



PALM BEACH COUNTY'S PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

Palm Beach County Reentry Task Force

Full Task Force Meeting

Wednesday July 26, 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
Alan Johnson, State Attorney's Office
Atensia Bowen, NAMI/FAU
Derek Gibson, Florida Department of Corrections (FDC)
Julia Dattolo, CareerSource of Palm Beach County
Kevin Jones, City of West Palm Beach Police Department
Nancy McConnell, Rebel Recovery
Oswald Newbold, PBC Resident
Tamara Starks, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office (PBSO)
Benji Faust, Integrated Health Care Systems (IHCS)
Carla Randle, The Reentry Center
Cassandra Andrews, Victory Resource Center
Cassandra Atkin-Plunk, Florida Atlantic University
Craig Spatara, GEO Group
Christina Morrison, Christina Morrison P.A.
Cristina Lucier, The Lord's Place
Darnell Paul, The Reentry Center
Darrell Guilford, GEO Group
Duane Thwaites, Florida Rights Restoration Coalition (FRRC)
Helen Eddings, Anchor House
Jennifer Loyless, Office of the Public Defender
John Eddings, Anchor House
Kevin Choi, True Cure PBA Harm Reduction Center
La'Andre Freeman, The Reentry Center
Laura Waterman, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries

Maggie Witherow, Restoration Destination
Melanie Magill, CareerSource Palm Beach County
Meredith Powers-Lupo, Veterans Affairs
Robert Graham, True Fast Ministries, Inc.
Ron Dixon, The reentry Center
Shahzia Jackson, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
Todd Bonlarron, PBC Administration
Victoria Amoroso, The Victory Program
William Freeman, People of Purpose

Members Absent

Angela Bess, School District of Palm Beach County
Greg Starling, Department of Juvenile Justice
Jeffrey Gillen, 15th Judicial Circuit
Teresa Johnson, League of Cities – Town of Haverhill

Public Safety Department Staff Present:

Arlene Griffiths, PBC Public Safety Department
Cathy Wolf, PBC Public Safety Department
Jessica Hidalgo, PBC Public Safety Department
Les'Unique Hessing, PBC Public Safety Department
Randi Taylor, PBC Public Safety Department
Shirlon St. Amour, PBC Public Safety Department
Stephanie Sejnoha, PBC Public Safety
Yenefer Cerda, PBC Public Safety Department

- I. Welcome, Chair Carey Haughwout, Public Defender**
 - a. Roll Call of Voting Members, Arlene Griffiths, Palm Beach County Public Safety Department**
 - b. Introductions**
- II. Approval and/or Additions to the Preliminary Agenda:** Approved after addition to include update from Juvenile Reentry Subcommittee.

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

- III. **Approval and/or Corrections to the 4/26/2023 meeting minutes:** Approved
- IV. **Chairman's Comments, Chair Carey Haughwout, Public Defender**
- a. Chair Haughwout congratulated and extended welcome to Derek Gibson, new Administrator, Circuit 15, Florida Department of Corrections (Probation)
 - b. Motion to approve Atensia Bowen as new Task Force member, moved by Kevin Jones and second by Julia Dattolo. Chair Haughwout welcomed Ms. Bowen.
- V. **Subcommittee Updates** (*Written Updates for all subcommittees provided via Attachment*)
- a. **Sustainability** - : Kevin Jones, West Palm Beach Police Department
Reported based on feedback from the Criminal Justice Commission Community Engagement meeting, that members requested other capacity building options be explored as Non-Profits First certification process is too rigorous although the workshops would not include certification. He noted that there is a list of other local agencies that are able to do the workshops. It was pointed out that agencies need to have a baseline of what is expected of them in order to apply for grants. The Task Force is open to other organizations to do the workshops but voted that the intent was for Non-Profits First to meet the agencies where they are. Mr. Jones will share list with Jessica for follow up with the hopes of starting workshops in the fall. The goal of the Task Force is to provide support to smaller grass root efforts in reentry.
 - b. **Faith Based - Kingdom Litigators, Kevin Jones, WPB Police Department**
The organization comprised of attorneys have come up with an initiative entitled, "The Jubilee Process", where they partner with the faith-based communities to host the Jubilee events where returning individuals have an opportunity to start the process of pardons and expunging records. A zoom meeting will be scheduled in August, to finalize and answer questions and concerns. February of 2024 is when the Kingdom Litigators plan to do mass submission petitions of pardons. Chair Haughwout commented on the initiative and her understanding of them starting to file petitions for pardons and to challenge the existing rules, and noted that clemency has not been granted in Florida for a long time.
Ms. Powers-Lupo noted that Legal Aid was provide a grant of \$150K by the VA to provide legal services for veterans to include pardons and expungements, noting that they could also partner with Kingdom Litigators if there is significant request for services in this regard.
Mr. Thwaites of FRRC added that his organization filed a law suit against the State a few days ago for the same issue. It was recommended that he be connected with Kingdom Litigators.

c. **Employment, Training, and Education – DOL Employment and Training Grant Opportunity, Shirlon St Amour, Palm Beach County Public Safety**

Ms. Dattolo reported on the \$80M grant opportunity that was presented by Dr. Johnson at the previous meeting. She noted that the subcommittee did a deep dive into the grant that was found to be very difficult to apply for as well as to execute and a decision was made not to proceed with that grant at this time, but looking forward to other opportunities to apply for funding for clients.

d. **Youth Reentry, Randi Taylor, Palm Beach County Public Safety**

Ms. Taylor extended apology for Chair Judge Kroll who had to be in court, and provided the update. She reported that efforts are continuing on the objective to increase pre-release engagement in bridging the service gaps and the closer to home initiative to better serve the youth that are returning to the community. She remarked about meetings with Right of Passage and advised of an upcoming meeting with Department of Juvenile Justice in this regard. Also highlighted the Advisory Board that is in place, and partnerships with other providers to leverage resources.

Chair Haughwout explained the process involved with youth being sent throughout the State, hence the efforts for the closer to home initiative. She highlighted the progress made thus far and applauded the County for its efforts, and expressed the need to also focus on capacity building for services for kids.

VI. Old Business/Follow Up Items

a. **Voting Membership, Chair Carey Haughwout, Public Defender**

i. **Atensia Bowen, Mental Health Provider, NAMI Board Member**

The Task Force voted in Atensia Bowen as a member of the task force to represent NAMI.

b. **Criminal Justice Commission/Reentry Task Force Update**

i. **Glades Initiative**

1. **BJA Grant, Jessica Hidalgo, Palm Beach County Public Safety**

Last November we were awarded the grant for Crisis Stabilization and Reentry Community Services. Ms. Hidalgo noted that we are early into the process, building the partnerships and speaking with the community. Technical Assistance providers will be doing a site visit in August, and in September two representatives will be attending a Symposium in Washington for an opportunity to learn and network.

Assistant County Administrator provided an update on developments taking place in the Glades area, but noted that the

processing of de-mucking is very expensive but continues to look at different ways to revitalize the area. He remarked about partnerships with the State to improve infrastructure in the area. The additional industries and housing developments were highlighted, and the transportation services such as “Go Glades” in the community. Reentry, according to Chair Haughwout is also being enhanced in the area, and educating the residents of services noted as key.

ii. Outreach Video, Jessica Hidalgo, Palm Beach County Public Safety

Making three videos, one to provide at the sheriff’s office and the county jail, one for individuals in the Florida Department of Corrections, and one for the families of those being released. Channel 20 did a recording at Moore Haven and will conduct additional interviews in this regard.

c. Florida Department of Corrections Outreach via DTEN Monitors, Arlene Griffiths, Palm Beach County Public Safety Department

Ms. Griffiths spoke about the partnership with Department of Corrections to utilize their DTEN monitors to increase engagement of individuals returning to PBC. To date, one meeting via the DTEN monitor was conducted at Okeechobee C.I. where 18 participants were engaged and connected with reentry providers.

VII. New Business

a. Reentry Task Force Strategic Planning, Chair Carey Haughwout, Public Defender

Chair Haughwout advised of revisiting the strategic plan and looking at the membership, how the subcommittee structures are working, and identifying gaps in the Reentry process and services. To this end, a special meeting will be scheduled for same, and expressed the importance of participating.

VIII. Sago Palm Reentry Center

a. Pre Release Services, Ron Dixon, Riviera Beach Reentry Center

Mr. Dixon reported that 354 individuals currently at Sago, of which 181 will be released back to Palm Beach County and as of February we have been able to intake 75 of those individuals. He highlighted a number of programs that are currently taking place at Sago and the level of engagement that is very encouraging.

IX. Additional Member and Guest Comment

- a. Mayor Weiss to host town hall meeting at Sago Palm Reentry Center on August 18, 2023.**
- b. Community Resource Fair: September 9, 2023 from 10:00am to 2:00pm**

Venue: Vita Nova, Inc. – 2724 N. Australian Avenue, WPB, FL 33407

- c. Ms. Witherow announced the Solid Rock Ministries two year commitment program, utilizing a 500 page workbook where they teach men and women behind bars to become ministers and other church leaders. The first batch of 33 individuals will be graduating next week.
- d. Mr. Newbold advised that the Federal Government is creating an accreditation for reentry providers and reentry professionals. This is being led by SAMHSA and will take a year of planning and researching to establish an accreditation and training programs. The first meeting is scheduled for August 14-16, 2023 in Washington DC to which he and Orie Bullard were selected to participate.

X. Next Steps

- a. Recap Action Items
- b. Next Meeting Date: October 25, 2023

XI. Adjournment