



PALM BEACH COUNTY'S PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

Palm Beach County Reentry Task Force

Full Task Force Meeting

Wednesday January 25, 2023 @ 12:00pm

Palm Beach County Governmental Center

McEaddy Conference Room, 12th Floor

301 N. Olive Ave., WPB, FL 33401

Summary Meeting Minutes

Members & Guests Present:

Chair, Carey Haughwout, Office of the Public Defender
 Gregory Starling, Department of Juvenile Justice C-15
 Angela Bess, School District of PBC
 Julia Dattolo, CareerSource of Palm Beach County
 Jeffrey Gillen, 15th Judicial Circuit
 Teresa Johnson, League of Cities – Town of Haverhill
 Kevin Jones, City of West Palm Beach Police Department
 Nancy McConnell, Rebel Recovery
 Tamara Starks, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
 Adam Davis, PBC Library
 Alia Spencer, Palm Beach State College
 Alicia Reno, SEFBHN
 Antonia Smith, Office of Equal Business Opportunity
 Arnia Perpignand, Department of Corrections
 Brenda, Belle Glade
 Cassandra Atkin-Plunk, Florida Atlantic University
 Craig Spataro, GEO Group
 Cristina Lucier, The Lord's Place
 Daniel Santiago, The Lord's Place
 Diana Stanley, The Lord's Place
 Florence Thompson, Salvation Army
 Helen Eddyings, Eph 428 Anchor House
 Jasper Kandola, Supervisor of Elections Office
 Jennifer Loyless, Office of the Public Defender
 Jessica Younts, Justice Impact Alliance
 John Eddings, Eph 428 Anchor House
 Kevin Choi, Harm Reduction Center
 Kim Raynor, Supervisor of Elections Office
 Liela Basili, Supervisor of Elections Office
 Leonard Neal, GAMA
 Kenneth Crawford, The Salvation Army
 Laura Waterman, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
 Lynn Trimble, Choice to Change

Maggie Witherow, Restoration Destination
 Marcia Bahia, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
 Meredith Powers-Lupo, Veterans Affairs
 Monique Brown-Faust, Integrated Healthcare Systems
 Mayra Geldent, SEFBHN
 Nicole Davis, Office of Equal Business Opportunity
 Orié Bullard, The Riviera Beach Reentry Center
 Raynisha Perry, Career Source PBC
 Robert Graham, True Fast Ministries, Inc.
 Serena Marlow, Department of Corrections (Sago Palm)
 Shazia Jackson, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
 Sheila Kurzen, Department of Corrections (Sago Palm)
 Tina Robinson, Department of Juvenile Justice C-15
 Timothy Gradsom, Salvation Army
 Vanessa Klein, The Lord's Place
 William Freeman, People of Purpose
 Willie, GAMA

Public Safety Department Staff Present:

Arlene Griffiths, PBC Public Safety Department
 Bridget Rodriguez, City of Riviera Beach Reentry Center
 Jessica Hidalgo, PBC Public Safety Department
 Latronda Hayes, PBC Public Safety Department
 Les'Unique Hessing, PBC Public Safety Department
 Nicole Bishop, PBC Public Safety Department
 Shirlon St. Amour, PBC Public Safety Department
 Stephanie Sejnoha, PBC Public Safety Department
 Randi Taylor, PBC Public Safety Department

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** *Chair Carey Haughwout, Public Defender*
 - a. Chair Haughwout extended welcome to members and guests.
 - b. Roll call of voting members was conducted for quorum purposes.
 - c. Meeting attendees introduced themselves.
- II. **Approval and/or Additions to the Preliminary Agenda** – approved following addition of an item to discuss adding a slot for the business community on the Task Force
- III. **Approval and/or Corrections to the 4/27/2022 Meeting Minutes** – Approved
- IV. **Chairman's Comments**, Chair Haughwout expressed appreciation for the efforts of all and commented on the new initiatives and what the group can do to further these initiatives.
- V. **Addition of a slot for the business community**
- VI. **New Business**
 - a. **Addition of a slot on the Task Force for the business community**

Chair Haughwout noted that while the Task Force has great members, but it is agencies or offices and think it would be beneficial to have a member from the business community as this is vital in the employment and reintegration of returning residents. Motion to add the business community member was moved by Kevin Jones and second by Nancy McConnell.

A representative from LEADS agency was recommended as well as Cristina Morrison, former CJC member that is very interested in reentry efforts and is involved in the Economic Council. Director Stephanie Sejnoha advised that this requires Board of County Commissioners approval and that efforts would be made to get this done. Members were asked to send other recommendations, if any to Arlene
 - b. Member vacancy for an expert in mental health that was held by Marsha Martino of NAMI. The following individuals were recommended to be explored:
 - Katherine, new Executive Director - NAMI
 - Cristina Baker – Mental Health Association

Director Sejnoha will also confirm if this needs approval by the BCC.

Chair Haughwout will reach out to both individuals, and it was also suggested that Marsha Martino be contacted for any recommendation in this regard.
 - c. **Criminal Justice Commission/Reentry Task Force Joint Meeting** *Chair Haughwout*

Kevin Jones in his report on the meeting, noted that a number of items were discussed including the recent grant received that will be used to enhance reentry services in the Glades community. It was decided that since the funds received could serve only 30 individuals, the Task Force in collaboration with the CJC would approach the BCC for an additional \$191,000 in order to serve 60 people per year. Another request from the dialogue included to create a video/information for returning individuals for a smooth transition to the community. The grant was awarded by the Department of Justice in the amount of \$750,000, and will focus on behavioral health of those exiting the local

jail. The grant includes a planning period to determine its implementation. Chair Haughwout recommended a mini strategic planning group to look at data and other issues that may not be addressed by this grant to support the work of the grant planning team. Nancy McConnell remarked about the services including screening that Rebel Recovery is already doing in the jail, and the need to combine efforts to avoid duplication. Nancy McConnell, Tamara Starks, Diana Stanley, and John Eddings makes up the planning group in this regard.

Motion was made by Tamara Starks and unanimously approved to request matching funds from the BCC in order to serve an additional 30 individuals per year.

Outreach Video: Jennifer Loyless advised that a meeting was held in collaboration with the CJC and including individuals that have been impacted by the justice system, for the production of a video to be utilized as a tool for outreach. The aim is for Individuals to tell their story in an authentic fashion about their journey to inspire others that are also impacted. Producing three separate videos for the jail, prison, and the community was discussed.

She expressed appreciation to the Department of Corrections for their collaboration on efforts to increase outreach to the prisons. She outlined the procedures that was developed which will focus initially on the top ten releasing facilities to Palm Beach County, and is hoping to start same in February. This will utilize the D10 monitors in the facilities to have group informational session followed by individual check-ins with individuals wishing to participate.

d. **Outreach efforts, Jennifer Loyless**

Department of Corrections Policy & Procedure: In addition to the video production, the reentry team met with Department of Corrections to create a Policy and Procedure that will assist with efforts to enhance outreach and increase engagement of individuals returning to Palm Beach County. Jennifer expressed appreciation to the Department of Corrections for their collaboration in this regard, and outlined the procedures that was developed which will focus initially on the top ten releasing facilities to Palm Beach County, and is hoping to start same in February. This will utilize the D10 monitors in the facilities to have group informational session followed by individual check-ins with individuals wishing to participate.

Tamara Starks

Probation Bus: Arnia Perpignand spoke about the mobile unit that was recently rolled out to allow greater access for individuals on check in with probation officers to reduce the number of technical violations. The bus is outfitted with three work stations, wifi and other tools to serve about 5000 individuals. A monthly schedule of the location of the bus is developed and distributed widely. The bus has so far been to the western communities and other central locations including The Reentry Center. Vice Chair Starling added that the intention is to provide even greater access for individuals and that it was reported it is going well so far. Other locations including the library will be explored. Chair Haughwout commented on the coordination of the bus with the Health Care District for additional services. Robert Graham advised of mental health services that is offered by True Fast Ministries, Inc and the possibility of the bus utilizing that location.

e. **CareerSource Update, Julia Dattolo**

Julia reported that CareerSource's current transition, noting that a study is being done with the aim of consolidating, and the possibility of Palm Beach County assuming other regions. To this end she assured the group of plans in place to retain reentry staff and recommended that more job ready low risk individuals be referred as staff are also involved in other services. She also announced the move of Dhiny Mercedes to Rebel Recovery and the continuation of Raynisha Perry in his position

f. **Recommendation, from Housing Subcommittee, Jennifer Ferriol, Chair of Housing Subcommittee & Jessica Younts, Vice Chair of Housing**

Jennifer Ferriol reported on discussions current regarding subcommittee goals and the discussion around focusing on one or two. She presented recommendation regarding a draft notice of proposed legislative change to the SHIP program relating to the special needs definition. The requirement is for 20% of the funding to be allocated to special needs population, so the recommendation is to amend the language of include homeless individuals and individuals at risk of homelessness which would increase the utilization of these funds. She noted that conversation will be pursued with the County's Legislative Affairs and The City of West Palm Beach Legislative Affairs for guidance in proceeding. The need to move swiftly was noted given the timing. After member discussion, it was agreed to move forward with the recommendation, and even with Senator Bobby Powell and Representative Jervonte Edmonds on board, a Republican Legislator would be key in this endeavor. The Lord's Place also offered to assist in this regard.

The second recommendation from the subcommittee for discussion as presented by Jennifer Younts is for the Lewis Center to put aside some beds for formerly incarcerated individuals due to the difficulties accessing housing upon release. The situation is worsened as the policy does not allow case managers to assist clients in this endeavor. After member discussion regarding homelessness and the various issues in this regard, it was determined that the Subcommittee should further explore the possibility of doing this and report at the next meeting.

VII. Old Business

Palm Beach County Youth Reentry, Chair Haughwout

With youth reentry being determined as a priority for the Reentry Task Force, and the efforts to establishing a youth facility in Palm Beach County for better access to youth in commitment program, Randi Taylor advised of on-going meetings with the Department of Juvenile Justice, and the Secretary's commitment to partner in this regard. She advised of an upcoming tour of the Palm Beach Youth Academy on February 16th, to which members will be invited. She further outlined what the process will entail going forward, including analyzing data to substantiate the efforts. A progress report will be presented at the April Task Force meeting.

VIII. Subcommittee Updates (Written updates provided)

Sago Palm Reentry Center, Serena Marlow, Assistant Warden,

Ms. Marlow provided an update on Sago, noting that 12 individuals were graduated from the heavy equipment operator program utilizing the simulator, unfortunately the facility lost the instructor so the search is again on for same. The instructors for HVAC program from Palm Beach State College also stepped down, hence the search for instructors for HVAC as well, which results in no vocational class at the facility at this time. The first semester for the Pell Grant concluded with individuals passing their two core classes (English and Math). They are now taking culinary and hospitality classes. She advised of new volunteers coming into the facility, and major events on the way including a basketball tournament, and looking forward to working with The Reentry Center ball tournament.

IX. Additional Member and Guest Comment

- a) Marcia Bahia announced the return in person of the Youth Summit at the end of April, and introduced visiting pastors from the Glades.
- b) Arlene announced the observation of Second chance Month during April, and plans to distribute the schedule of events.
- c) Chair Haughwout recognized Judge Gillen's participation and remarked about the importance of the judicial involvement.

Adjournment: Next meeting date is April 26, 2023