



PALM BEACH COUNTY'S PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT
PBC Reentry Task Force Meeting

January 27, 2020 – 12PM
 WebEx Virtual Meeting

Summary Meeting Minutes

Members & Guests Present:

Chair, Angela Bess, Palm Beach County School District
 Vice Chair, Gregory Starling, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice
 Adam Davis, PBC Library System
 Alan Johnson, State Attorney's Office
 Armando Fana, City of West Palm Beach
 Bert Winkler, Criminal Justice Commission
 Carrie Haughwout, Public Defender's Office
 Cassandra Atkin-Plunk, Florida Atlantic University
 Charisse Van Biesen, Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network
 Craig Spatara, GEO Group
 Cristina Lucier, The Lord's Place
 Dhiny Mercedes, CareerSource
 Diana Stanley, The Lord's Place
 Emily McBay, Gulfstream Goodwill
 Erika Ray, The Lord's Place
 Jennifer Loyless, Public Defender's Office
 Jenny Gomez, PBC Library System
 Jerome Cox, Florida Department of Corrections – Sago Palm
 Jessica Younts, Florida Rights Restoration Coalition
 Judge Jeffrey Dana Gillen, 15th Judicial Circuit
 Julia Dattolo, CareerSource
 Kevin Jones, City of West Palm Beach
 Laura Waterman, Gulfstream Goodwill
 Maggie Witherow, Restoration Destination
 Mark Ferrante, Policy Practice and Systems Change/
 America Institutes for Research
 Marsha Martino, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
 Meredith Powers-Lupo, Veteran's Administration
 Negaysha Walcott, Gulfstream Goodwill
 Nikki Girard, The Lord's Place
 Orie Bullard, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach
 Oswald Newbold, Returning Resident
 Shannon Fox, PBC County Attorney
 Sharon Masciarelli, Pathways Transitional Housing
 Shirlon St. Amour, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice
 Tamara Starks, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
 Tarcel King, The Lord's Place
 Teleetha Haslem, Florida Department of Corrections
 Thomas Masciarelli, Pathways Transitional Housing
 Wenfred Dorsey, The Lord's Place
 William Freeman, People of Purpose, Inc.

Public Safety Department Staff Present:

Arlene Griffiths, PBC Public Safety Department
 Chenise Bonilla, PBC Public Safety Department
 Randi Taylor, PBC Public Safety Department
 Stephanie Sejnoha, PBC Public Safety Department
 Jessica Hidalgo, PBC Public Safety Department

Members Absent:

Alton Taylor, Drug Abuse Foundation
 Audrey McDonough, Literacy Coalition
 Barbara Cheives, Converge and Associates Consulting
 Elisa Cramer, Florida Department of Children and Families
 Honorable Laura Johnson, 15th Judicial Circuit
 Javier Jones, Florida Department of Corrections
 Joe Speicher, South County Mental Health Center
 John Cohen, League of Cities
 Judge Kathleen Kroll, 15th Judicial Circuit
 Justin Kunzelman, Rebel Recovery Florida, Inc.
 Michelle Johns, Florida Department of Corrections
 Nicole Konieczny, Palm Beach State College
 Patricia Mikulan, Salvation Army
 Peter Noel, Alpha & Omega, Inc.
 Robert Graham, True Fast Ministries, Inc.
 Steven Spaulding, Legal Aid Society of PBC
 Ted Rodarm, Restoration Destination
 Tyrus McCloud, Prison Fellowship

- I. **Welcome, Opening Comments, and Introductions** – *Vice Chair Gregory Starling, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice*, welcomed attendees and commenced the meeting.
- II. **Approval and/or Additional to the Preliminary Agenda**
Approved without additions.
- III. **Approval and/or Corrections to the Minutes**
Approved without corrections.
- IV. **New Advisory Member**, *William Freeman, People of Purpose, Inc.*
The Reentry Task Force recognized William Freeman, passionate reentry advocate, and congratulated him on his new role as a new advisory member.
- V. **Outreach Improvement**, *Nicole Bishop, Director of Victim & Justice Services, PBC Public Safety Department*
Nicole Bishop discussed improvements made to Palm Beach County's (PBC) reentry outreach process. Outreach letters that connect to individuals soon-to-be-released from Florida's state prisons have been refined to be more engaging and informative. Upon engagement, a follow-up postcard with assigned reentry provider will be provided. A follow-up outreach letter will be sent to again attempt to engage any individuals who have not yet responded to the initial outreach attempt. All moderate-high risk individuals who are returning to PBC will receive letters, and not just those convicted here in PBC.
- VI. **Reentry Program Office Updates**, *Chenise Bonilla, Manager of Criminal Justice Programs, PBC Public Safety Department*
Chenise Bonilla gave an overview of the various actions from program office for PBC's first quarter. Discussed completion of various funder reports and applications, finalization of contracts with reentry service providers, presentations to the public and partner organizations, giving back to reentry provider staff, and developed contact for training trainers on the LSI-R assessment. Additional information was also included in presentation provided.
- VII. **FDC Introduction and Updates**, *Jerome Cox, Acting Assistant Warden, Sago Palm Reentry Center, Florida Department of Corrections*
Warden Cox thanked the group for their partnership and their ongoing involvement in the Reentry Task Force. He discussed upcoming events and activities at Sago, and plans to meet with reentry stakeholders and providers in the near future.
- VIII. **Subcommittee Updates**
 - i. **Sex Offender Subcommittee**, *Meredith Powers-Lupo, Veterans Affairs*
Vice Chair Powers-Lupo provided a presentation on information related to sexual offenders, including common terms and the importance of appropriate language, intention to evolve the name of the subcommittee, the barriers for this population related to the stigmas and impact of legal ramifications that lead to extensive homelessness and lack of access to resources. Data was presented on the demographics of PBC's reentry participants with sexual offenses, including the rising average age, rates of recidivism, moderate risk-level trends, and rates of homelessness for the majority of individuals. The implications of the offender registry, residency restrictions, and the opportunities that could lead to violation were also discussed.

- ii. **Data and Evaluation Subcommittee**, *Jennifer Loyless, Public Defender's Office*
Chair Loyless discussed the addition of *Cristina Lucier from The Lord's Place*, as the new Vice Chair of the subcommittee. She reported that Florida Atlantic University has commenced their efforts on PBC's reentry system evaluation and noted that they are currently analyzing a potential funding opportunity. Information to aid in the analysis and evaluation will be gathered from reentry participants, stakeholders, subcommittee meetings, and reentry staff.
 - iii. **Employment, Training, and Education Subcommittee**, *Dhiny Mercedes, CareerSource*
Chair Mercedes discussed the objectives towards increasing breadth of employer partners hiring returning residents and increasing educational and training opportunities. He highlighted the current partnership with Tesla, providing job fairs and hiring opportunities for returning residents.
 - iv. **Housing Subcommittee**, *Armando Fana, City of West Palm Beach*
Chair Fana announced the addition of *Peter Noel of Alpha & Omega, Inc.*, as the new Vice Chair of the subcommittee. He discussed the ongoing efforts to convene all PBC local housing authority leadership in an effort to improve reentry housing opportunities. Ongoing data analyses on the housing efforts, barriers, and sustainable housing successes for individuals returning from incarceration were also discussed.
 - v. **Youth Reentry Subcommittee**, *Judge Kathleen Kroll, 15th Judicial Circuit*
Randi Taylor, PBC Public Safety Department staff gave an update on behalf of Judge Kroll, providing an overview of the current objectives, and detailed prioritizing efforts to address policies and procedures to keep youth incarcerated, and served, closer to home in PBC.
 - vi. **Sustainability Subcommittee**, *Diana Stanley, The Lord's Place*
Chair Stanley discussed the prioritization of sustaining funding for reentry services. A new potential date for the Reentry Summit was provided: February 16-18, 2022.
- IX. Second Chance Month, April 2021**, *Arlene Griffiths, PBC Public Safety Department*
In observance of Second Chance Month, April 2021, Arlene Griffiths, in collaboration with reentry providers will be planning events that spread awareness about reentry efforts in PBC to combat the many challenges faced by individuals returning from incarceration. Returning residents will also be featured for their accomplishments and efforts in helping others to reintegrate in the community.
- X. Additional Member and Guest Comments**
- i. Maggie Witherow discussed Restoration Destination's Second Chance Month banquet taking place virtually and/or in person on April 17, 2021.
 - ii. Sharon & Thomas Masciarelli introduced their organization, Pathways Transitional Housing, which will be providing transitional home in Riviera Beach, for individual returning from incarceration. In addition to transitional housing, services will include employment assistance, community connections, hard/soft skill development, and financial literacy. Tentative capacity is for eight adult male participants at a price to be determined, but noted the flexibility to meet the needs of returning residents.
- XI. Next Steps**
- i. **Recap Action Items:**

- i. PBC Public Safety Department will provide the Sex Offender presentation to the legal experts recommended by Carrie Haughwout and Alan Johnson for any potential legal clarifications.
- ii. Arlene will initiate a committee to plan Second Chance Month events for April.
- iii. PBC Public Safety Department will schedule meeting with Acting Assistant Warden Cox to discuss reentry services and collaboration at Sago.

ii. **Next Meeting Dates:** 4/28/21, 7/28/21, 10/27/21

XII. Adjournment