



PROBATION ADVISORY BOARD

301 N. Olive Ave., **10th Floor**, CJC Conference Room
 West Palm Beach, FL 33401

MINUTES

Thursday, May 2, 2024, 12:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Andrea Rocha (Zachary Ives), Clerk & Comptroller’s Office
Judge Ashley Zuckerman, Chair, County Court Administrative, 15th Judicial Circuit
Derek Gibson, Circuit Administrator, Florida Department of Corrections
Stephen Arbuzow (Michael Deuker), Public Defender’s Office
Steven Cohen, Criminal Defense Attorney
State Attorney’s Office (Vacant)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Nathan Vreeland, U.S. Probation Office

CJC STAFF PRESENT:

Brad Allen, Criminal Justice Analyst
Christopher Slydell, Criminal Justice Analyst
Damir Kukec, Research & Planning Manager
Dawn Caveness-Davenport, Senior Criminal Justice Analyst
Katherine Shover, Criminal Justice Systems Manager
Margo Smith, Criminal Justice Analyst
Stephanie Moliere, Senior Criminal Justice Analyst

GUESTS ATTENDING:

Glenny Cueto, Director of Operations, Professional Probation Services, Inc.

- I. **Welcome and Opening Comments** – *Judge Ashley Zuckerman, Chair*
 Chair, Judge Zuckerman, welcomed all members along with CJC Staff; everyone provided a brief overview of their role/duties.
- II. **Roll Call**– *Christopher Slydell, Criminal Analyst*
 Mr. Slydell determined there was a quorum for the meeting.
- III. **Approval of and/or Additions to the Meeting Agenda**
 Chair, Judge Zuckerman, made a motion for the Agenda to be approved, Steven Cohen seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- IV. **Approval of Minutes for the June 7, 2023 Meeting**
 Chair, Judge Zuckerman, made a motion for the Minutes to be approved for June 7, 2023. Michael Dueker seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- V. **Discussion Items-**
 - A. Brief introduction of Members- *Judge, Ashley Zuckerman, Chair*



- All members introduced themselves, along with their backgrounds/expertise, in addition to CJC staff as well.
- B. Professional Probation Services reports- *Glenny Cueto, Director of Operations-PBC, Florida at PPS, Inc. (Report attached, pg. 4-13)*
 - Ms. Cueto provided an overview of PPS, Inc., the number of locations they have in Palm Beach County, their financial summary, number of probationers they engage with along with other details as described in the PowerPoint attached to the Agenda. PPS, Inc. is looking to hire extra staff for courthouse coverage on the 9th Floor (four (4) times a week; Wednesdays are usually quite slow due to jury trials taking place) and are currently open on Monday's and Friday's in the morning at this time; they service probationers until the last client comes in to sign up.

VI. Old Business

- A. Evaluation of PPS Contract- *Damir Kukec, Research & Planning Manager*
 - I. Site visit(s) completed
 - **Mr. Slydell:** Site visits to PPS, Inc. were completed on 3/21/24 (West Palm Beach and Delray Beach) & 3/22/24 (Belle Glade).
 - Each office was easy to find, had signage posted, hours of operation, staff to guide/check in probationers, offices for probation officers, and waiting rooms for probationers.
 - II. Desk or Case Review to be scheduled-
 - **Mr. Slydell:** The Research & Planning Unit have all the technology/information need to schedule a desk or case review with Glenny to monitor/evaluate the PPS, Inc. contract.
- B. Audit of PPS per contract guidelines- *Damir Kukec, Research & Planning Manager*
 - I. Name of Agency that completed the Audit of Pride in 2010 and the cost.
 - In March of 2010, the CJC received information stating the former probation contract holder was using funds in an inappropriate manner (restitution fees paid by probationers were being held longer than 14 days and were meant to support the Crime Trust Fund). Subsequently, The Clerk of the Court completed a review of the court costs & fines as well as restitution payments. At this time, we have enough resources to complete an Audit internally. We can also look at our internal auditor, and financial support team (Marianela Diaz & John Port) to complete an audit of PPS, Inc. financials.
 - Mr. Kukec also reminded the board that per the contract, the 'Contractor' must hire an independent auditor to review their finances (pg. 33).
- C. Public Defender Office Request for Information- *Glenny Cueto, Assistant Director, PPS, Inc.*
 - I. Number of people on probation from year to year to identify trends
 - A total of **2,273 cases** are being actively monitored by PPS, Inc. (*cases with violations of probation are included*). *****NO CASE COMPARISON/ANALYSIS HAS TAKEN PLACE AT THIS TIME TO DETERMINE ANY TRENDS***.**
 - II. How many probationer's report via mail-in
 - 356 probationers report via mail in as of 5/2/24.
 - III. The number of probationers in each office along with the number of PPS sites in the State of Florida
 - Provided information on the number of intake officers (3 total with 2 in the office and 1 at court; the third has yet to be hired and will be in court from 8am-1pm or so. There are twelve



probation officers (12) with a total of 2,273 cases between them. Glenny provided a document detailing the number of PPS locations in Florida as well as the United States.

Questions, Answers & Statements:

Steven Cohen: What is the unsupervised category under the current cases by judges, and what's the "hold" category?

A-Ms. Cueto: The unsupervised category is Administrative Probation (*PPS meets with the probationer once, if they are in the county, to review any conditions of probation; a monthly check is made to ensure there are no new charges, and if fines & court costs are the condition of probation PPS collects those funds on behalf of the court from the probationer; these individuals have no monthly probation fee*), cases that don't report to probation nor have any payment to submit to the court/victim. The Whole Category are individuals in treatment, or in custody.

Mr. Dueker: There was information requested by the PD's Office at the last meeting from PPS, as a follow up, can the PD's Office receive data from PPS separating the DUI cases versus others? Also, when it comes to the probation fee, do you keep information on how much money was collected in the month? Lastly, do you have an idea when the third Intake Officer will be hired?

A-Ms. Cueto: Yes, there's more than likely a way for PPS to separate those cases data wise. PPS provides a monthly update to the CJC detailing how much revenue was collected from probation fees (this will be included in future reports as suggested by Ms. Shover). PPS has not received preferred applications from their pool of candidates, yet remain diligent in filling the role as soon as possible (within the next month).

Chair, Judge Zuckerman: Is there always coverage for probationers at the three (3) locations?

A-Ms. Cueto: There is always someone available in the office (there's court staff, and office staff) and the office "closes" during the staff's lunch break, major holiday's (county calendar). On Tuesday's and Thursday's they have extended office hours (until 6pm), and open the office one Saturday a month as well.

Chair, Judge Zuckerman: With being aware of the \$5 increase to \$55 for the probation fee, is PPS also providing a sliding scale fee?

A-Ms. Cueto: There is a sliding scale fee provided to probationers who provide proof of their financial hardship (documentation must be provided to PPS). A probation fee waiver is also available based on the severe financial hardship with documented proof.

Member: Can PPS provide the board with statistics (past six months) on how many probationers applied for and received waivers, as well those probationers on a sliding fee scale?

A-Ms. Cueto: Yes (non-verbal head shake).

Chair, Judge Zuckerman: Unless there is pertinent work to be done, how does the board think about meeting twice a year, quarterly or as needed to ensure efficiency?

Damir: If there is a problem with anything a phone call is typically made to the CJC. Emergency meetings can always be facilitated by the CJC as needed to support the efforts of PAB.

Members: Meeting bi-annually at this time seems to be appropriate with the option to convene as needed, next meeting will be in October.

VII. New Business-

A. Develop a Work Plan for the PPS contract evaluation - *Damir Kukec, Research & Planning Manager*

- The contract runs through December 3, 2025 (expires officially on the 4th) and has two (2) one (1) year extensions available prior to another Request for Proposal (RFP).



- The way the contract is worded, the Criminal Justice Commission has tasked the Probation Advisory Board has, to monitor PPS activities. Subsequently we plan to conduct a report on whether the judges, Public Defender, State Attorney, Clerk of the Court, etc. are satisfied with the conduct of PPS per the contract stipulations. We will also provide a more quantitative evaluation in terms of the number of individuals on probation, how many are paying the costs associated with their conditions of probation, how much they are paying, etc.
- We also want to look at recidivism a bit more from a data perspective to potentially identify and key factors or drivers that may need to be addressed, reaching beyond what's outlined to monitor/evaluate in the contract from (ex. exploring an evaluation on how we are doing in comparison to other jurisdictions) and are open to any other comments or suggestions from the board as well.
- Mr. Kukec plans to reach out to PPS to discuss their independent auditor(s) and will provide that information to the board.
- Mr. Slydell will email a copy of the most current PPS, Inc. contract to all of the members in the next week.

VIII. Member Comments- NONE

IX. Guest Comments- NONE

X. Adjournment- Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: October 2, 2024 - 12 PM
Robert Weisman Governmental Center
10th Floor, CJC Conference Room
301 N. Olive Avenue, West Palm Beach, FL 33401