Contracted Agencies will occur on a quarterly basis in order to discuss community issues, identify and resolve items of mutual concern including contract issues, and plan future activity. Ideally, CSPC meetings will occur during June, September, December and March of each year, with the December meeting set aside for an annual general CSC/Agency Workshop, when financial obligations permit.

Executive Directors are responsible for identifying service requirements and proposing options to meet those requirements, facilitating all aspects of the Contracting Process to ensure good working relationships and timely completion of the process prior to the commencement of the new contract period.

### **Tasks and Timeframes**

#### **June 30**

- Call letter to Area Directors to complete agency contract evaluations, discuss new year service requirements with the agency, complete 286 Request for Contract Forms (Due September 1)
- Call letter to Agencies for Audited Financial Statements (Due September 30)

#### **September 1**

- Request for Contract forms and Agency evaluations received at RHQ Contracting

#### **September 30**

- Audited Financial Statements received by CSC

**December 1**

- Agency receives draft contract for review and Executive Director's signature
- It is anticipated that the majority of contracts will be approved by the agency
- Request for contract amendments negotiated where necessary (Due January 1)

**January 1**

- Contract amendments negotiated and settled
- Approved amendments received at RHQ Contracting

**February 1**

- Signed contracts received at RHQ Contracting from the Agencies

**March 15**

- Signed Contracts received by the Agencies from RHQ Contracting

**Outstanding Issues**

- Proposed that Director of Management Services initiates call letters and monitors the contract process
- Process for requesting Enhanced Services and invoicing to be determined
- Clarify how CPI will be incorporated into the contracting process
- Call letter to be generated for quarterly meetings