

M I N U T E S

MONDAY, January 11, 2010 – 8:00 a.m.

**PALM BEACH COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

McEaddy Conference Room
12th Floor, 301 N. Olive Avenue
West Palm Beach, Florida 33401

Members Present:

Peter Blanc
Barbara Cheives
Douglas Duncan
George Elmore
Carey Haughwout
Feirmon Johnson
Frank Kitzerow
William Kramer
Marti LaTour
Michael McAuliffe
Gerald Richman

James Barr (ex officio
Executive Committee)

Art Johnson (ex officio
Executive Committee)

Guests Attending:

August A. Bonavita, County Court Judge
Jim Kelley, School District
Jennifer Loyless, Public Defender's Office
Louis Tomeo, Clerk & Comptroller's Office

Staff Present:

Michael L. Rodriguez, Executive Director
Journey Beard, Crime Prevention Project Specialist
Arlene Burton-Griffiths, Administrative Secretary
Wayne English, Sr. Criminal Justice Analyst
Shahzia Hashmi, Intern
Katherine Hatos, Criminal Justice Analyst
Damir Kukec, Research & Planning Manager
Jenise Link, Sr. Criminal Justice Analyst
Shenique McKenzie, Student Intern
Rosalind Murray, Program Development Specialist

Members Absent:

Ric Bradshaw

Brenda Oakes, Youth Violence Prevention Planning Coordinator
Candee Villapando, Criminal Justice Analyst
Becky Walker, Criminal Justice Programs Manager

- I. Chair Barbara Cheives called the meeting to order at 8:08 a.m.
- II. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.
- III. Chair Barbara Cheives welcomed members and invited guests to introduce themselves.
- IV. The agenda was unanimously approved after motion by Mr. Douglas Duncan and second by State Attorney Michael McAuliffe.
- V. The minutes of the September 14, 2009 Executive meeting were unanimously approved after motion by Mr. Max Davis and second by Mr. George Elmore.
- VI. Under Chairman's Comments, Ms. Cheives :
 - A. Reminded persons to use the microphone when speaking so that everyone can hear easily.
 - B. Commented on the Reentry Strategic Plan approved by the CJC meeting at the last full meeting. She spoke of the collaborative efforts of the Reentry Task Force and the Department of Corrections (DOC) for the establishment of a reentry site in Palm Beach County. This she said lead to the visit of Secretary Walter McNeil and resulted in the increased interest in housing a reentry site in Palm Beach County. She provided a brief on the Secretary's visit and developments since his visit.

Public Defender Carey Haughwout added that one of the goals of the Reentry Task Force strategic plan was to partner with DOC where the inmates returning to Palm Beach County would be sent to a local institution in order to begin community transition in a meaningful manner. This she said worked out in the County's favor with the visit of Secretary McNeil.

She remarked that the group's presentation to Secretary McNeil coupled with his view of the community support placed Palm Beach County at the top of the list as a potential site. The County has since been contacted about partnering with DOC on an up to \$750,000.00 Second Chance Act Grant for establishment of the reentry site. She said that the plan would be to bring inmates three years out from their release to Sable Palm where they would begin intensive services (educational, vocational and substance abuse etc.) in the institution as well as the community in order to establish a connection. She thinks that this will utilize the work release centers in Palm Beach County. Ms. Haughwout advised that a meeting is scheduled to discuss the grant and moving forward.

State Attorney Michael McAuliffe reported that he wrote a letter to Secretary McNeil inquiring about the additional services to be provided under the pilot program as well as what would be expected of the community in terms of commitment, but has not received a response.

Ms. Haughwout remarked that she did not think a response would be forth coming until it is certain that the County is getting the grant as a lot will be contingent on the funding. She also said that the DOC is currently reviewing their match for the funding in terms of in-kind services that they will be able to

provide at the facility in partnership with the community, but feels that Palm Beach County has a good chance of being selected. She noted that the Jacksonville pilot is channeled through the Sheriff's Department while Palm Beach will be channeled through the community, and further stated that the Secretary was impressed with the community involvement in Reentry in Palm Beach County.

Chair Barbara Cheives added that approximately 1400 people are sent from Palm Beach County to the Florida State prison system while 1200 return each year. She also noted that the Secretary's goal in the selected counties is to reduce recidivism rate by 50%.

She thanked Public Defender Haughwout and Jennifer Loyless as well as the Reentry Task Force for taking a lead on the issue.

VII. Under Executive Director's Comments, Mr. Rodriguez:

- A. Announced the 2nd Palm Beach County Re-Entry Transition Fair to be held on Friday, January 29, 2010 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Salvation Army. He noted that the event is hosted by County Commissioner Priscilla A. Taylor and the Palm Beach County Criminal Justice Commission's Weed and Seed program, and is designed to help those who have been incarcerated re-enter society as productive citizens. Local service providers throughout the County will be in attendance.
- B. Reminded members who have not returned the CJC satisfaction survey to do so today, adding that the CJC provides this report to the County.

VIII. Business Consent Item

There were no business consent items.

IX. Old Business

Under old business, Chair Barbara Cheives commented on the strategic planning committee meeting held in November 2009, indicating that at the request of Commissioner Karen Marcus, a presentation on the services provided by the Department of Public Safety in Palm Beach County was made by Mr. Vince Bonvento. Other constitutional officers (Chief Judge, Public Defender, State Attorney and Sheriff) were asked to do similar presentation at the January full commission meeting, but noted that there has been some indecision in moving forward. Former Chair James Barr received a response from Chief Judge Peter Blanc indicating that most of the services provided by the Courts were already covered by Mr. Bonvento, and that any additional services to be covered in a ten-minute presentation would do no justice. Chair Cheives inquired whether the CJC feels there is a need for such presentations, and invited feedback from members.

Public Defender Haughwout remarked that while she is happy to do the presentation, she was still not sure why the request was made and what the CJC would do with the information gathered at the end of the exercise. She also noted that if the duplication of services were to be evaluated, it should include all services in the County and not just those provided by Public Safety.

Mr. Barr commented that in his opinion, the Commissioner was looking for a review of

the various kinds of services offered to determine if and where there are overlaps and to make recommendations accordingly. He said that the review stems from the CJC's commitment as a commission to look at its overall focus relative to the breadth of what the CJC staff does with regard to programs versus recommendations to the BCC.

Mr. Rodriguez concurred with Mr. Barr with regards to Commissioner Marcus' request.

Dr. Art Johnson commented on the budget situation saying that the CJC is regarded as the expert and has to be a part of the problem solvers as the CJC faces the same challenge like the community where there are insufficient funds and will ultimately need to address the issue of downsizing.

State Attorney Michael McAuliffe remarked that the ten minute presentation doesn't seem to be the appropriate vehicle to meet the objectives of meaningfully evaluating and making recommendations to the BCC, but pointed out that some of the issues should be discussed at the upcoming CJC planning meeting.

Chair Cheives commented that she would like Commissioner Marcus as the CJC's liaison to the BCC, to be comfortable with the fact that the CJC is in agreement with how the programs are funded and whether there are duplications.

Mr. George Elmore inquired about the proposed permanent funding solutions committee. He noted that Fire Rescue Department will go after the half cent sales tax that will be given up next year, to underwrite the shortfall in their ad valorem tax. He thinks it will be a major problem for the CJC to seek a specific taxing district at this time.

Dr. Johnson added that Commissioner Jeff Koons has been speaking with the School District about some governmental combined approach at the half cent sales tax in order to benefit various groups. He said that the new Chair of the Juvenile Justice Commission who is aware of that possibility also contacted him about being the recipient or a part of the recipient of that sales tax. He therefore thinks that it is an important question when looking at the public policy as there are a lot more needs than dollars that will come out of that.

Chair Cheives recommended that the CJC not schedule the presentations at this time. She further stated that a strategic planning committee was established (members include Jim Barr – Chair, Lee Waring, Marti LaTour, Chief Judge Blanc, Bill Kramer, George Elmore and Matt Immler).

Dr. Johnson commented that for years the School District has used many independent outside advisory committees that report quarterly or monthly to the Board in the form of a five to ten minute presentation. He feels that Commissioner Marcus is looking for something of a similar nature from the CJC as the expert in the criminal justice system. He further noted that the BCC does not have the knowledge of the criminal justice system at the level of the CJC, and sees it as a good thing to be able to report to the BCC every month if possible, which he said would make them aware of the CJC's recommendations, concerns etc, and prove more helpful to the BCC.

State Attorney McAuliffe remarked that there needs to be a larger process for periodic reporting on performance and compliance with all CJC funded activities and projects. He also said that his office made a presentation to the BCC a month ago and that he would be happy to provide a copy of the presentation to the CJC.

Mr. Richman inquired if there was a process in place to evaluate all the criminal justice programs that are being funded.

Mr. Rodriguez noted that evaluations have in the past been done sporadically with the Weed and Seed program, but that the CJC has improved in that area and has for the first time, set aside money for research and evaluation of the programs.

Mr. Damir Kukec added that while funds have been set aside for research and evaluation of the CJC projects, it does not include the operations of the criminal justice system in Palm Beach County in its entirety.

Members further discussed and provided their opinion on how the CJC should proceed in terms of its charter, available funds and direction by the BCC.

In conclusion, Chair Cheives read the CJC's mission and purpose and asked that members be reminded of same as the CJC moves forward.

- X. Under New Business, Mr. Rodriguez noted that Commissioner Jeff Koons contacted him regarding a request from Chief Judge Blanc about the possibility of a veteran's court and whether the CJC thinks it is a good idea. He referred to a letter from the Chief Judge as well as information from the Buffalo model of their Veterans Court included in the agenda packet.

Chief Judge Peter Blanc commented on his meeting with the Veterans Association (VA), noting one of their concerns regarding whether they would have the resources dedicated solely to Palm Beach County or if they would have to share their resources with Broward County if they were able to get this veterans docket up and running. He said that while this is in the very early stages, he thought that a letter from Commissioner Koons to suggest that the numbers would justify dedicating resources solely to Palm Beach County would be helpful. He noted that Broward County does not have a veteran's court but that they are also discussing the issue. He said that Court Administration met with two different groups from the Beach County VA to get something formal in place.

Mr. McAuliffe noted that as we proceed with establishing the veteran's court, the issue of interaction with the mental health and drug court operations should be considered.

Chief Judge Blanc said he did not envision the veterans court to be a separate division since the additional resource is not available, but to instead work in conjunction with the mental health and drug courts. He noted however, that if the VA has the resources federally funded, they can be referred to utilize those without using the limited state resources. The idea he said, is to provide resources without much focus on sanctions, by tapping into the federal resources.

After further discussions, a motion to support the concept of a veteran's court was made by Mr. James Barr and seconded by Mr. Bill Kramer.

XI. Member Comments

There were no member comments.

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:58 a.m.