



PALM BEACH COUNTY'S PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT
Palm Beach County Reentry Task Force

January 26, 2022, 12:00-1:30PM
WebEx Virtual /In-person Meeting/Quorum
Summary Meeting Minutes

Members & Guests Present:

Chair, Dr. Angela Bess, Palm Beach County School District
Vice Chair, Gregory Starling, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice
Adam Davis, PBC Library
Alia Spencer, Palm Beach State College
Allen Boyd, Ernst & Young
Arlene Austin, People of Purpose
Amanda Busbin,
Armando Fana, City of West Palm Beach
Arnia Perpignand, Florida Department of Corrections
Bert Winkler, Criminal Justice Commission
Carey Haughwout, Office of the Public Defender
Cassandra Atkin-Plunk, Florida Atlantic University
Craig Spatara, GEO Group
Cristina Lucier, The Lord's Place
Damir Kukec, Criminal Justice Commission
Dhiny Mercedes, CareerSource of Palm Beach County
Diana Stanley, The Lord's Place
Francesca Giambeluc,
Geeta Loach-Jacobson, PBC Youth Services
Judge Jeffrey Gillen, 15th Judicial Circuit
Jennifer Loyless, Office of the Public Defender
Judge Kathleen Kroll, 15th Judicial Circuit
Julia Dattolo, CareerSource PBC

Kevin Jones, City of West Palm Beach
Kim Raynor, Supervisor of Elections Office
Kimberly Comer, NAMI
Laura Waterman, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Maggie Witherow, Restoration Destination
Marcia Bahia, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
Marsha Martino, National alliance on Mental Illness: PBC Chapter
Meredith Powers-Lupo, Veteran Affairs
Nicole Landrum, Florida Department of Corrections
Orie Bullard, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach
Oswald Newbold, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach
Pam Berry, Salvation Army
Peter Noel, Alpha & Omega House
Serena Marlow, Florida Department of Corrections
Shahzia Jackson, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
Shirlon St. Amour, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice
Tamara Starks, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
Vanessa Klein, The Lord's Place
William Freeman, People of Purpose

Public Safety Department Staff Present:

Arlene Griffiths, PBC Public Safety Department
Alexis Davis PBC Public Safety Department
Jessica Hidalgo, PBC Public Safety Department
Nicole Bishop, PBC Public Safety Department
Randi Taylor, PBC Public Safety Department
Margo Smith, PBC Public Safety Department
Stephanie Sejnoha, PBC Public Safety Department
Molly McConnell, PBC Public Safety Department

- I. **Welcome and Roll Call, Chair, Dr. Angela Bess, PBC School District**
Attendees were asked to enter their name and agency in the chat box for attendance records, in lieu of a roll call.
- II. **Approval and/or Additions to the Preliminary Agenda – approved unanimously**
- III. **Approval and/or Corrections to the 10/27/21 Meeting Minutes- approved unanimously**
- IV. **PBC Reentry Task Force's Chair – In-Person vote, Chair, Dr. Angela Bess**
As required by Bylaws, four Task Force members attended in person to satisfy the required quorum.

Members voted unanimously for Carey Haughwout to be the new chair.

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

Dr. Bess formally announced the new chair and turned the meeting over to her.

V. Recognition of Chair Dr. Bess' service to RTF, Jessica Hidalgo, Manager, Criminal Justice Programs, Palm Beach County Public Safety Department

Jessica presented a plaque to Dr. Bess with a statement of gratitude for her time and service to the Reentry.

VI. Chairman's Comments, Carey Haughwout, Public Defender

Chair Haughwout thanked Dr. Bess for her leadership as out-going Chair and her commitment to reentry. She remarked about her history with reentry and expressed excitement on serving as the new chair. She said that she was looking forward to meeting in person again in three months, and remarked about re-organizing the agenda to ensure that business items are addressed and her preference to have subcommittee reports in writing, unless there is a major issue to be addressed. She also alluded to reverting to by-monthly meetings instead of quarterly.

VII. New Business

a) Palm Beach County Reentry Evaluation Report - Florida Atlantic University, Drs. Cassandra Atkin-Plunk and Wendy Guastafarro – not present

Dr. Cassandra Atkin-Plunk gave a presentation for "making data driven decisions", and thanked the various groups for their participation.

This study explored the strengths and weaknesses of the reentry program in Palm Beach County. The evaluators met with three focus groups that studied the process over a period of time. The goals of the focus groups were to determine if the subcommittees are making data driven decisions, and what their data wants and needs are. These focus groups consisted of subcommittee members, PBC public safety staff, service provider administrators, and reentry case managers.

Some barriers reported include lack of access to data and reports, siloed data, data inaccuracy, not having needed data, not know what data is available, the inability to interpret data, and the difficulty in pulling data. It was also noted that there were some concerns with the Renew billing system, system usability, and lack of access.

Recommendations based on the findings were categorized in three groups: Group A - explore options for a new case management software, procure a data dashboard, and create sharing agreements/database bridges; Group B - adjust the 72 hour rule that require case managers to enter data in the RENEW system, which was noted as a potential barrier to meet deadlines, and also the recommendation to standardize definitions. Group C - hire data analyst, create data request process, and provide data to stakeholders.

At the request of the Data and Evaluation Subcommittee, the recommendations were placed in the three groups based on what should happen first. Ms. Jennifer Loyless, Chair of Data and Evaluation Subcommittee added that the first two groups are the immediate focus.

Ms. Stephanie Sejnoha, Director of Public Safety spoke on the recommendations for upgrading RENEW and encouraged the task force to utilize the County's ISS department to keep the data secured and in house, instead of outsourcing to software vendors. She advised that she would be willing to start the conversation with ISS.

Chair Haughwout questioned the 72 hour rule and after further discussion, Dr. Atkin-Plunk noted the concern expressed by focus group that modifications made after 72 hours by the case managers, appear as if the submission was late since it uses the most recent date for data entered.

Ms. Nicole Bishop asked that the group -think about the data to be displayed on the data dashboard. She also noted that PBC is in the process of filling a vacant position with more focus on the data aspect of reentry, and is also exploring the use of Tableau.

After extensive member discussion, it was agreed that the Data and Evaluation Subcommittee along with other interested individuals, including case managers, would meet to explore existing case management systems and to agree on the purpose of the data, which would determine what data is really needed and why. The importance of including case managers was further highlighted.

Chair Haughwout thanked Drs. Atkin-Plunk and Guastaferrero for their work on the reentry evaluation.

- b) Reentry Summit 2022, Jennifer Loyless, Office of the Public Defender and Dr. Cassandra Atkin-Plunk, FAU**
Ms. Loyless announced the Reentry summit scheduled for October 5-7, and noted the deadline of February 15th for Call for Presentations.

- c) 2022 Notifications of Funding Opportunities (NoFO) for Reentry**
Ms. Hidalgo announced the NoFO for early February and the different approach taken by adding additional categories to address the gaps in the past. These include housing, mental health, and substance abuse. Chair Haughwout noted that this could build the capacity

- d) FDC Sago Palm Reentry Center Updates, Serena Marlow, Assistant Warden, Florida Dept. of Corrections**

A.W. Marlow provided an update on Sago Palm Reentry Center, noting that they are trying to create more space for the added programs at Sago. They are also in the process of completing their learning labs.

Chair Haughwout commented on the heavy equipment at Sago that is not being used and noted that they are trying to identify someone to teach same. She also touched on the outreach process, and inquired if FDC was able to waive the cost of emails for individuals utilizing the tablets. .

Ms. Landrum noted that the D10 monitors are established in reentry centers and short term facilities to accommodate virtual meetings, pre-release interviews, etc. She also commented on the contractual changes due to COVID-19 and FDC's push to get them back to pre-COVID status. Of note is the interactive journaling that she said will be introduced in reentry centers to reduce idleness and keep individuals better engaged.

VIII. Old Business/Action Items

- a) Florida Department of Correction's Roadmap to Restoration Event, Chair Carey Haughwout**
Chair Haughwout spoke about the event held in Riviera Beach to kick off the Roadmap to Restoration, and advised that FDC representatives from Tallahassee would be presenting details at the April meeting. Ms. Landrum expressed her gratitude for participating in the meeting, and commented on PBC's passion for the reentry program. She looks forward to also attending the April meeting.
- b) Florida Department of Corrections Outreach, Jennifer Loyless**
Ms. Loyless reported on a meeting with FDC transition Specialist and the plans to also meet with FDC career development specialists for their assistance in connecting reentry team with individuals prior to release.

IX. Subcommittee Updates

This was skipped as there were no pressing issues/items for updating.

X. Additional Member and Guest Comments

- Mr. William Freeman inquired about the number of PBC residents enrolled in academic classes, noting that a number of individuals are exiting without certification. Ms. Hidalgo commented on conversations with case managers about working with PBC residents to see the benefit of remaining at Sago instead of opting for work release. Ms. Landrum reported that 27% of total residents at Sago was enrolled in classes. Mr. Oswald Newbold remarked about the importance of residents wanting to work on themselves, and further noted the importance of peer mentoring.

XI. Next steps

a) Action Items

- i. Subcommittee updates to be provided in writing
- ii. Next meeting to be in person
- iii. Interested parties to work with Data and Evaluation Subcommittee to create a wish list of what data is needed and why, and to explore existing case management systems.
- iv. AW Marlow to explore waiving the cost of emails for incarcerated individuals

b) Next meeting date: April 27, 2022

XII. Adjournment