



PALM BEACH COUNTY'S PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

Palm Beach County Reentry Task Force

Full Reentry Task Force Meeting

Wednesday, January 29th, 2025

CareerSource PBC

Summary Meeting Minutes

Voting Members & Guests Present:

Vice Chair, Greg Starling, Department of Juvenile Justice

Adam Davis, Palm Beach County Library (Virtual)

Alan Johnson, State Attorney's Office

Alicia Reno, South Florida Behavioral Health Network (Virtual)

Dr. Angela Bess, School District of PBC

Ashley Ridley, Drug Abuse Foundation

Atensia Bowen, NAMI PBC

Dr. Barbara Gerlock

Brandon Lavin, BRIDGES WPB

Carey Haughwout, Citizen

Carla Randle, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach (Virtual)

Chenise Bonilla, Integrated Health Care Systems

Craig Spatara, GEO Group

Darnel Paul, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach

Ellis Darryl, Jack Brewer Foundation

Gary Hawkins, The Lord's Place

Hy'Deia Wilson, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach

Janet McCatty, Florida Department of Corrections

Jennifer Ferriol, City of West Palm Beach

Jennifer Loyless, Office of the Public Defender

Jesse Shepperd, Jack Brewer Foundation

Jessica Vann, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach

Jessica Younts, Florida Justice Center

Julia Dattolo, CareerSource of Palm Beach County

Kemoy Sutherland, Pivot Point

Kevin Jones, Clergy

Kiera Hester, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach (Virtual)

Latronda Hayes, City of Riviera Beach

Laura Waterman, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries (Virtual)

Lauren Klemowich, Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections (Virtual)

Maggie Witherow, Restoration Destination (Virtual)

Malcolm DaCosta, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach

Marcia Bahia, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office

Melanie Magill, CareerSource PBC

Meredith Powers-Lupo, United States Veteran's Administration

Michelle Periera, The Lord's Place

Nancy McConnell, Rebel Recovery

Natalie Dixon-Williams, Florida Department of Corrections (Virtual)

Orie Bullard, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach

Oswald Newbold, PBC Reentry Alumni

Paulette Cooper, Florida Department of Corrections

Sean Wright, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach

Shahzia Jackson, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office

Stephanie Thompson, Drug Abuse Foundation (Virtual)

Tamara Starks, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office (PBSO)

Teleetha Haslem, Sago Palm, Florida Dept. of Corrections

Dr. Teresa Johnson, League of Cities – Town of Haverhill

Tiana Crawford, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach

Vanessa Klein, The Lord's Place

Victoria Amorosa, The Victory Program

William Freeman, People of Purpose (Virtual)

Willie Cooks, The Reentry Center of Riviera Beach

Voting Members Absent:

Derek Gibson, Florida Department of Corrections

PBC Public Safety Department Staff Present:

Arlene Griffiths, PBC Public Safety Department

Bridget Hodge, PBC Public Safety Department (Virtual)

Cathy Wolf, PBC Public Safety Department

Jessica Hidalgo, PBC Public Safety Department

Nicole Bishop, PBC Public Safety Department

Randi Taylor, PBC Public Safety Department

Richard Sena, Palm Beach County Attorney's Office (Virtual)

Ron Dixon, PBC Public Safety Department

Shirlon St. Amour, PBC Public Safety Department (Virtual)

Stephanie Sejnoha, PBC Public Safety Department

Yenefer Cerda, PBC Public Safety Department

I. Welcome, Opening Comments, and Introductions, Vice Chair, Gregory Starling, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice

- a. Roll call taken and a quorum present.
- b. In-person attendees introduced themselves while virtual attendees indicated their name and affiliation in the chat.

II. Approval and/or Additions to the Preliminary Agenda

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

Agenda approved without corrections. Motion by Dr. Angela Bess; seconded by Nancy McConnell

III. Approval and/or Corrections to the 10/23/2024 Meeting Minutes

Minutes approved without corrections. Motion by Nancy McConnell; seconded by Oswald Newbold

IV. Chairman's Comments, Chair, Vice Chair, Gregory Starling

a. Congratulations Carey Haughwout

Vice Chair, Gregory Starling, congratulated Carey Haughwout on her Retirement and thanked her for her many years of service with the Reentry Task Force under Palm Beach County Public Defender's Office. A suggestion was made to create the Reentry Carey Haughwout Award to be given to a selected individual during Second Chance Month (April) each year. Jessica shared that Carey has been involved with Reentry since day one when the Reentry Task Force was implemented under her.

b. Thank You Kevin Jones

Shared that Kevin Jones' term with the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) has ended, therefore as a representative of the CJC, his term with the Reentry Task Force has ended. Vice Chair thanked Kevin for all of his hard work. Kevin shared that it has been a joy serving on the Task Force and that he will continue to be a part of the great work. Arlene Griffiths added that he will remain co-chair of the Faith Subcommittee.

c. Congratulations Oswald Newbold

Congratulated Mr. Oswald Newbold on completing Leadership USA. Expressed that he has made major strides as a community member and with the Reentry Task Force. Oswald shared what Just Leadership USA is; a yearlong program, taking leaders who are system-impacted to the next level. Oswald expressed that he learned a lot along the way, that it was a long ride, but that he is thankful for it, and looks forward to using it in this forum. Vice Chair shared that Oswald has been a vital piece and a core part of the work that has been done in Palm Beach County and thanked him for taking on the nomination.

V. Old Business/Follow-Up Items

a. Subcommittee Highlights

i. Employment, Training, & Education, Julia Dattolo

A strategic plan with goals and objectives has been developed by the subcommittee, with identified champions for each goal. However, Julia shared her disappointment with the participation of the group as they continue to monitor the goals. When discussing second chances and fair hiring there has been little conversation and efforts outside of herself and Shirlon. Julia asked the Task Force to review their goals to determine appropriateness and how to garner better involvement in our subcommittees. She also thanked Meredith for her interest in the Employment and Sexual Offenses subcommittees partnering to work on a shared goal.

ii. Faith, Dr. Angela Bess

The subcommittee has completed two youth outreach events this last quarter. The first event at Palm Beach Regional Juvenile Detention Center and the second at

Palm Beach Youth Academy. In addition, the subcommittee is busy planning two Faith Workshops to take place during Second Chance month, on April 2nd on the east coast and April 30th in the Glades where we will introduce and educate faith leaders and other members of the clergy to Reentry in Palm Beach County. Dr. Bess shared positive updates regarding Chosen to Overcome, a youth mentoring program that works with at-risk youth at Crossroads Academy. The clergy in the Glades continue to support the Alternative School population. Vice Chair, Gregory Starling, discussed how they are very tangible ways that the public can help our youth and how much it is appreciated by them.

iii. **Housing, Jennifer Ferriol**

Jennifer shared that at their last meeting they discussed the expectations of their subcommittee, identifying that housing is one of the biggest and most challenging needs in PBC. Jennifer expressed that she has seen similar trends as Julia, a decrease in attendance and participation. The subcommittee is currently in the process of surveying the group and then reevaluating their goals and determining how to increase the participation of individuals in the community. Jennifer plans to follow through with developing the Pilot Project specifically focusing on Reentry. PBC Community Services has done a great job maintaining available housing units in PBC with landlords who are willing to work with special populations.

Dr. Johnson asked for an update regarding the partnership that was developed to serve individuals who are homeless at the old Jerome Golden housing. Jennifer provided a brief update to the Task Force and expressed that they are beginning negotiations to acquire the units.

iv. **Sexual Offenses, Meredith Powers-Lupo**

Three major accomplishments of the subcommittee were shared with the Task Force. The subcommittee has appointed a vice chair, Darrell Guilford. On November 7th, Meredith and PBC Reentry staff presented information related to reentry, barriers faced by returning residents, programming in PBC and the overall Task Force to 8 different judges and court administrators. The presentation was well received and the subcommittee is hopeful that it leaves a lasting impact. It was acknowledged that although this subcommittee cannot change laws, they do still have the ability to create change where it can. Meredith shared the Reentry Registration Resources (3Rs) guide developed by the subcommittee that has a variety of information's for individuals who are required to register and returning to our communities. Once approved by PBC, it will be shared with case managers, release officers, classification officers, Florida Department of Corrections staff, OSCARSS, and with many others to share this valuable information and resources. Meredith is very excited to collaborate, as nobody can get work done in silos.

v. **Sustainability and Data, Jennifer Loyless**

The committee has been working to support the goals of other subcommittees. As they shift their work into developing and creating resources, the 3Rs resource guide was noted as a great example of the kind of documentation they can assist with; very specific information for a designated population/audience. Another great example is the work that the subcommittee is doing on behalf of the Faith Subcommittee to create a one pager for their two Faith Workshops coming up in

April. The hand out will include data and information, and include specific and attainable ways that the faith community can do to help Reentry. Jennifer asked if there is anything that this committee can do on behalf of the other Task Force subcommittees to please reach out.

- vi. Due to limited time and technical difficulties, the agenda was reorganized to prioritize the discussion regarding the resolution and moved the updates for the Youth and Behavioral Health subcommittees to the end if time allows.

b. **Resolution, Vice Chair, Gregory Starling**

Jessica Hidalgo reminded the Task Force that at the last meeting the voting seats were presented and that it has also been included in their meeting packet. She noted that the goal is to obtain any final feedback regarding the resolution so that a final vote could occur and the resolution move forward to the PBC Board of County Commissioners for final approval.

Nancy McConnell shared that she felt that the Behavioral Health should have more than one seat, and asked if this resolution included more or less seats than previously outlined. Jessica informed the Task Force that this includes two additional seats and reminded them that the County resolution only allows eleven (11), however, this Task Force was grandfathered in at thirteen (13) which is why they reduced the increase in seats from twelve (12) to two (2).

Meredith Powers-Lupo asked if there was going to be a review of the expectations and responsibilities of those who sit as voting members. Jessica shared the idea of bringing back an orientation and updating the binder for current and new voting members. In addition, she mentioned the survey included in their packet to give feedback, as it relates to the Task force, and as a means to self-reflect on their participation which will be discussed later in the agenda.

Victoria Amorosa expressed her concerns about labeling seat 5 as Formerly Incarcerated/Reentry Alumni as it limits the ability for individuals who are justice impacted to have a voice. Orie Bullard added that it is imperative to engage justice impacted individuals at a higher level as the Task Force grows. A suggestion was also made to have the seat open to any justice impacted individuals and not just those who participated in the PBC reentry program.

Voting members were reminded that they can move and change seats as they wish, however, they need to remain within the maximum 15 seats.

Extensive discussions regarding justice impacted vs PBC reentry alumni as well as other various seats and the impact of those seats pursued.

Carey Haughwout remarked about the voting members and the value that the advisory members bring to the table. She further commented that there is too much government representatives and not enough community members who are the invested in reentry and are the individuals who will make reentry work. She suggested developing a process for nominating, vetting, be created by the Task Force.

Vice Chair noted the importance of having individuals at the table are have the ability to impact system changes. Jennifer Ferriol echoed Vice Chair's sentiment regarding having individuals that are able to implement change. These she noted could be commissioners, city officials, etc., and said it is also very critical to have folks who have the resources to implement change.

The need was mentioned for voting members to speak and be more engaged at the Task Force and doing the work. Oswald Newbold also mentioned the stagnation of the Task Force and wondered if individuals voices are really being heard, citing the example of the CoSA program and the non-profits workshops where suggestions were not taken into consideration and neither had positive results. He expressed the need for everyone to work together, saying it is not about the votes.

After further discussion, Vice Chair mentioned creating a nomination committee, as we want to ensure those that are selected as voting members are dedicated to the work. Vice Chair also made a suggestion to hold a special meeting dedicated to discussing and making a final vote for voting membership. Motion to call for special meeting by Tamara Starks, seconded by Nancy McConnell

- c. **Chair Discussions, Vice Chair, Gregory Starling**
Carey Haughwout will no longer be the chair, as she is no longer representing the Public Defender's Office. Jennifer Loyless was appointed by the new Public Defender to be the Task Force Representative. There is a need for an interim chair, and Dr. Johnson inquired about the process for electing same. Stephanie Sejnoha advised of the option to have a special meeting to identify a new chair. The Task Force decided to keep Vice Chair, Gregory Starling as the interim, until final voting seats have been determined and filled.

VI. New Business

- a. **Federal Funding Freeze, Jessica Hidalgo, Palm Beach County Public Safety Department**
Jessica Hidalgo noted that a decision is yet to be made, but County is monitoring the situation, and there is no interruption of services at this time, however, everyone will be advised if any changes.
- b. **New Public Defender Designation, Vice Chair, Gregory Starling, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice**
Reported under Chair Discussions.
- c. **Reentry Task Force Voting Member Survey, Vice Chair, Gregory Starling, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice**
Jessica provided an overview of a survey that will be shared for voting members to complete and return by the due date of February 5th. The survey is intended to receive feedback on the Task Force and member reflection in past year. The survey was opened for others to complete.

VII. Updates

- a. **Public Safety Department Notification of Funding Opportunities (NoFO) for Adult Reentry Services, Jessica Hidalgo, Palm Beach County Public Safety Department**

Jessica advised that the NoFO for adult reentry services was published and a pre-conference held with potential applicants. Due date for proposals is February 24th.

b. Sago Palm Reentry Center

There were no updates for Sago, however, Ms. Haslem introduced Sago's Captain Cooper. Captain Cooper noted that she has attended reentry meetings prior to becoming the Captain, and expressed her appreciation on the great work that The Reentry Center (TRC) and PBC Public Safety Department is doing, noting that this is not common at other institutions. Orie Bullard provided an update on the pre-release services that TRC is providing at Sago. They just started the spring semester, with Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), a Twelve-week Reentry Academy, and Commercial Driver's License (CDL). They are no longer offering InsideOut Dad, as the Department of Corrections is now teaching that class. TRC continues to hold events for PBC residents and, at times, for the entire campus, and they are looking forward to staying engaged this year. Julia Dattolo inquired about computer classes at Sago to which the answer was that there are no classes at this time. Dr. Gerlock commented on not having the skills to use the various tools presented to individuals upon returning to the community. Oswald commented on the unutilized computers that are currently in a classroom at Sago. Brandon from Bridges spoke about their computer program offered in the community and his interest in partnering with Sago to provide them there.

VIII. Additional Member and Guest Comments

- Dr. Gerlock announced the Economic Mobility Summit, and stated that the PBC Community Services Department will be releasing a Notice of Funding Opportunities for Economic Mobility and Economic Stability funding. This will be discussed at a meeting on February 13th at 9:00 am at the County Office on Jog Road.
- Jessica Hidalgo noted that the Youth Reentry and Behavioral Health Subcommittees updates are included in the packet. Announced the Youth Reentry Program Workshop to the Board of County Commissioners on April 22nd, and invited all to attend.

IX. Next Steps

- a. Recap Action Items:
 - i. Schedule a Special Meeting to determine the voting membership seats that will be outlined in the resolution.
 - ii. Create a Nomination Committee to support the changes to voting membership and impending vacancies.
- b. 2025 Meeting Dates: March 26th, May 28, August 27, October 22

X. Adjournment