

M I N U T E S

MONDAY, November 26, 2012

PALM BEACH COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

McEaddy Conference Room
12th Floor, 301 N. Olive Avenue
West Palm Beach

Members Present:

Rosalyn Baker
Peter Blanc
Mike Driscoll
George Elmore
Carey Haughwout
Feirmon Johnson
Randy Johnson, Sr.
William Kramer
Kathleen Kroll
Gerald Richman
Valentin Rodriguez
Chuck Shaw
Priscilla Taylor
Carmen Veneziano
Lee Waring

Barbara Cheives
Ex-Officio/Past Chair

Guests Attending:

Ronaldo Alvarez, 15th Judicial Circuit
Cristy Altaro, Court Administration
Clay Cox, Professional Probation Services
Pamela Eidelberg, County Attorney's Office
Michael Gauger, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office (for Ric Bradshaw)
Jenise Link, Justice Services - Department of Public Safety
Jennifer Loyless, Public Defender's Office
Lawrence J. Leon, School District Police Chief
Louis Tomeo, Clerk & Comptroller's Office (for Clerk Bock)

Staff Present:

Michael L. Rodriguez, Executive Director
Arlene Griffiths, Administrative Assistant
Shahzia Hashmi, Criminal Justice Analyst
Katherine Hatos, Senior Criminal Justice Analyst
Damir Kukec, Research & Planning Manager

Members Absent:

Peter Antonacci
James Barr
Mack Bernard
Sharon Bock
Ric Bradshaw
Steven Burdelski
Vincent Demasi
Douglas Duncan
Rolando Garcia
Nellie King
John McKenna
Robert Shirley

E. Wayne Gent
Ex-Officio Exec. Cmtee.

Craig Spatara, RESTORE Initiative Program Manager
Mike Szakacs, Financial Analyst II
Becky Walker, Criminal Justice Programs Manager

- I. Vice Chairman William Kramer called the meeting to order and welcome extended to members and guests.
- II. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.
- III. Vice Chairman Kramer invited guests to introduce themselves.
- IV. The agenda was unanimously approved after motion by Mr. Randy Johnson and second by Commissioner Priscilla Taylor.
- V. The minutes of the October 22, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved after motion by Mr. George Elmore and second by Mr. Lee Waring.
- VI. Under Chairman's Comments, Vice Chairman Kramer:
 - A. Reminded members of the annual meeting scheduled for Monday, December 10, 2012 in the McEaddy conference room.
 - B. Congratulated Mr. Chuck Shaw as the new Chairman of the Palm Beach County School Board, and Commissioner Taylor as the Vice Chair of the Board of County Commissioners.
- VII. Under Executive Director's comments, Mr. Rodriguez:
 - A. Invited members to participate in the annual Judge Marvin Mount's prison tour scheduled to take place from March 13 – 14, 2013. The two day tour starts at the Loxahatchee Road Prison and culminates at the Florida State Prison.

Vice Chairman Kramer commented on the meaningfulness of the prison tour, and urged members who have not yet taken the tour, to do so.
 - B. Reported that the Department of Justice has indicated that if the "fiscal cliff" is not averted, the Department could see an 8.2% cut in grant funding across the board.
 - C. Welcome Shahzia Hashmi as the new Criminal Justice Analyst, noting that the CJC now has a full staff compliment.
 - D. Invited members to participate in the CJC/United Way initiative to feed the hungry. Persons interested in donating should see to Arlene Griffiths.
- VIII. Business Consent Item

There were no business consent items.
- IX. Under Old Business, Mr. Rodriguez brought to the attention of members, the recommendations from the Criminal Justice Mental Health and Substance Abuse Juvenile Population Committee (CJMHS). He noted that the item was presented at last year's annual planning meeting and is now presented for member direction on how to proceed.

Judge Ronald Alvarez, Committee Chair noted that the first section of the recommendations addresses the reduction of evaluations carried out on youth, to develop one evaluation document. He said that the State is now considering “GAIN” which goes through mental health, substance abuse, criminal history checks, the social history, and all that is needed to evaluate the child. The second part he said, deals with identifying and implementing programs that are effective in addressing mental health and substance abuse issues of children. He further noted that there are existing programs that have been tested and proven nationally effective in addressing these issues. He spoke about the Functional Family Therapy program that has been around for more than a decade and is currently used in the juvenile justice system in instead of placing juveniles in justice residential program that is more costly.

During a discussion on how the recommendations should be implemented, Mr. Rodriguez agreed that while they could go to the BCC for funding, he was thinking of presenting a proposal at the next CJC annual planning meeting to use some formula dollars to contract with a university to look at existing programs that have proven effective. Commissioner Taylor inquired about the cost, to which Mr. Rodriguez responded would be several hundred thousand dollars to do it right, but said that \$100,000 could provide the CJC with preliminary data and distinguish between evidence based programs.

Mr. Waring agreed with Mr. Rodriguez suggestion as a good idea saying that it is consistent with CJC goals for the year. Public Defender Haughwout commented that the evaluation needs to be done, not just to determine whether it is evidence based, but also if the program has delivered true to its design. She is concerned however, about the CJC using limited formula dollars to evaluate juvenile justice programs instead of using to provide services, and wondered if another department such as Youth Services might be more appropriate to carry out an effective evaluation.

Vice Chairman Kramer noted that the CJC Committee has presented these recommendations to the CJC, and that its role may be to devise a way to move it forward, and not necessarily to participate in the evaluation. Public Defender Haughwout agrees that it might be the CJC’s role to recommend to the BCC that it be a directive of Youth Services.

Judge Blanc expressed concerns with doing an in-house evaluation as it might not provide the objectivity that is needed, and thinks that an outside person or entity with the skills and experience might be the option to get the best for our dollars. He suggested that the recommendations be sent back to the committee for a further recommendation on how to move forward. Judge Alvarez said that he and his committee would be happy to look at it, but noted that statistics need to be captured from providers in order to be able to truly evaluate programs.

Mr. Randy Johnson asked for comments from the Department of Juvenile Justice, at which point, Mr. Feirmon Johnson advised that he sits on the CJMHSA Committee and will be working with Judge Alvarez. He noted the importance of informing DJJ’s Secretary of the County’s needs during her visit in December.

Commissioner Taylor inquired about the possibility of overlapping services with the School District. Mr. Shaw responded that he would be happy to work with the committee, and proceeded to ask about the number of youth that are involved with the assessment through DJJ and the number of youth that have already been assessed through the Psychologist within the school system, saying there might be a disconnect. Judge Alvarez advised that the committee works with the School Board Liaison who is very helpful in providing information.

X. New Business

A. Nominating Committee Report

Ms. Barbara Cheives, Chairman of the Nominating Committee presented the recommendations for 2013 officers and executive committee members. The members were unanimously approved to serve for 2013 after motion by Mr. Randy Johnson and second by Mr. Commissioner Priscilla Taylor.

Officers

- Vice Chairman - William Kramer
- Treasurer - Lee Waring
- Secretary - Carey Haughwout

Private Sector Members

- James Barr
- George Elmore
- Gerald Richman

Public Sector Members

Rosalind Baker
Peter Blanc
Rolando Garcia
Fairmon Johnson
Chuck Shaw

Ex-Officio Members

Barbara Cheives, Immediate past Chair
E. Wayne Gent, School Board Superintendent

B. Adult Civil Citation

Mr. Rodriguez mentioned an news article on adult civil citation, which he explained, is an alternative to arrest and going to court while taking care of the agreed upon outcome, based on the crime committed. He said that it is being looked at in Tallahassee, and that it was also brought up by the Public Defender at a meeting in which he was involved. Mr. Rodriguez asked whether it is an issue that the CJC wishes to explore.

Public Defender Haughwout added that it would impact hundreds of cases at Gun Club on the walk in arraignments who are sent to do community services and report back with proof, which she said have a huge impact across the justice system. She remarked that it would be an efficient practice that would also save money. She feels that it is a CJC issue that might be pursued by the Courts System Task Force, though it would not allow the State Attorney,

Courts and the Public Defender to talk about while being pursued by the CJC. She noted that it is a similar idea to what was done at Community Court instead of attending a real court.

Chief Judge Blanc echoed the Public Defender's concern about not being able to talk about it, and thinks it might be a good idea and a more effective process for all three entities to look at it before presenting to the CJC for consideration.

Ms. Cheives inquired about law enforcement's involvement. Chief Judge Blanc responded that they would be involved at some point, but noted that getting the State Attorney on board is the most important component at this time. Vice Chairman Kramer asked that Deputy Gauger apprise the Sheriff of the potential discussion.

XI. CJC Initiatives/Updates

A. Misdemeanor Probation Services

Mr. Clay Cox, Chief Executive Officer of Professional Probation Services (PPS) provided an update on the probation services in Palm Beach County. In his presentation, Mr. Cox noted that PPS now has three offices up and running with most of the staff hired from Pride. All the offices; Belle Glade, Delray Beach and West Palm Beach are open two days per week, including late evenings and Delray and West Palm Beach offices opening two Saturdays per month to allow persons to report without missing work. He reported that the transition from Pride Integrated Services went smoothly, and that all the data was electronically transferred from Pride to their system. Persons are now able to make payments and receive computerized receipts immediately. PPS is about 80% complete with their training; and funds are being electronically transferred twice per week with the hopes of increasing to daily transfers.

Mr. Cox said that restitution collections have been going very well and are remitted to the Clerk's office within 14 days. Risk needs assessments are being completed in all cases and on-site testing are now been conducted. He also said that a status report is prepared and submitted to Chief Judge Blanc on a monthly basis.

Vice Chairman Kramer thanked Mr. Cox for the update.

B. 2012 Semi-Annual Uniform Crime Report

Mr. Rodriguez commented on the crime report included in the agenda packet. He highlighted the crime statistics for Florida, showing a comparison between the first six months of 2011 and 2012. He noted that the crime index continue to decline with its lowest level in 13 years in the first six months of 2012. Palm Beach County showed a slight increase (0.1%) in violent crimes from the prior semi-annual report, and a 32% decline since 2007. Palm Beach County also reported its lowest number of murder since 2005. In terms of murders, Palm Beach County showed a 22.2% decline since 2011, and a

42% decline since 2006, while Broward County showed an 85.7% increase. Robberies in Palm Beach County increased by 7.3% but decreased in Broward County by 7.2% during the same period. Non violent crimes are also at the lowest level in 13 years with a 0.4% since 2011.

C. Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)

Mr. Rodriguez remarked that JDAI is not a direct CJC subcommittee, but noted that Becky Walker and Damir Kucec are very involved with the subcommittee that is chaired by Feirmon Johnson.

Ms. Walker reported that JDAI sites are all over the country and it is funded by DJJ through the Annie E. Casey Foundation. There are four sites in Florida and according to the 2012 Annual Report, Palm Beach County is the most successful in achieving significant reductions in detention while increasing public safety. The report indicates a 26% drop in felony referrals, 40% drop in detention admissions, and 49% drop in detention population in Palm Beach County since 2009. This results in a fiscal impact of \$2M to the County.

She commented on some of activities that have contributed to the successes such as the collaboration of the different entities, Court Administration's efforts in reminding youth of their court dates to ensure appearance, and the alternatives to secure detention programs funded by the CJC and DJJ.

She noted the remark included in the report about using a portion of the \$2M savings to reinvest in detention alternatives and other services, supervision, and sanctions for court-involved youth.

Judge Kroll commended all the people involved and said she hopes that the CJC and BCC will put more efforts in putting kids first.

Members commented on the savings and what those funds could be used for.

Commissioner Taylor inquired about the unfunded mandate that the County is absorbing from the State, and argued about the \$2M savings. She remarked that it is great to see the numbers dropping, and mentioned that since it is a state initiative, the funds given to DJJ by the County could perhaps be channeled into better places. Judge Kroll expressed disagreement with Commissioner's statement saying that while she is not advocating for a take-over of the detention center, other counties have done it and has proven profitable. She added that she has asked the CJC on various occasion to look at it but that it has not happened.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that the bill to the County has been reduced from \$5M to \$3M and that there is real savings somewhere but that the calculation is somewhat difficult to understand based on the formula used. He pointed out that Florida Association of Counties and DJJ are looking at cost savings as an issue and are trying to identify better rational methods for calculating. Chief Judge Blanc echoed the comments, adding that the County has no ability to challenge the bill submitted to the County.

XII. Member Comments,

There were no member comments.

XIII. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:05 a.m.