A major concern of jails across the country is providing treatment for those who are mentally ill or have what is known as a co-occurring disorder. In Wayne County – home to the state’s largest jail – there were 3,708 admissions into jail-based mental health services between Oct. 1, 2013, and July 31, 2014. Each year, more than 2 million adults with mental illnesses are admitted to jails across the country, many with substance-abuse disorders.

It is an issue that costs Wayne County a great deal in both money and the amount of staff time. Based on recent figures, the cost to house an individual in the Wayne County Jail is $145 per day, which amounts to nearly $53,000 per year. Providing community-based mental health services for low-risk mentally-ill offenders would prove a more efficient use of tax dollars than paying for similar care in the jails.

The key is identifying those in need as they enter the jail and form a care plan. It is also important to measure outcomes so we can learn what works and what doesn’t, though remembering that each case is different. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the mentally ill are treated properly and that they don’t keep cycling through the justice system.

In October, I introduced a resolution in support of the Stepping Up Initiative, and it was unanimously supported by colleagues on the Wayne County Commission, along with Wayne County Executive Warren C. Evans. As an active member of the National Association of Counties (NaCo), I was proud to bring this national initiative to Wayne County. We have a great team assembled to discuss best practices and work with stakeholders to bring about system changes based on data driven strategies.

Together, we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Alisha Bell

Wayne County Commission
Vice-Chair

7th District Update
Alisha Bell

Wayne County
Commission
Vice-Chair

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April 2016

Mental health treatment continues to be major concern

The Wayne County Commission voted unanimously March 3 to recognize March as National Women’s History Month, and all 14 of my peers joined me in sponsoring the resolution. This year’s theme is “Working to Form a More Perfect Union: Honoring Women in Public Service and Government.”

To that end, I’m very proud to say that seven of the 15 Wayne County commissioners are women, and two of us are in leadership positions for the entire Commission. Last year, I was again voted by my peers as vice-chair and Commissioner Jewel Ware was again voted by our peers as vice-chair pro tempore. She chaired the Commission from 2003-08.

We’re also joined by Commissioners Irma Clark-Coleman (chair of Committee on Economic Development), Terry Marecki, Martha G. Scott, Ilona Varga (chair of Committee on Public Safety, Judiciary and Homeland Security) and Diane Webb (chair of Committee on Public Services).
Wayne County Commission
Vice-Chair

When the Boys & Girls Club doors were opened on a beautiful Saturday morning last April, dozens of girls were treated to a colorful display of prom dresses, shoes, purses and jewelry that they normally couldn’t afford.

This year’s distribution promises more smiles for area youngsters.

“Belle of the Ball” 9th Annual Prom Dress Giveaway

Prom Dress distribution will be:
Saturday, April 9, 2016, at the Boys & Girls Club
16500 Tireman
from 10 a.m. to 12 noon
For more information call:
(313)224-0936

Prom dress distribution set for April 9

When the Boys & Girls Club doors were opened on a beautiful Saturday morning last April, dozens of girls were treated to a colorful display of prom dresses, shoes, purses and jewelry that they normally couldn’t afford.

The girls chose among hundreds of dresses of varying styles and sizes, and a long table full of accessories, and it was all free. The items were donated by community members and sponsors, and volunteers ran the event.

This year’s distribution promises more smiles for area youngsters.