



**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, April 27, 2016 - 12:00 P.M.

SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES

I. Welcome and opening comments

Chair Sylvia Moffett called the meeting to order and extended welcome to all participants. She commented on National Reentry Week and highlighted some events including "Coffee Time" hosted by Ms. Rosalyn Baker at the Department of Corrections (Probation) office and the Sago Palm library make over at.

II. Introduction of members and guests

Participants introduced themselves in lieu of a roll call. A total of 38 persons were in attendance (see attached).

III. Approval and/or additions to the Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved.

IV. Approval and/or corrections to the 1/27/2016 minutes of the Reentry Task Force

The Minutes were unanimously approved.

V. Old Business

a) Budget Update

An update was provided on the budget, and it was noted that the reentry program is fully funded for fiscal year 2016, and includes \$500,000 funding from Florida Department of Corrections. Comments were made about the recent meetings with county commissioners and their support for reentry. It was also noted that the funding for 2016 does not reflect the comprehensive services needed for the County's reentry efforts and a discussion ensued regarding the need for sustainable funding in this regard.

b) Integrated Reentry Employment Strategies Pilot Project (IRES)

Mr. Spataro provided an update on the three year employment pilot project that is near completion of its first year. He advised that representatives from the Council of State Governments (CSG) will be visiting in May to present on the first year findings and provide recommendations for implementation. He said that this will allow us to focus on business based on best practices.

c) Forklift Training at Sago Palm Reentry Center

Ms. Griffiths reported on discussions with Kelly Tractor regarding their commitment to support reentry by through a forklift loaner to Sago Palm Reentry Center to provide residents with forklift training. It was also noted that Kelly Tractor will assist with training at no cost.

VI. New Business

a) National Reentry Week

Ms. Griffiths reported that for the first time, The Department of Justice has declared the week of April 24th as "National Reentry Week". She noted that the County has joined in declaring that week and the City of West Palm Beach will be doing the same at their April 25th commission meeting. A schedule of events for the week was highlighted and members and guests were invited to participate where possible.

b) Team of Hope

As part of National Reentry Week, Team of Hope a reentry initiative in the City of Boynton Beach was recognized by the Reentry Task Force as an innovative and outstanding reentry initiative in the county. Team of Hope is a network of influential community leaders that advocates for individuals returning to the community from incarceration. The initiative started three years ago by former City of Boynton Beach Mayor, Jerry Taylor and has been very successful in its employment efforts.

c) Second Chance Act Grant

Mr. Spatara announced the release of the Second Chance Act Grant and presented possible options in applying for the grant. He noted that Sago Palm Reentry Center would not be eligible for assistance through this grant as it requires a pre-release component for a new reentry initiative. The grant amount is \$1M for three years to be used as seed money for planning and implementation. Members discussed various options, and voted to proceed with applying for same.

d) Reentry Strategic Plan

The updated strategic plan was presented. It was noted that all the goals outlined in the five year plan six years ago has been met. The updated plan included the 2015 accomplishments and the one goal for the upcoming year. Chairs of the subcommittees provided an update on the work being done by each subcommittee and presented their goals as follows:

Sustainability

- Raise reentry awareness among policy holders, community leaders and private sectors
- Develop a proactive strategy for working with media employers and other stakeholders
- Prepare agency executive staff, crime victims and formerly incarcerated individuals to serve as initiative spokes person
- Continue to look for dedicated funding for reentry.

Housing

- Advocate for ex-offenders to become eligible for public housing
- Create pre and post arrest diversion programs
- Increasing opportunities for ex-offender to become eligible through rental opportunities

Employment, Training and Education

- Identify 30 businesses to hire two individuals with criminal background and track their progress for two years
- Find 10 new businesses and municipalities to "Ban the Box"
- Research entrepreneurial opportunities for ex-offenders

Youth

- Create a system of graduated sanctions
- Deliver appropriate programming for youth housed in the County Jail
- Identify youthful offenders returning to Palm Beach County and establish case management and a transition process.

Goals for the sex offender and the data subcommittees are included in the updated strategic plan.

VII. Task Force Initiatives/Updates

a) Mac Arthur Grant

Mr. Spatara reported that Palm Beach County was awarded \$150,000 from the MacArthur Foundation to continue the work started during the planning phase of the grant. The county will submit a new application for the full grant when the solicitation is put out in the coming year.

b) Reentry Website

The new reentry website under Public Safety Department was presented and participants asked to provide feedback to Arlene Griffiths.

VIII. Additional member and guest comments

a) Ms. Tamika Cooley was elected as the new Chair for the Employment, Training and Education Subcommittee, and Ms. Geeta Loach-Jacobson was elected as Vice Chair for the Youth Subcommittee.

b) A participant mentioned Carl Bryant, formerly incarcerated Deputy Sheriff from Broward who started a program called Biotec that employs formerly incarcerated individuals.

c) Ms. Griffiths thanked the Criminal Justice Commission for their sponsorship of promotional items for National Reentry Week.

d) Chair Moffett encouraged participants to watch an interesting 60 minutes feature on the German prison system.

IX. Adjourn

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