

PALM BEACH COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION
PROBATION ADVISORY BOARD
Governmental Center, 10th Floor
301 N. Olive Avenue
West Palm Beach, FL 33401
August 5, 2009, 12:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Members Present

Sandra Bosso-Pardo	Chairman, County Court Administrative Judge
Steven Cohen	Criminal Defense Lawyer's Association
Kay Oglesby	Ex-Offender Reentry Program, Public Defender's Office
John Rivera	Public Defender's Office

Members Absent

Rosalyn Baker	Florida Department of Corrections
Virginia Cataldo	US Probation
Elizabeth Parker	State Attorney's Office
Louis Tomeo	Office of Clerk & Comptroller

Guests Present

Maureen Brickous	CEO, Pride Integrated Services, Inc.
Diane Feldman	Office of Clerk & Comptroller (for Louis Tomeo)
Wanda Joiner	Pride Quality Assurance Coordinator, Pride Integrated Services, Inc.
Kathy Burckbuchler	Private citizen

CJC Staff Present

Journey Beard	Crime Prevention Project Specialist
Damir Kukec	Research and Planning Manager
Michael Rodriguez	Executive Director
Candee Villapando	Criminal Justice Analyst

- I. Welcome/Opening Comments.** Chair Bosso-Pardo welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.
- II. Roll Call and Introduction of Guests.** In lieu of a roll call, Chair Bosso-Pardo asked if everyone signed the sign-up sheet and asked guests to introduce themselves.
- III. Approval and/or Amendments to the Agenda.** The agenda was approved with no amendments.
- IV. New Business**
 - A. Cost of Supervision

Maureen Brickous presented a request for an increase in Pride's cost of supervision from \$50 to

\$55. Ms. Brickous said that the last time they had an increase in COS was in 2002 (from \$45 to \$50). She also said that they (Pride) have been sustaining some loses for the past couple of years, and that they have made adjustments in staffing but their overhead costs (e.g. insurance) keep increasing. She handed out a sheet showing the impact of an increase in COS in September on their budget (resulting in positive income or profit), and without the increase (negative income or loss). She said that \$55 was about the standard rate of probation services in the State, except for Broward which she believes is \$75.

John Rivera expressed their (PD) concerns about the cost increase because of their clients who are indigent. He said that they understand the reason for the request, but that it was just a bad time for this because of the recession, with people who are unemployed. He said that costs and fees for everything have gone up, including court costs. Mr. Rivera added that even though it's a small amount, and he knows it's certainly a need that probation has, it just adds to all the fees that people have to pay and it's just going to make it harder for people to comply with the conditions of probation.

A discussion on what can be done to reduce the costs for Pride ensued. Steven Cohen asked if community service can be done for the COS, and Ms. Brickous said no. Mike Rodriguez asked if Pride still have a percentage of the costs waived, and Ms. Brickous said yes, but it runs in the single digits, and that they prefer to use the word reduction instead of waiving of fees. Ms. Brickous added that Pride charges a flat COS, unlike other departments that charge other fees, such as an intake fee. Mike Rodriguez asked if Pride's clients are still decreasing, and Ms. Brickous said that it has stabilized at around 2800-2900, and that their break-even point is at around 3000, but that they're consistently below that. Mr. Rodriguez observed that if Pride is at their break-even number of clients, then they probably won't have to request for an increase in COS. Ms. Brickous agreed and said that it's absolutely caseload-driven.

Mr. Rivera expressed that their position is against the increase in COS, and it's not directed at Pride, but he thinks that it is something that should be discussed with the Chief Judge as some sort of alternative, like the Delray office (i.e. moving out of the current building and having an office space at the courthouse), for example, where cost savings could be made. Chair Bosso-Pardo added that she will talk with Judge Blanc about approaching the county, if getting space at the satellite courthouses would help Pride.

A motion was made and seconded to vote on approving Pride's request for COS increase. The group voted, and the request was not approved. Ms. Brickous then added that in lieu of that vote, she would like to possibly work with the board on looking at other options for assistance.

B. Officer of the Court

Ms. Brickous requested for the board's input on the possibility of designating Pride probation officer as "Officer of the Court". She said that their probation officers are not sworn, and they currently don't have a process for it, but that they just want to step up the integrity of their probation officers. Chair Bosso-Pardo said that her concern was whether Pride has some ethic classes because Officers of the Court have higher obligations, like lawyers. Wanda Joiner asked if the Clerks are considered Officers of the Court, and Diane Feldman said that they are "deputies" and have required certification. Chair Bosso-Pardo said that if Pride decides to do this, they should have someone write ethical standards that the probation officers should follow, and was not sure if it might be more trouble than it's worth for Pride. Ms. Brickous said that she will have their counsel look into the issue.

C. Private Probation Referral to DUI Programs

Ms. Brickous informed the group about a statute that was adapted this past legislative session, which states that “A private probation services provider authorized under s. 948.15 may not refer probationers to any DUI program owned in whole or in part by the probation services provider.” Pride provides both probation services and DUI services and is therefore affected by the legislation. Ms. Brickous said that they could provide a list of DUI providers to probationers, advising them of who are the licensed programs, but would not be able to directly refer to their program alone. So they will be providing defendants with a list of the two licensed programs in Palm Beach County, as well as an acknowledgment form advising them that they are free to go to any licensed program where they live, work, or attend school per the administrative rule and that they are not being mandated or required to go to any particular program by probation.

D. Probation Referral Program Grant Award

Maureen Brickous said that they have been awarded Byrne Grant funds to provide the probation referral program. She gave the group a copy of the job description of the Community Referral Manager position that this grant will actually fund. The grant will also fund updates to their database. Ms. Brickous said that this manager will have a couple of responsibilities: assisting probation officers, and providing direct service when needed with the probationers themselves as well as providing liaison services with community agencies for which they can refer their clients. She said that the position will begin October 1, 2009 with the implementation of the Byrne grant, and is good for one year only. Mr. Rodriguez recommended making it clear to the applicant that it's a grant-funded position and that is going to be only for one year.

E. 2007/08 Fiscal Year Audit Update

Candee Villapando gave a brief update on the status of the monitoring report. She said that the report is done and all the data have been collected. She acknowledged Pride's full cooperation and assistance with the review. She noted that a copy of the draft was provided to Pride, and that their input had been incorporated in the report which is in the final stages of revision. Ms. Villapando reported that the review studied 5,487 terminated cases between October 1, 2007 to September 30, 2008, and that about 70% of those cases were on probation and 30% were on PTI. In addition to the review of electronic data, the study also reviewed 544 randomly selected physical files, which is approximately 10% of the census population. The review looked at Pride's delivery of services in terms of their intake procedures, client supervision, staffing and administration, and after reviewing all the data and documentation shared by Pride, Ms. Villapando reported that the study finds Pride in compliance with the Service Contract and Scope of Work. Ms. Villapando said that the final report will be ready on the next PAB meeting.

V. Updates

Maureen Brickous advised the group about the pending termination of SAAP as of September 30th. She said she wanted to make sure the members of the Board are aware of the consequences of not having substance abuse services available. Chair Bosso-Pardo said that evaluations cannot be done because there is no money. Ms. Brickous agreed and added that Pride does the assessment for SAAP. Wanda Joiner said that she did a quick review of their data system and found that they currently have 64 active cases that have SAAP as a requirement. She said further that there's really no alternative to SAAP because anything else as a treatment would be a cost.

John Rivera clarified that it is not the county that is directing that cuts be made to SAAP. Chair

Bosso-Pardo agreed that it's the Sheriff making the decision where to spend their money. Mike Rodriguez said that he thinks it will have an impact on the jail population. Chair Bosso-Pardo said further that SAAP is a good alternative, especially for people who have misdemeanor charges, like substance abuse related problems for which treatment is a better alternative sometimes.

VI. Member and Guest Comments

Maureen Brickous informed the board that Pride had voluntarily requested the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) to visit their offices and provide them with technical assistance. Ms. Brickous said that an NIC representative is coming over to assess the services Pride is providing, and will be making recommendations. The representative will be providing Pride technical assistance on doing risk assessments, where they would be trained to use evidence-based tools in assessing the level of risk of their probationers, as well as in motivational interviewing, to enhance their services. Ms. Brickous invited everyone to attend the meeting with the NIC representative on Friday, August 14th from 9 am to 12 pm, at the Pride office.

VII. Adjournment

The next PAB meeting will be determined.