

MINUTES

Monday, April 11, 2022 1:00 P.M.

Law Enforcement Planning Council Palm Beach County School & Community Safety Initiative Behavioral Health Track

Online via Zoom



Members Present:

Captain Randy Foley, Chair, Behavioral Services Division, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office

Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D., Vice Chair, CEO, Children's Services Council of PBC

Dr. Seth Bernstein, Executive Vice President for Community Investments, United Way

Mary Blakeney, Director, PBC Emergency Management, Public Safety Department

Chief Sean Brammer, Past Chair, CJC Law Enforcement Planning Council and Chief of Police, Florida Atlantic University Police Department

Lieutenant Pat Burroughs, PBC Fire Rescue

Elisa Cramer, Community Development Administrator, FL Dept. of Children and Families

Darcy J. Davis, CEO, Health Care District of Palm Beach County

Elisa Cramer, Community Development Administrator, FL Dept. of Children and Families

Tammy Fields, Director, PBC Youth Services Department

Dr. Barbara Cox Gerlock, LLC, Consultant

Sharon L'Herrou, President/Chief Executive Officer, 211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast

Kevin McCormick, Director, Exceptional Student Education, PBC School District

Kaley Newby, Organizational Standards Officer, 211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast

Dr. Gena Rowlands, Senior Planner, PBC Sheriff's Office

Robin Russo, Director of Student Well Being, Palm Beach State College

Jill Sorensen, Director of Children's System of Care, SE FL Behavioral Health Network

Greg Starling, Chief Probation Officer, Department of Juvenile Justice

Sharon Tarlow, Education Coordinator, Behavioral Health Services, HCA Florida JFK North Hospital

Heather Thomas, Case Manager, PBC Sheriff's Office

Ortances Thomas-Hawkins, Director of the Mobile Response Team

Major Michael Waites, PBC School District Police Department

Craig Williams, Chief Assistant State Attorney, State Attorney's Office, 15th Judicial Circuit

Grant Evaluation Partners:

Cassandra Atkin-Plunk, Ph.D., Associate Director and Associate Professor, FAU

Vaughn Crichlow, Ph.D., Associate Dean and Associate Professor, FAU

Guests:

Stephen Plunk, Graphic Designer, PLUNK DESIGNS

CJC Staff Present:

Regenia Herring, Executive Director

Katherine Shover, Senior Criminal Justice Analyst

- I. Welcome and Opening Comments by Captain Randy Foley, Chair. He thanked the group for participating and for addressing these critical school and community safety issues. He just returned from an International Association of Homicide Investigators Conference. A unique aspect of the conference was that four out of five days centered on how to address mass violence by using a proactive approach. He also mentioned that the FBI recognized the collaboration in Palm Beach County between law enforcement and mental health providers. He wanted everyone to know that their work is being acknowledged on a national level. Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D., Vice Chair mentioned that this is fantastic news that should be shared

Director Regenia Herring commended the group for their collaboration. She mentioned that since we have some new members, she wanted to provide an overview of the initiative. In the wake of the Stoneman Douglas tragedy, the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) requested that the Law Enforcement Planning Council establish a committee to look at how PBC would respond to a similar situation. She is thankful for Judge Martz who was tasked with leading this initiative. Initially, a law enforcement committee was formed, then Judge Martz pulled together behavioral health professionals (November 2018) to look at this issue. Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office was also looking at how to address this issue from their perspective, so they pursued a grant after the tragedy that included a committee. (The grant was approved October 2018.) Rather than duplicating efforts in creating a separate committee, this group serves a dual role. The grant is a resource that can be leveraged for the greater good. Florida Atlantic University is also part of the grant and is a value-added, as they started documenting these efforts from the beginning of the behavioral health group initiative to address mass violence. One of the aspects of the grant is educating the community, which was addressed when the Aware and Care campaign launched. Unfortunately, Judge Martz resigned, but the committee needed to keep the momentum going. That's when Captain Randy Foley and Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D., stepped up to lead

this group. She also recognized Chief Brammer and Captain Foley for coming up with a new direction to look at a comprehensive review of the system. Now the group is able to provide a comprehensive response to the Board of County Commissioners and residents. She welcomed the new members for participating at this point when they are about ready to finalize the initiative in terms of recommendations and a response to the CJC. She noted that the grant isn't driving the work of the committee, but it provides a value-added to support these efforts. At some point, there will be the implementation of these initiatives. That's when some of the members' agencies may come into play. She advised that the CJC evaluates and pilots programs, but the initiative needs to have a home. She noted that the goal is to find the resolution and commonality for the best outcomes and solutions for our community.

Katherine Shover also mentioned that Erica Whitfield, PBC School Board Member brought this request to the CJC at their Annual Planning meeting (February 26, 2018) that happened to be scheduled after the Stoneman Douglas tragedy. She noted that it has been an amazing collaboration and thanked everyone for their partnership on this project. Chair Foley also mentioned that he was worried about taking on this position because he hadn't done anything like this before. However, he commented that it has been a great experience. He also recognized Judge Martz for establishing the foundation and getting the group in the right direction.

Introductions: Chair Foley introduced Lieutenant Pat Burroughs, PBC Fire Rescue. Lieutenant Burroughs oversees the Special Operations side of Hazmat at Fire Rescue. In addition, he is attached to the FBI, working with the Joint Terrorism Task Force. The active-shooter responsibilities of training and operational SOGs fall under his responsibilities. He is also attached to Miami SWAT. In addition, he noted that they have a mental health side at Fire Rescue. He would like them to attend the next meeting. Sharon L'Herrou introduced Kaley Newby, the Organizational Standards Officer with 211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast. Dr. Seth Bernstein reintroduced himself due to not being part of the meeting for some time, but he was involved when the group got started. Tammy Fields remarked how goodness can be born out of tragedy as this group was formed after Stoneman Douglas, and Birth to 22 was started as a result of Sandy Hook. She advised that PBC has been very responsive when things have happened elsewhere to want to come together and find ways to avoid similar tragedies occurring within our community.

- II. Agenda/minutes were approved by consent. A motion was made by Chief Brammer and seconded by Tammy Fields.
- III. Presentations
 - a. **Behavioral Health Services Division Update:** Captain Randy Foley, Chair provided an overview of recent changes to the Division. The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) is its own unit now. They also have a Targeted Violence Unit that is a co-responder unit with law enforcement and a therapist. Their focus is on identifying people that are possible threats to the community and linking them to mental health services to prevent them from coming back into contact with law enforcement. Also, CIT used to be a part-time program but it is now full-time and is led by Gabby Torrez. They previously had five to eight CIT classes per year, but now they will have up to twenty classes. In

addition, they are adding a refresher class (24 hours) for CIT officers who have not taken the class in more than ten years. They also added a supervisor CIT course to help supervisors identify when they should utilize CIT officers. He noted that when the community requests a CIT officer, one should be sent when they are available. The CIT training will be adding one hour of trauma-informed care, which the committee suggested. The Targeted Violence Unit was given \$1.5 million from the Department of Homeland Security to add two additional full-time Spanish-speaking detectives, two case managers, and a mental health clinician who is Creole-speaking. Money will also be allocated toward mental health resources in the community. The majority of the funding will go to the mental health providers through Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network (SEFBHN). The third unit is a substance abuse program with one detective and one case manager to address overdoses in PBC. This team will work with the family and the individual to try to link them to services. They will also start working with Fire Rescue. In addition, Fire Rescue has a pilot program for transporting nonviolent Baker Acts that is still in the planning stages. Martin County is already using Fire Rescue to transport Baker Acts. He asked for the group to come up with suggestions, such as using MRT or a better way to transport individuals that aren't violent. The goal is to not involve law enforcement with Baker Acts unless they are needed.

- b. **BJA Connect and Protect Law Enforcement Behavioral Health Response grant:** Director Herring brought forward information about this grant that has a deadline of May 27th. This might be a great opportunity to secure additional funding. She would like to have a small exploratory team look at the grant. The maximum amount is \$550,000 with a three-year period and a 20% match. She suggested using the funds for additional evaluation and having a 30-60 minute meeting to discuss the grant. Jill Sorensen mentioned that they are thankful for the increased funding from the legislature that will help to enhance the MRT program. She also advised that there is a tremendous struggle in hiring licensed persons in the behavioral health workforce. A discussion was held concerning Senate Bill 1844, a mental health and substance abuse law regarding law enforcement transporting a person in the least restrictive manner possible. Chair Foley noted that due to officer safety and the individual's safety they need to be handcuffed in the back of the vehicle. Kevin McCormick advised that they don't use mechanical restraints, chemical restraints, or seclusion in the PBC School System. Chair Foley suggested a small group follow-up discussion concerning this item.
- c. **PBC Aware and Care Card/Magnet Update:** Stephen Plunk presented the graphics and Dr. Barbara Cox Gerlock provided an overview of the Aware and Care campaign. Aware and Care is intended to educate the community on when to call 211 which is for information and resources and when to call 911 for emergencies. A link is also provided to the site for additional resources. There was a discussion about the format of the card and CIT. Chair Foley remarked that not every law enforcement officer is CIT certified. It will take time to have more officers trained in CIT, but they are moving towards that goal. He noted that law enforcement is also dealing with staffing shortages. The group also recommended adding that 211 is available 24/7 and by text. The idea was brought up to have the magnet translated

into Spanish and Creole. Katherine Shover advised that she is working with the Water Utilities Department to have an Aware and Care rack card mailed out with the water bills.

- d. **Caregiver's Guide to Navigating a Hospitalization under the Florida Mental Health Act/The Baker Act:** Sharon Tarlow and Kevin McCormick presented the Caregiver's Guide on how to navigate a Baker Act. They recognized everyone that worked on this project including Michelle Beatty, Student Advocate Administrator, Indian Ridge School, Dr. Barbara Cox Gerlock, LLC, Consultant, Cheryl Harris, Program Planner for Autism and Emotional Behavioral Disabilities, School District of PBC, Michele Lockhart, Detective Supervisor, PBC School District, School Police, Kevin McCormick, Director, Exceptional Student Education, PBC School District, Jill Sorensen, Director of Children's System of Care, Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network, and Sharon Tarlow, Education Coordinator, Behavioral Health Services, HCA Florida JFK North Hospital. They noted that the brochure explains frequently used terms to help parents have a better understanding of what is happening. It also explains what happens when a child or adolescent comes to a receiving facility, as well as returns to an education setting and home. Next steps and frequently asked questions are provided for each section. The brochure also includes information about the ongoing communication between the parent and the school including the Release of Information (ROI) form. Additionally, they noted the time out of school is excused, as a letter will be provided by the hospital upon discharge. Lastly, it gives the family information on follow-up care and resources. Contact information was provided for 211 and 911 on the brochure. It will also be translated into other languages.

- e. PBC Aware and Care 5K Community Awareness Event: Chair Foley advised that there will be a 5k event on September 17th at Okeeheelee Park to raise money and awareness on mass violence prevention. They want to create a resource fair where community partners can set up tents and give out information. The PBC Aware and Care magnets and business cards will be distributed at the event. Please let Dr. Gena Rowlands know if you are interested in helping with planning the 5K or being part of the resource fair.

IV. **Business**

- a. Reaction Working Group: Mary Blakeney advised that they are working on the recommendations.

V. **Member Feedback and Comments:**

- a. Tammy Fields recognized Dr. Gerlock for her comprehensive presentation at the Criminal Justice Commission's Annual Planning meeting. Director Herring also commended Dr. Gerlock for her presentation. She noted that they will be following up with the CJC concerning the recommendations.
- b. Feedback was provided in the chat concerning whether to extend the meeting time.
- c. Tammy Fields reminded everyone that May is Mental Health Awareness/Trauma-Informed Care month. She provided information in the chat about the events. May 19th is the day to wear green to promote the Get Your Green On campaign. There is

a 5K associated with the event. Lisa Williams-Taylor, Ph.D., Vice Chair will also send out the Proclamation.

VI. Next meeting will be held on June 13, 2022, at 1 PM.

VII. Adjournment