

M I N U T E S

MONDAY, December 8, 2008

PALM BEACH COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

McEaddy Conference Room
12th Floor, 301 N. Olive Avenue
West Palm Beach, Florida 33401

Members Present:

Moses Baker
Stephen Barborini
James Barr
Joseph Bernadel
Steven Burdelski
Barbara Cheives
Max Davis
Douglas Duncan
George Elmore
Carey Haughwout
Feirmon Johnson
Randolph K. Johnson, Sr.
Wesley Lauer
Martin Millar
Stephen Stepp
Carmen Veneziano

Art Johnson (Ex officio Exec. Committee)

Members Absent:

Commissioner Burt Aaronson
Rosalyn Baker
Mitch Beers
Sharon Bock
Delsa Bush
Ric Bradshaw
Mike Driscoll
Rolando Garcia
William Kramer
Barry Krischer
Kathleen Kroll
Luis Perez
Gerald Richman
Debra Robinson
Maria Sachs
Richard Staudinger

Harry A. Johnston, II (Ex officio
Exec. Committee)

Guests Attending:

William Bales, Florida State University
Thomas Blomberg, Florida State University
Wendy Cavendish, Florida State University
Commissioner Jeff Koons, PBC Board of County Commissioners
Karen Mann, Florida State University
Michelle Spangenberg, Court Administration
Tony Spaniol, Palm Beach County Youth Affairs
Louis Tomeo, Clerk & Comptroller

Staff Present:

Michael L. Rodriguez, Executive Director
Journey Beard, Crime Prevention Project Specialist
Arlene Burton, Administrative Secretary
Wayne English, Sr. Criminal Justice Analyst
Katherine Hatos, Criminal Justice Analyst
Damir Kukec, Research & Planning Manager
Rosalind Murray, Program Development Specialist

Glenna Nowalk, Clerical Specialist
Brenda Oakes, Youth Violence Prevention Planning Coordinator
Kristie Slinsky, Temporary Staff
Becky Walker, Criminal Justice Programs Manager

- I. Chairman Barr called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. He welcomed members and invited guests to introduce themselves.
- II. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.
- III. The agenda was unanimously approved as amended after motion by Mr. Elmore and second by Mr. Randy Johnson.
- IV. The minutes of the November 17, 2008 business meeting were unanimously approved after motion by Mr. Duncan and second by Mr. Randy Johnson.
- V. Under Chairman's Comments, Chairman Barr:
 - A. Reminded members and guests to use microphone when speaking so that persons can hear clearly.
 - B. Highlighted the changes to the CJC Bylaws as approved on November 17, 2008. Noting that the changes allow him to serve an additional year as chair of the commission. Chair Barr noted that 2009 would be a challenging year with the budget implications but looks forward to working with the CJC and hopes it will be a good year.

Commissioner Koons, Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) congratulated the 2009 CJC chair on being elected. He advised that new commissioner Shelly Vana, who was previously a probation officer, and will serve on the Corrections Task Force which he has served on for a number of years. Commissioner Karen Marcus will serve on the CJC with himself as backup.

Commissioner Koons expressed his dissatisfaction with what the state has done to the criminal justice system noting his involvement with the CJC and his passion for the youth violence prevention project. He stated that the county will host a joint workshop with the city and school board in January, and that he will be inviting the CJC to participate.

Commissioner Koons also thanked the CJC staff, noting that in the last year he chaired the homeless advisory Task Force as well as Criminal Justice Substance Abuse Mental Health Planning Council. He is looking forward to seeing the report on the mental health issue. He is also trying to take a deeper look at the BCC's regular meetings versus their workshop strategies with the view of improving communication with the CJC, and looking at funding and other issues. He said that the financial resources are very limited He remarked that the CJC is one of the most valuable agencies in the county, and we need to look at how we can work better. He thanked the CJC for all the efforts and hard work over the years.

Superintendent Art Johnson noted that in this and next year combined, the school district will be reduced by \$100 million.

Commissioner Koons said that the county is committed to work with the state, and recommend the CJC submits legislative issues early for the BCC's review. He asked that the public safety committee for Florida Association of Counties be also looked at in terms

of the legislative strategies.

He commented that Commissioner Marcus is excited about being a part of the CJC and has her own “Article V” expertise that is really valuable.

VI. Under Executive Director’s Comments, Mr. Rodriguez:

- A. Thanked Ms. Rosalyn Baker for organizing a speaker’s bureau at The Anglers Club. The Florida Department of Corrections presented a power-point discussion on local and state corrections and answered questions in that regard.
- B. Advised that the meeting of Circuit 15 Juvenile Justice Board’s recently launched their website (<http://www.c15jib.com/>). Information such as the Board’s mission, members, committees, newsletters and priorities may be accessed. In addition, there are resource links and contact numbers for parents and other community members.
- C. Congratulated the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office and its partners for securing a \$200,000 grant from the office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency for gang prevention coordination. He also thanked other CJC staff and other community partners who also worked on securing the grant.

VII. Business Consent item(s)

There were no business consent items.

VIII. Old Business

There were no old business items.

IX. New Business

Recommendation from LEPC and the Law Enforcement Workgroup of the Youth Violence Prevention Project (YVPP) for the approval of the purchase of an annual support and maintenance agreement in the amount of \$3,205.00 for the tag reader previously purchased with YVPP funding.

Mr. English added that this represents the maintenance agreement for the unit.

Public Defender, Carey Haughwout questioned whether the CJC has a way of assessing the effectiveness of these programs and how such effectiveness is measured. She said that often times these purchases are made and no real assessments or ongoing analyses take place. While she supports this maintenance agreement, she believes that generally the CJC should be assessing these purchases rather than just continuing with the maintenances.

Chair Barr concurred with Ms. Haughwout about the need for assessments and ongoing analyses.

Chief Stepp inquired if it was part of the Auto Theft Taskforce countywide project that handles the tag reader. He then commented that the Countywide Auto Theft Taskforce has done a great job and that the tag reader is used on a daily basis doing analysis at approximately one hundredth of a second. He said it instantly checks vehicles within a certain area to determine if they are stolen and has the ability through the entire team on the ground, to converge on it and make arrest where appropriate. The Chief said while he has no statistics, he does know that it works very well.

Ms. Walker noted that FSU is in the process of obtaining statistics which Chair Barr said will be shared with the CJC as it becomes available.

Members unanimously approved the purchase of an annual support and maintenance agreement in the amount of \$3,205.00 for the tag reader after motion by Mr. Davis and second by Mr. Elmore.

X. Annual Recognition Presentations

Presentations were made to the following Task Force/Committee Chairs and Liaisons to Affiliated Boards:

Max Davis, Youth Violence Prevention Initiative
Douglas Duncan, Corrections Task Force
Carey Haughwout, Re-Entry
Jeff Koons, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Planning Committee
Barbara Cheives, Juvenile Justice Board

The following Chairs were also recognized but not in attendance:

Edith Bush, Community Justice Service Center – West Palm Beach
Rolando Garcia, Weed and Seed Steering Committee
Jack Goldberger, Court System Task Force
Laura Johnson, Probation Advisory Board
Harry Johnston, Re-Entry
Jay Pickens, Law Enforcement Planning Council

A special presentation was made to out-going CJC member Chief Stephen Stepp. State Attorney Barry Krischer, out-going member was absent.

XI. CJC Initiatives/Updates

A. Representatives from Florida State University (FSU) College of Criminology Center for Public Policy presented the preliminary two year report on the Youth Violence Prevention program with specific emphasis on the youth empowerment centers (YECs).

Dr. Blomberg provided an overview of the project and findings from their evaluation of years one and two as well as the progress made, noting that a complete report on year two will be submitted in February 2009.

In his presentation, Dr. Blomberg noted that the prevention, law enforcement and courts components of the project have been implemented in all four sites; namely Boynton Beach, Riviera Beach, West Palm Beach and Lake Worth, while the corrections component was implemented in Riviera Beach only. He said that Belle Glade is now moving but is far behind. He noted that the quasi experimental design was used to evaluate the effectiveness of the youth violence prevention program.

He reported that at the end of year one, there were expected and unexpected obstacles that had to be overcome. He said that the YECs in Lake Worth, West Palm Beach and Riviera Beach began implementation in February, March and April 2007 respectively while Boynton Beach began in December 2007.

Law enforcement, PBSO and individual law enforcement agencies continued to participate in a variety of activities and initiatives. The sites are utilizing law enforcement officers in their YECs and law enforcement agencies are engaged in a variety of gang prevention and gang suppression investigation activities such as equipment purchases, training development, protocols development, patrols and targeted community outreach. In terms of the courts, two additional prosecutors were assigned at the state attorney's office for the purpose of prosecuting gang related and violence related cases. In terms of prevention, Dr. Blomberg reported that, combined, the four YECs, provided structured program services to 2,424 youths (not unduplicated) and unstructured program services to almost 14,500 youths.

Major Bernadel sought clarification on the numbers being not unduplicated, which Dr. Blomberg stated to mean that one child could be counted several times in that figure because they receive several program services. He noted that FSU is hoping to obtain the unduplicated numbers as that would provide a per client indication, noting however that it is important to have both since many of the kids require multiple services. He said the result shows that the YECs are active and engaged and that the kids are participating.

Public Defender Haughwout remarked that the language suggesting total county youth served is misleading as it really is total services provided to youths.

Mr. Rodriguez inquired if the numbers will be separated before the BCC meeting in February. Ms. Cavendish noted that one of the impediments encountered in 2007 was the data quality but that as the data gets better, they should be able to make greater effort to unduplicate the numbers. This however, ultimately depends on the data quality.

Major Bernadel suggested that some sort of identifier be used to distinguish each person.

In terms of corrections, Dr. Blomberg said 46 clients were served by Riviera Beach and 5 individuals had an arrest occur subsequent to their first month of participation in the program. He said it appears based on the data gathered, that the YECs are having the precise impact that it was hoped they would have, highlighting that the total crime rates were more favorable when compared, as it was either declining or in one case the increase was much less than in the control site. He reported that Boynton Beach and West Palm Beach experienced slight increases while their respective control sites experienced greater increases, and Lake Worth and Riviera had greater decreases than their control sites.

The estimated economic impact on the county as a result of the YECs is over \$4 million in all four cities. Dr. Blomberg cited a report published by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention which indicates that countywide crime reduction resulted in an estimated near \$15 million.

The updates for year two of the program include Riviera Beach YEC acquiring its own site after changing location a few times, while the justice service center at

Riviera Beach continues to serve clients. Belle Glade does not have a YEC or JSC that is operational but there has been progress made.

Dr. Blomberg concluded that there has been substantial progress made. He said that the current data demonstrates that the program certainly seems to be on a path of reducing crime and improving the lives of the youth in the county as well as citizens who could fall victim to youth crime. He remarked that when this is measured in relationship to the economic impact and the current fiscal crises, the timeliness of the program could not be better.

He also shared the results of the annual survey of Florida citizens to get their perception of crime and their fear of criminal victimization, carried out by the Criminology Department of FSU. This he said indicates that 95% of Florida citizens surveyed, felt that during the next year, they would fall victim to a violent crime (FDLE statistics would indicate less than 1%), 88% felt that they will fall victim of a property crime, and that the juvenile offenders are the ones they feared most. The results also show that citizens prefer prevention and early intervention.

He noted that Attorney General Bill McCollum is working closely with Becky Walker and that his office is interested in replicating the Palm Beach County YVPP around the state of Florida.

Superintendent Johnson remarked that in the future, he would prefer if some data is displayed in graphic detail as opposed to just the narrative. He noted that while he is in favor of the YEC, he did not think that the number of students being served is impressive when compared to the number of students in the county. He said we have to figure out a way to get more kids involved. Mr. Randy Johnson enquired about the difference between a site and a control site.

Dr. Blomberg responded that Boynton Beach, Lake Worth, Riviera Beach and West Palm Beach are the experimental sites that have the YVPP in place. The control sites do not, but are matched to the experimental sites on all demographics, characteristics and population so that the impact of the experiments can be tested, hence the term “quasi experimental design”.

Ms. Chieves remarked that careful note should be taken of what Public Defender Haughwout and Superintendent Johnson said as she thinks if these questions are raised at the CJC meeting, it will be worse at the BCC. She added that the report is of such importance, it should be factual to the best of our ability and that the use of words such as “impressive” be avoided, noting that the BCC already informed the CJC not to request further funding from the BCC and that the report is needed to secure the additional funds.

Dr. Blomberg said that his team is willing to do whatever the CJC requires and added that Michael Rodriguez and his staff could provide FSU with ideas of what is expected in the report. He noted that FSU is just the outside objective observer gathering scientific data and making conclusions that they believe are professionally responsible from a scientific standpoint, but that it is also very important to communicate it in a compelling way.

Superintendent Johnson inquired about obtaining a list of the kids in the program, as he could create the match pairs to determine how they are doing in both academic and behavioral areas.

Public Defender Haughwout commented that she sees the presentation as a public relations presentation and thinks that it needs to be the CJC's job, if we are to get through what could be very tough questioning by the BCC about effectiveness, we ensure it is objective and data driven. She further stated that we cannot expect it to be miraculous, and that the more we make it sound miraculous, it becomes superficial. She noted that it is a long term project that is intended to impact the lives of children so that the community will be changed in the future.

Mr. Rodriguez reminded Ms. Haughwout that this is just an update and that the data is not compiled until the end of the calendar year, but that her point is well taken.

Major Bernadel asked to what would Dr. Blomberg attribute the fact that there is such a wide difference between the public's perception of 95% chance of victimization versus FDLE's 1%.

Dr. Blomberg noted that it was meant to illustrate that there is probably a lot of public support for these types of efforts, and while there might be an image that the public wants people locked up, that's not necessarily what they want. He thinks that for this to be institutionalized throughout the county it must be promoted and the public educated.

Mr. Feirmon Johnson enquired about the juvenile court aspect of the YEC not being initiated, and the impact the YEC have on what the juvenile justice is attempting to do, as kids are still getting into trouble and ending up in court.

Ms. Cavendish noted that the juvenile court was not a part of the original proposal and neither was it specific in terms of how it would be linked to the YECs.

Ms. Walker added that the CJC has been working with Mr. Johnson and youth that are on probation, though the plan originally excluded those that were on probation, and is now being used as an alternative sanction at one site. She said there has been that link with the juvenile court and that some strides have been made, but that FSU has not been kept enough in the loop and neither has the kind of data expected to be gathered addressed.

Ms. Chieves suggested that a group of members and staff get together, look at the report and provide some direction in terms of what it should look like before presentation to the BCC.

Mr. Davis provided a brief history of how the YEC started and encouraged members to see how we can improve upon them as the number one concern in Palm Beach County, according to surveys is crime and the CJC is doing a good thing about it. He also encouraged persons to visit one of YECs.

Tony Spaniol of Palm Beach County Youth Affairs commented that he is usually careful about making statements that the kids in the program are not at risk of

committing crimes because he is unable to judge which kid would never commit a crime. He said we therefore need to be careful about the statements directed at youth committing crimes as we are not able to determine if the youth coming to the program would have done so in the first place.

- B. Due to time constraints, the prioritization from the annual planning meeting and staff recommendation with regards to the FY2009/2010 budget was postponed for the next CJC meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:15 a.m.