



**PALM BEACH COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION
REENTRY TASK FORCE MEETING**

Palm Beach County Governmental Center
301 N. Olive Avenue, 12th Floor
West Palm Beach, Florida 33401
Wednesday, January 28, 2015; 12:00 P.M.

SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES

PARTICIPANTS PRESENT:

Carey Haughwout, Public Defender's Office
Avida, Literacy Coalition
Barbara Moody, The Lord's Place
Barry Moore, Palm Beach State College
Brenda Oakes, Youth Services Dept.
Bennie Hayse, Jay Ministries
Bert Walker, Private Practice
Bridgette Price, SEFBHN
Carlos Martinez, Miami Dade Public Defender's Office
Chal Stoffel, Miracle Village Ministries
Cicely Holcomb, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Claudia Tuck, Palm Beach County Human and Veteran Services
Clay Walker, Department of Children and Families
Corey M. Smith, Law Office Corey M. Smith
Crystal Leonard, Palm Beach County Schools
Daniel Gibson, The Lord's Place
Dave Samuelson, The Lord's Place
Dawn Davenport, The Lord's Place
Eve Lyon, The Lord's Place
Francy Vasquez, Justice Service Center
Greg Rydman, Salvation Army
Guy David Robinson, Miami Police Dept.
Jeff Dougherty, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Jennifer Loyless, Public Defenders Office
Jerry Youmans, Matthew 25 Ministries
Jessica Hildalgo, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Jessica Kahn, State Attorney's Office
Jim Parker, Mathew 25 Ministries
Joan Hicks, Jay Ministries
Jose Rendon, Palm Beach sheriff's Office
Kaitlin Schibli, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Karina Munajj, Miami Police Dept.
Katyne Henry, Justice Service Center
Kenturah Wamdho, Back to a Future
Kevin Molloy, The Lord's Place
Laura Waterman, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Laurel Considine, Gulfstream Goodwill

L. Porter, Gulfstream Goodwill
Liz Downey, NAMI PBC
Maggie Witherow, Matthew 25 Ministries
Marcia Bahia, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
Mark Williams, Resident
Marsha Martino, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Myra Lindsay, Miami Police Dept.
Meagan Rappatta, Magellan Complete Care
Melissa Lewis, SCMHC
Michele Carter, Gulfstream Goodwill
Michelle Dryer, CareerSource PBC
Minka Veasy, Justice Service Center
Nicole Bishop, PBC Justice Services & Victim Services
Orie Bullard, Justice Service Center
Pat Powers, Miracle Village Ministries
Patti Aupperlee, First United Methodist Church
Rita Ruggles, SEFBHN
Robert Graham, True Fast
Roderick White, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
Rosalyn Baker, Florida Department of Corrections
Sabrena Cooper
Sharon L'Herrou, 211
Stephen Weigert, Life Coach
Sylvia Moffett, City of West Palm Beach
Tamara Starks, Palm Beach County Sherriff's Office
Tamika Cooley, RESTORE
Tyrus McCloud, Prison Fellowship
Yvette Salinas, Florida Department of Corrections
Wallace Jones, Infinity Solutions

CJC STAFF PRESENT:

Michael Rodriguez, Executive Director
Arlene Griffiths, Senior Criminal Justice Analyst
Allison Orr, Administrative Assistant
Craig Spatara, Criminal Justice Programs Manager
Jacquelyn Esposito, Criminal Justice Analyst
Shahzia Jackson, Senior Criminal Justice Analyst

I. Welcome and opening comments

Ms. Rosalyn Baker called the meeting to order in the absence of Chair Haughwout who shortly after, joined the meeting. She welcomed members and guests.

II. Introduction of members and guests

Participants introduced themselves in lieu of a roll call.

III. Approval and/or additions to the Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved after motion by Diana Stanley and second by Rosalyn Baker.

IV. Approval and/or corrections to the 10/22/2014 minutes of the Reentry Task Force

The Minutes were unanimously approved after motion by Diana Stanley and second by Rosalyn Baker.

V. Old Business

Sealing and Expunging Event and Operation Green Light

Craig Spatara reported on his inquiry into the sealing and expunging event held in Miami. He said that the event takes place every quarter with about 300 participants of which 50% to 80% are typically eligible. Ms. Baker added that she suggested hosting one in Palm Beach County as a good way to help ex-offenders, but noted that it is the Task Force's decision on whether to proceed with such an event. Ms. Haughwout said that her office held events throughout the county many years ago, and commented on the lack of success as many individuals that participated were not eligible. She further advised that a staff in her office currently does sealing and expunging of records, but expressed her interest in hosting the event, saying that it would be great to have the State Attorney's Office help in doing so.

Commissioner Sylvia Moffett questioned whether expunging would remove the police photo of ex-offenders from websites. Ms. Haughwout said yes they should be removed from government websites if they are copied on the final orders. She added that clemency application packets could also be made available at the event.

Craig Spatara and Ms. Baker will explore feasible location for the event.

VI. New Business

a) Restoration of Rights

Ms. Luletha Cheatham of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., presented an overview of her organization's campaign in restoration of ex-offenders rights. She noted that Florida has one of the most restrictive civil rights policies in the country, and said that their goal is to identify and assist ex-offenders with 10 or more years release records in getting their rights restored. This she said will increase voter participation in the African American community. Ms. Cheatham commented on a test case that is currently carried out. She sought the Task Force support in helping them to realize their goal.

Ms. Haughwout remarked about the length of time the process for restoring one's right takes.

Commissioner Moffett advised of an amendment that the League Women Voters, the ACLU and other organizations are pursuing for the restoration of rights for convicted felons who served time. Ms. Cheatham said that they are working with those groups as well.

Ms. Haughwout noted that the organization could also partner with the Task Force for the sealing and expunging event.

b) Reentry Task Force Bylaws

Arlene Griffiths informed the group of the draft Task Force bylaws, noting that this is an effort to establish a more formal structure. She advised that the draft was with the Assistant County Attorney for review.

c) Employment Pilot Project

Arlene Griffiths provided an update on the pilot project, noting that although Palm Beach County was not selected for the three year pilot, the Council of State Governments offered a mini pilot to receive technical assistance for one year. She emphasized the importance participation by top executives such as mayors, county commissioners, and the Department of Corrections Secretary. Craig Spatara added that this will assist in developing an assessment tool for employment of ex-offenders similar to what now exist to measure risk, and help in shaping the efforts of the Employment Subcommittee.

d) Mentoring Grant

Craig Spatara advised of a Department of Justice Second Chance Act mentoring grant for \$420,000 for three years to improve recidivism outcomes for young fathers. He inquired if any non-profit agency had an interest in applying. Details of the grant were provided in the agenda packet.

e) Reentry Statistics

Reentry statistics for the last quarter was provided. The report highlighted the recidivism rates and performance of the different agencies. Mr. Spatara noted that the recidivism rates have been cut in half complements of the work been doing.

VII. Subcommittee Reports

1. Data and Evaluation

Chair of the Data and Evaluation Subcommittee, Jennifer Loyless noted that the subcommittee meets on an as-needed basis, and have not met for a while. She reported that a bulletin board was recently added to the RENEW database for case managers to communicate with each other. She also noted that the County's ISS department continues to be a great partner and are constantly updating RENEW.

In response to Ms. Haughwout's inquiry about the national evaluation by RTI and the Urban Institute, Mr. Spatara reported that the team was looking at 45 people who left Sago Palm. Also, they are and will continue through September 2015, to do exit interviews for those that are released. He said that the final results should be available in 2016. Ms. Haughwout commented that while we continue to do well, she would like the Task Force to have a conversation to identify and focus on the greatest needs as we continue to explore funding options.

Daniel Gibson inquired about available resources to provide research and evaluation assistance if needed, and was advised of the CJC's Research Unit.

2. Employment, Training & Education

Chair of the Employment Subcommittee, Michelle Dryer reported on the recent meeting of the Subcommittee, highlighting the presentation by the ex-offender, now a successful entrepreneur and also spoke about the employment pilot project. She commented on the strategy changes as it relates to reentry, saying that it is about doing business a different way and advised of the newly created reentry unit. This she said will serve as a single point of contact for employers and employees and provides a better way of collecting data and tracking those that are served, while linking this data to RENEW. She further mentioned that the CareerSource Center has been contracted with approximately \$800,000 for sex offenders with a broader array of issues, and that at the end of the funding year they would like to do a need analysis to ensure that the money is targeted in the right area.

3. Sex Offender Subcommittee

There was no subcommittee report as Chairman Featherman was absent.

Ms. Haughwout remarked about the need to continue the efforts on the issue of residency restrictions with the cities now that Palm Beach County's restrictions have changed. Participants reported of some small changes seen in terms of sex offenders being able to live elsewhere.

4. Juvenile Reentry Subcommittee

Shahzia Jackson, CJC staff to the Juvenile Reentry Subcommittee reported that the subcommittee is currently working on a pre-release hearing that will serve as a reentry port where participants including the youth will be involved. A checklist to ensure that all services are in place once the youth is released was also created. This will be piloted with Judge Kathleen Kroll's juveniles. Ms. Jackson announced that the Lord's Place was selected as the transitional housing provider by a selection committee. Members of the Subcommittee along with Ms. Jackson will present on juvenile reentry at the Florida Sheriffs Association conference in Orlando in April. She remarked about programmatic improvements that are made to look at priority needs. The Subcommittee continues to work with the University of Miami in evaluating the juvenile reentry program.

Ms. Laura Waterman, Transition Specialist with the Back To a Future Program reported that the process with the transition is going smoothly, and thanked those who assisted in connecting them with partners. She provided update on the youth in the program and announced that two are attending Palm Beach State College and will receive laptops donated by CareerSource.

5. Sustainability, Marketing and Advocacy Subcommittee

Chair of the Sustainability, Marketing and Advocacy Subcommittee, Diana Stanley remarked about the sub-committee's ongoing discussions regarding marketing and advocacy. She advised that the Public Relations Marketing Officer at the Lord's Place will assist with developing a short term marketing plan, but said there were discussions about whether it should be a more formalized process where funds are allocated towards marketing. She reiterated the need for education, awareness, and marketing of the program going forward. She further advised of a scheduled trip to Tallahassee in March to have discussions with the legislatures.

While Ms. Haughwout thinks it should be discussed, commented on the need to determine if this is a priority. The Committee A unanimous decision was reached by the Task Force for the sub-committee to present a specific proposal with funding requirements to the Task Force

6. Housing Subcommittee

Chair of the Housing Subcommittee, Daniel Gibson reported on discussions from the meetings held, and the subcommittee's pursuit for action. He remarked about the issue of housing for this population for decades, and advised of the plan to invite the sex-offender group and other representatives to the next housing meeting as an educational initiative about the laws and restrictions. Mr. Gibson also spoke about the need to look across systems for housing and create initiatives to allow cross systems users to be targeted. He highlighted the importance of having dialogue between the heads of the homeless communities and healthcare providers to ensure that the same people are targeted, available dollars are efficiently used.

Mr. Gibson further mentioned a conference call with the CJC and the Council of State Governments who were helpful in providing resources in this regard.

Mr. Rodriguez shared data regarding the homeless population in the jail (180 – 300 on a daily basis) and noted that one half of them are in the jail for county ordinance violation, trespass, or failure to appear.

Mr. Gibson spoke about the continued barriers for people coming out of the jail with a history of homelessness that are not able to access services.

7. Mental Wellness Subcommittee

Chair of the Mental Wellness Subcommittee, Marsha Martino advised that no meetings were held, but announced that a grant was submitted for motivational interviewing where all providers will have access to the resources if received.

Ms. Haughwout said that this would be a great resource for the case managers from the different agencies, and suggested that if received, the committee could look at drafting a proposal for countywide use.

VIII. Additional member and guest comments

- A. Ms. Claudia Tuck announced the start of the bi-annual homeless count.
- B. Ms Maggie Witherow of Mathew 25 Ministries advised of a banquet to be held on April 10, 2015.
- C. Mr. Daniel Gibson reported that The Lord's Place expanded the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) initiative through funding from two funders allowing them to have a dedicated SOAR Specialist (Barbara Moody) who will assist ex-offenders in accessing benefits. He further noted that additional funding was also received to hire a second staff (Kevin Molloy) who will focus on the institutions (jail and prison) to identify uninsured offenders that are released to assess their social security benefits status so housing options can be explored upon release.

IX. Adjourn

With no further item for discussion, the meeting was adjourned.