



PALM BEACH COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT
PBC Reentry Task Force

Wednesday July 22, 2020
WebEx Meeting

Summary Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Angela Bess, PBC School District
Armando Fana, City of West Palm Beach
Carey Haughwout, Public Defender's Office
Cassandra Atkin-Plunk, Florida Atlantic University
Dhiny Mercedes, CareerSource
Diana Stanley, The Lord's Place
Geeta Loach-Jacobson, PBC Youth Services Department
Gregory Starling, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice
Jennifer Loyless, Office of the Public Defender
Justin Kunzelman, Rebel Recovery Florida Inc.
Kathleen Kroll, 15th Judicial Circuit
Kevin Johns, West Palm Beach Mayor's Office
Laura Waterman, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Marsha Martino, National Alliance on Mental Illness
Meredith Powers-Lupo, Veteran's Administration
Michelle Johns, Florida Department of Corrections
Nicole Bishop, PBC Public Safety Department
Nikole Konieczny, Palm Beach State College
Orie Bullard, The City of Riviera Beach Reentry Center
Oswald Newbold, PBC Resident
Craig Spatara, GEO Group
Tamara Starks, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office
Charisse Von Biesen, SEFBHN

Guests:

Cristy Altaro, Court Administration
Emily McBay, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Mark Ferante, American Institute of Research
Mona Duffus, The Lord's Place
Negaysha Walcott, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Richardo Jackson, Monarch Health Services
Ronnie Davidovic, FAC
Sarita Johnson, Care Joy
Shahzia Jackson, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
Shannon Fox, PBC Attorney
Wenfred Dorsey, The Lord's Place

Public Safety Department Staff Present:

Alia Spencer, PBC Public Safety Department
Arlene Griffiths, PBC Public Safety Department
Chenise Bonilla, PBC Public Safety Department
Jessica Hidalgo, PBC Public Safety Department
Randi Taylor, PBC Safety Department
Sarah Sanchez, PBC Public Safety Department

Members Absent:

Julia Dattolo, CareerSource
John Cohen, League of Cities
Laura Johnson, 15th Judicial Circuit
Robert Graham, True Fast Ministries, Inc.
Audrey McDonough, Literacy Coalition
Tyrus McCloud, Prison Fellowship
Steven Spaulding, Legal Aid Society of PBC
Joe Speicher, South County Mental Health Center
Alton Taylor, Drug Abuse Foundation
Elisa Cramer, Florida Department of Children and Families
Adam Davis, PBC Library Department
Patricia Mikulan, Salvation Army
Bert Winkler, Criminal Justice Commission
Barbara Cheives, Converge & Associates Consulting

I. Welcome, Opening Comments, and Introductions – Chair, Dr. Angela Bess, PBC School District

Please Note: Florida Sunshine Law provides this is a public meeting; all meetings are audio recorded and documents are open to public inspection.

- II. **Introduction of members and guests** – Ms. Bonilla did a roll call and asked guests to put their names in the WebEx Chat or email her directly to record attendance.
- III. **Approval and/or Additions to the Preliminary Agenda** – Approved.
- IV. **Approval and/or corrections to the 1/22/2020 meeting minutes**–Approved.
- V. **Subcommittee/ Program Office Updates**
- **Employment, Training, and Education Subcommittee, *Dhiny Mercedes, Reentry Program Supervisor, CareerSource***, Mr. Mercedes gave a brief update on the three employment goals based on the work plan. He remarked about the need for increased awareness, and that he is working on providing more information to employers. He also advised of new funding through CareerSource for Employment.
 - **Data and Evaluation Subcommittee, *Jennifer Loyless, Project Coordinator, PBC Public Defender's Office***, Ms. Loyless discussed previous ad hoc nature of the subcommittee, and the transformation into a proactive, regular body for data collection and analyses. She also discussed the need for an updated reentry system, research analysis and feedback on how to keep data collection moving forward. It was mentioned that we should partner with the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) or exploring the possibility of funding an outside entity and using the Data Subcommittee to analyze all of the data. It was also mentioned that we should reach out to the National Reentry Center and/or CSG to see which resources may be available for evaluation of the program. Dr. Bess will send a letter to the Chair of the Criminal Justice Commission requesting to analyze reentry data. Submit a request to the CJC to provide assistance with data collection and analysis.
 - **Housing Subcommittee, *Armando Fana, Assistant City Administrator, City of West Palm Beach***, Mr. Fana recapped the subcommittee's work plan, which included reengaging local housing authorities. He also provided an update, highlighting the success of the Housing Pilot project, this included a one- pager for Task Force members. He noted the desire for future expansion in the housing pilot and additional resources for reentry participants. Ms. Alia Spencer added that while there was no difference between the treatment and the controlled group, in terms of employment, the treatment group was consistently employed, often times having multiple jobs possibly because of their stability with housing. A deeper dive will be done with this pilot and update provided accordingly.
 - **Sex Offender Subcommittee, *Meredith Powers-Lupo, Healthcare for Veterans Reentry Specialist, West Palm Beach VA***, Ms. Powers-Lupo presented a proposal to the Reentry Task Force for PBC Reentry Task Force Sex Offender Subcommittee and Broward County Coalition on Sex Offenders to combine their efforts in finding solutions for this population. She presented a proposed plan which highlighted the major issues faced by individuals with sexual offenses for the members' feedback. Ms. Haughwout mentioned legal concerns with merging the two subcommittees, and after further discussion, members decided the two subcommittees should test this collaboration with one or two client centered objectives, but not officially merged. Ms. Haughwout further suggested a joint meeting to target legislative issues to present to PBC and BC legislative delegation.
 - **Sustainability Subcommittee, *Diana Stanley, Chief Executive Officer, The Lord's Place, and Tamara Starks, Unit Manager, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office***, Ms. Stanley provided an update from the last subcommittee meeting and stated that members

will continue to look at the funding streams and new resources under public and/or private funds. The need to maximize the current available resources was also mentioned. Ms. Stanley also mentioned the Reentry Summit postponement.

- **Youth Reentry Subcommittee, *The Honorable Kathleen Kroll, 15th Judicial Circuit, and Geeta Loach-Jacobson, Director of Outreach and Community Programming, PBC Youth Services Department***, Judge Kroll provided the subcommittee's update, and noted that the Youth Homelessness grant funding did not prioritize DJJ/DCF youth's. She further stated that the goal is to have the youth stay in Palm Beach County during their stay in residential commitment facilities and upon completion of the commitment program. She also asked to identify speakers on best practices to change behaviors and engage the youth's families.
- **Program Office Updates, *Chenise Bonilla, Manager of Criminal Justice Programs, PBC Public Safety Department***, Ms. Bonilla gave an update on Palm Beach County activities since the last task force meeting. These include PBC's lobby for additional FDC funds and received double the amount, from \$250,000 to \$500,000 for case management and support services. Also, added the following items to the compensation chart as an allowable expenses for reentry participants: gift cards for adults, bikes for youth, basic technology needs (i.e. tablets, phones, and minutes for phone or phone bill). PBC began a weekly Reentry Updates email that includes reentry news articles, national publications, and local resources. Also, case managers received a culturally competency training and CareerSource training.

VI. Reentry Participants Success Story & COVID-19 Impact, This agenda item was not discussed due to time constraints.

VII. Amendment 4 Update, *Jennifer Loyless/Arlene Griffiths, Reentry Program Coordinator, PBC Public Safety Department*, Ms. Griffiths gave an update on the committee working on the restoration of voting rights for returning residents, including a video featuring Public Defender Carey Haughwout and State Attorney Dave Aronberg in this regard.

VIII. Additional Member and Guest Comments

Presentation- Monarch Health Services, *Richardo Jackson*

Mr. Jackson gave a brief overview on the services that Monarch Health provide which include free STI/STD testing and treatment, resources and transportation and services for all clients in Palm Beach County. Services are offered in English, Spanish, and Creole.

IX. Next Steps

a. Recap Action Items:

- i. Chairs and Vice Chairs will continue to work on subcommittee work plans.
- ii. Letter to CJC Chair to request reentry data evaluation.
- iii. Continue to review results of the West Palm Beach Housing Pilot and present final data.
- iv. Strategize with Broward County's Sex Offender Subcommittee on some common objectives.

b. Next Meeting Dates: Wednesday, October 28, 2020

X. Adjournment, Adjourned at 1:45PM.