



**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, July 22, 2015 - 12:00 P.M.

SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES

PARTICIPANTS PRESENT:

Carey Haughwout, Public Defender's Office
Andrew Melville, Melville Consulting
Angela Bess, School District, Palm Beach County
Bennie Harper, Jay Ministries
Bert Winkler, Private Practice/The Lord's Place
Brenda Oakes, Youth Services Dept.
Candice Thomas, Department of Corrections
Cassandra Andrew, VRC Inc.
Claudia Tuck, Palm Beach County Human and Veteran Services
Clay Walker, Department of Children and Families
Cynthia Clark, Department of Corrections/Sago Palm
Danielle Ouellette, South East Behavioral Health Network
Diana G. Ebergold, Drug Abuse Foundation
Eve Lyon, The Lord's Place
Everett McPherson, Department of Corrections
Gail Colletta, Florida Action Committee
Gary Hawkins, The Lord's Place
Jason Collins, Sago Palm
Jatelsa Brown – Jay Ministries
Jenise Link, Palm Beach County Justice Services
Jennifer Hardison-Walters, RTI International
Jennifer Loyless, Public Defender's Office
Jerry Youmans, Matthew 25 Ministries
Jessica Chiappone, Hope City Center
Jessica Hildalgo, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Joe Speicher, South County Mental Health Center
Jim Rhoads, The Lord's Place
Joel Cartwright, RTI International
Jose Rendon, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
Kelly Matthews, Department of Corrections
Kenturah Wamdho, Back to a Future
Latrona Hayes, Justice Services
Laura Waterman, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
L. Porter, Gulfstream Goodwill
Lester Mosley, Palm Beach State College
Meagan Rappatta, Magellan Complete Care
Michele Carter, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Michelle Dryer, CareerSource PBC
Minka Veasy, Justice Service Center
Nicole Bishop, PBC Justice Services & Victim Services
Orie Bullard, Justice Service Center
Rosalyn Baker, Florida Department of Corrections

Sherri Collins, State Attorney's Office
Smita Chand, Jerome Golden Center
Sylvia Moffett, City of West Palm Beach
Tamara Starks, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office
Ted Rodarm, Matthew 25 Ministries

CJC STAFF PRESENT:

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

I. Welcome and opening comments

Chair Carey Haughwout called the meeting to order and extended welcome to all participants.

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.

IV. Approval and/or corrections to the 04/22/2015 minutes of the Reentry Task Force

The Minutes were unanimously approved.

V. Old Business

Reentry Task Force Bylaws

a) Reentry Task Force Bylaws

Chair Haughwout commented on the Task Force by-laws changes, noting that it is the next step in the evolution of the Task Force as it relates to the structure and membership. She said that it is a great work in institutionalizing the great work that is done in reentry. A correction was noted relating to Article IV, Section 1 Meetings to read "An annual meeting of the members of the Task Force for the election of officers and the transaction of other business shall be held in July of each year. The bylaws were amended and approved as presented.

b) Reentry Transition to Public Safety

Mr. Michael Rodriguez, Executive Director of the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) reported that plans are underway to move the three reentry positions from the CJC to the Public Safety Department. He said there will be little or no noticeable difference as the task force and subcommittees will continue to be facilitated by the CJC. He further noted that the County approved of \$250,000 for reentry, to make up the shortfall of the RESTORE grant.

Ms. Nicole Bishop, Director of Justice Services, Public Safety Department added that the Public Safety team is working with the CJC to ensure a smooth transition, and that she is looking forward to further growth in this area.

Chair Haughwout commented that this is a huge step towards sustainability of the program, highlighting the importance of the initiative and the need for continuity. She

applauded the County for recognizing the importance of reentry to public safety and the quality of life in Palm Beach County (PBC).

VI. New Business

a) Nomination and Election of Chair, Vice Chair, and Ex-offender positions

Commissioner Sylvia Moffett was nominated and unanimously approved as new Chair of the Task Force, while Mr. Gregory Starling was nominated and approved as Vice Chair.

Ms. Jessica Chiappone and Mr. Anthony Hoskins were nominated and approved as ex-offenders on the membership.

b) Coming Home Directory

Mr. Craig Spatara spoke about having available resources on the internet for ex-offenders and families of ex-offenders. He shared a web page that provides services for ex-offenders in Boston that may be use as a guide in communicating the resources in PBC and requested input from participants. Mr. Bert Winkler remarked about the importance of family in reentry and noted that this could be a useful tool in the reentry process.

The issue of maintaining the site and other concerns were discussed. A draft will be created and brought back to the meeting for further input.

c) Reentry Feature on Channel 20

Arlene Griffiths reported on discussions with the County's Public Affairs Department with regards to communicating and promoting the work in reentry, by highlighting what works, including testimonials from past and current participants in the program.

She also mentioned some of the options available on Channel 20 in this regard. In addition, she provided the first issue of the reentry newsletter that will be published semi-annually and requested feedback and stories for the next issue.

Chair Haughwout recommended that a presentation also be schedule for County Commissioners within the next year to update them on the successes in reentry.

VII. Evaluation of BJA Second Chance Act Adult Offender Reentry Demonstration Project

Chair Haughwout commented on the need for evaluation and mentioned one that was done by the University of South Florida. She said that it's an opportunity to learn what other sites are doing.

Ms. Jennifer Hardison Walters provided an update on the evaluation currently underway by the Urban Institute and RTI International. She noted that there are seven sites participating in the evaluation including four jail based and three State prison programs that were selected following an evaluability assessment study. She said that the evaluation is funded by the National Institute of Justice, and will be completed within the next year.

She commented on the three primary components of the evaluation, i.e., an implementation study, an outcome study and a cost effectiveness study. Ms. Hardison said that this was their last visit as part of the implementation study and that they have been meeting with RESTORE staff and key partners around implementation issues and challenges. These will be documented across the programs to help future reentry programs in their development she said. She thanked individuals for participating in the web survey, and for providing information through interviews, and advised that Research Briefs will be published to include implementation challenges and solutions, evidence based practices, and collaboration communication. They are

also conducting six and twelve month interviews and expected to complete by mid 2016, when a final report and other articles will be published.

VIII. Reentry Statistics

Mr. Spatara presented the RESTORE statistics for the last quarter and noted that the recidivism rates for all the reentry programs have been cut in half.

Assistant Warden McPherson added that the recent focus has been on the orientation process where all parties meet with the new residents to ensure awareness of the program and opportunities available. Assessments are carried out and a plan is created for each individual based on risk and needs. He also spoke of the need for vocational opportunities to help prepare them prior to release.

IX. Task Force Initiatives/Updates

a) Grants Received

Motivational Interviewing - Ms. Jessica Hidalgo of Gulfstream Goodwill reported that participants are utilizing the training in their daily activities and plans to utilize it with families. She noted that trainers will be identified and provided with advanced training during the final three months of the program. Ms. Rosalyn Baker added that all Probation Officers in PBC are trained in motivational interviewing.

MacArthur Justice Challenge – Mr. Craig Spatara reported that Palm Beach County was one of 20 sites selected for the MacArthur grant to reduce the jail population and disproportionate minority contact with the system. A total of \$150,000 was received for the planning phase, and if selected for implementation, could receive up to \$10M for up to five years. Chair Haughwout commented on the opportunity for creative work in the community even if the grant is not received.

Pre Release Employment Preparation and Reentry Engagement (PREPARE) - Ms. Michelle Dryer announced the grant award of \$500,000 over two years from the Department of Labor to establish a career center in the jails. This is a pre-release program that is modeled off RESTORE and will identify about 150 inmates with low job readiness with high risk to recidivate to be provided with proper dosage. CareerSource is the lead agency with the Sheriff's Office, Gulfstream Goodwill, The Lord's Place, and the CJC as partners.

b) Employment Pilot Project

Mr. Spatara noted that the project's goal is to conduct an employability assessment that will match risk to recidivate with employability level and determine a path for each individual and could see agencies focusing on different risk levels. Ms. Griffiths added that the Council of State Governments (CSG) representatives also toured the Sago Palm Reentry Center and seemed to be satisfied with the level of participation in the project.

X. Subcommittee Reports

1. Employment, Training & Education Subcommittee

Ms. Dryer commented on the IRES presentation by the CSG regarding the technical assistance to be provided to PBC, as well as the participation of the MacArthur

representatives at the last meeting. Among the items discussed was the impact of the various initiatives on juveniles.

2. Data and Evaluation Subcommittee

Subcommittee Chair, Ms. Jennifer Loyless reported that during the last quarter, all residents that returned to PBC from DOC since October 1, 2013 were uploaded into the RENEW database. The Subcommittee's priority for the next year is to continue to work with the County's ISS Department to better incorporate the LSI-r with the system to be better able to provide data as needed. .

3. Housing Subcommittee

In Chair Daniel Gibson's absence, Mr. Spatara reported that the Subcommittee identified a network of local housing experts that are willing to explore solutions to reentry housing issues. The subcommittee priorities for the coming year are to: Establish diverse housing models and services for transitioning ex-offenders; Identify existing housing related funding streams and opportunities; Develop a local housing project dedicated to ex-offenders; Investigate the needs of special populations including women, juveniles and sex-offenders; and Facilitate the implementation of services.

4. Youth Reentry Subcommittee

Ms. Shahzia Jackson, CJC staff to the Subcommittee reported that in addition to continued work on the pre-release hearing pilot project, the Choice To Change 103 initiative is providing life skills and development to youth on the 12th floor of the County Jail once per week, and is receiving positive feedback. She commented on the creation of a visitation document for the 12th floor that has resulted in an increase in visitation, and also noted that Riviera Beach Justice Service Center is providing case management to youthful offenders. Ms. Jackson advised that the grant was extended to September 2016, but said that funding is available only through December 2015. Further discussions will continue in this regard.

The Subcommittee priorities are mentoring, case management for youthful offenders, and increase Juvenile Probation Officers (JPO) contact on the 12th floor.

Ms. Laura Waterman reported that 162 youth were serviced through the Back To A Future program. A total of 103 youth are currently active and 20 are to be released over the next 30 days, 35 received job placements, and 94 are enrolled in education setting.

5. Mental Wellness Subcommittee

Chair Haughwout announced the dissolution of the subcommittee due to the creation of the Behavioral Task Force.

6. Sex Offender Subcommittee

Ms, Gail Colletta, Vice Chair of the Subcommittee reported on the demonstration of a tool to identify appropriate housing for sex offenders. Also discussed was educating youth about sex offences and the possibility of reducing the requirement for registration.

Priorities for 2016 are to engage the municipalities through the League of Cities to align the residency restriction with the County's 1000 feet, and to embark on a reentry marketing and education campaign.

7. Sustainability, Marketing and Advocacy Subcommittee

Ms, Tamara Starks, Vice Chair of the Subcommittee reported that discussions surrounded the membership to include community and funder representation. Members also discussed the creation of a White Paper for County Commissioners, funders, legislators, and other sectors, highlighting the reason to participate in the reentry initiative in a leadership and/or funding role.

The subcommittee priorities for 2016 are to implement a professional media campaign, hold quarterly meetings with elected officials, and to develop and engage peer mentors.

XI. Additional member and guest comments

Ms. Griffiths encouraged participants to assist with distribution of the newsletters.

Outgoing Chair Haughwout expressed gratitude to participants noting that the success of reentry in PBC is because of everyone working together, and that she sees this work as one of the highlights of her career. Ms. Haughwout said she was honored to chair the Task Force, and pledged her continued participation and support as the new Chair takes over in October.

XII. Adjourn

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