



PALM BEACH COUNTY'S PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

Palm Beach County Reentry Task Force

Full Task Force Meeting

Wednesday July 27, 2022 @ 12:00pm

Riviera Beach Marina Event Center

190 E 13th St, Riviera Beach, FL 33404

Summary Meeting Minutes

Members & Guests Present:

Chair, Carey Haughwout, Office of the Public Defender
Angela Bess, School District of PBC
Brian Heck, Gulfstream Goodwill Industries
Bridget Rodriguez, City of Riviera Beach Reentry Center
C. Veree Jenkins, CEO Federation
Cassandra Atkin-Plunk, Florida Atlantic University
Craig Spatara, GEO Group
Daniel Santiago, The Lord's Place
Dhiny Mercedes, CareerSource of Palm Beach County
Councilman Douglas Lawson, City of Riviera Beach
Jennifer Loyless, Office of the Public Defender
Julia Dattolo, CareerSource of Palm Beach County
Julian Bembry, Salvation Army
Kiera Hester, City of Riviera Beach Reentry Center
Kenneth Crawford, The Salvation Army
Kevin Jones, City of West Palm Beach Police Department
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

Nancy McConnell, Rebel Recovery
Nikeisha Francis, The Riviera Beach Reentry Center
Nichole Landrum, Florida Department of Corrections
Orie Bullard, The Riviera Beach Reentry Center
Patricia Williams, The Lords Place
Richard Sena, County Attorney
Ron Dixon, The Riviera Beach Reentry Center
Sarita Johnson, Lord of Hope and Unity
Shannon Fox, County Attorney
Shazia Jackson, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
Shirlon St. Amour, Department of Juvenile Justice
Tamara Starks, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office
Tarcel King, The Lords Place
Timothy Gradsom, Salvation Army
Vanessa Klein, The Lord's Place
William Freeman, People of Purpose

Public Safety Department Staff Present:

Arlene Griffiths, PBC Public Safety Department
Jessica Hidalgo, PBC Public Safety Department
Stephanie Senjoha, PBC Public Safety Department
Randi Taylor, PBC Public Safety Department
Latronda Hayes, PBC Public Safety Department

I. Welcome and Introductions *Chair Carey Haughwout, Public Defender*

- a. Chair Haughwout extended welcome to members and guests, and asked that a roll call of voting members be conducted to ensure no confusion in there is an item to be voted on. Attendees introduced themselves, and Chair Haughwout noted equal opportunity for non-voting members and guests, noting the strengths of the Taskforce in everyone collaborating and participating.
- b. Arlene provided the names of the task force voting members present that included Carey Haughwout, Tamara Starks, Julia Dattolo, Kevin Jones, Oswald Newbold, and Nancy McConnell.

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

II. Approval and/or Additions to the Preliminary Agenda – approved

- a. Chair Haughwout added to “old business action items from previous meeting to the current agenda for discussion.
 - i. Tamara Starks – accepted amendment
 - ii. Shannon Fox County attorney advised of the quorum requirements for voting
 - iii. Chair Haughwout concluded that we wait until next meeting to vote and follow agenda as written with added items

III. Approval and/or Corrections to the 4/27/2022 Meeting Minutes – Tabled for next meeting providing there is a quorum.

IV. Chairman’s Comments, Chair Haughwout – This is a big change as the County taking on the provisions of services. This change could also be a positive change. However, I am sad that we do not have more community providers. As a task force, we should be asking how to we grow community involvement and programming more. I am glad the county agreed to step up and take this on but it is not necessarily forever and sort of a last option. I hope that it does not discourage the growth or involvement of the community in providing youth reentry services because that is where we have strength. Carey reviewed the reports and asked if this is the number, the county will be servicing? Jessica answered that they will serve about 70 per fiscal year. Carey wants the report updated with current service data for next meeting.

- a. Carey also recognized Councilman Doug Lawson from Riviera Beach and thanked him for being here and the work the reentry center does.

V. New Business

a. FY23 Reentry Funding and Program Office Changes, Chair Haughwout

Jessica provided an update on reentry services in the county as well as the processes. She outlined the notice of funding opportunities that was recently published and the results of same. She noted the major change in youth reentry moving in-house, and indicated what the transition looks like. Two reentry providers: The Lord’s Place and The Reentry Center, will be providing case management and support services, with the Lord’s Place also providing increased transitional housing, and Riviera Beach Integrated Healthcare will provide mental health services.

Chair Haughwout remarked about the new changes in reentry and expressed her satisfaction with the county stepping up to take on the actual provision of services for the youth reentry, which she think could be a positive change. She hopes that this move is not forever and noted her sadness with not having more community providers in some areas, citing the need to grow community involvement and programming. She also hopes that the decision does not discourage the growth and involvement of the community in providing reentry services, which is the strength in reentry.

Tamara Starks sought clarification regarding utilization of current case managers working with the youth reentry and the timeline for the move, and what the structure will be. Jessica noted that the transition has started but the actual start date is October 1, 2022, two case managers and a peer specialist will be hired and report directly to Randi Taylor with Public Safety.

b. Gulfstream Goodwill, Laura Waterman, Director of Justice Services, Gulfstream Goodwill

Laura Waterman provided a statement on behalf of Goodwill highlighting their services and success stories. She noted that Goodwill plans to seek other funding to continue serving the reentry community. They are also still working under the SCA grant coordinated by The Lord's Place.

Chair Haughwout concluded that Gulfstream has been an important part of reentry since day one, and is glad that they will stay involved.

c. BJA Grant, Jennifer Loyless, Office of the Public Defender & Jessica Hidalgo, Palm Beach County Public Safety Department

Jennifer provided updates on the BJA Grant that she and reentry staff are in the process of submitting a grant in the amount of \$750,000 over three years, including a 6-month planning period, to focus on working with an underserved marginalized community, providing behavioral health services to individuals returning from incarceration.

The intent is to collaborate with the Health Care District in the Glades to include case managers providing services inside the jail to. She also acknowledged Ms. Jenkins from the Glades and thanked her for the support.

d. PBC Reentry Summit, Jennifer Loyless

Jennifer provided information on the Reentry Summit scheduled for October 5-7, 2022 at the Airport Hilton Hotel. An update on the key note speaker that all have lived experiences, the panels, and registration was provided. She provided the link for registration, and encouraged everyone to register if they have not already done so and to also participate by having a table at the summit. She thanked the many sponsors for their support.

Chair Haughwout commented on the 2018 summit and the various feedback and continued dialogue following same.

VI. Old Business

a. CJC Community Engagement Recommendations Updates, Chair Haughwout

- i. Chair Haughwout provided an overview of the CJC's dialogue in the community to hear concerns and explore ideas on how to improve community engagement, criminal justice systems, racial issues, incarceration, among others. Through this dialogue a number of recommendations were presented including filling the reentry services gap in the Glades, for which the BJA grant is being written with the hopes of addressing some of the issues

She provide the background of reentry's birth at the CJC, and their need to stay involved and provide assistance where possible when needed.

Chairman of the CJC Reverend Kevin Jones added that recommendations from the CJC dialogue will be presented to the Board of County Commissioner on August 30, 2022. Reentry Taskforce Chair Carey Haughwout, CJC Chair Kevin Jones, and CJC Executive Director Regenia Herring will be in attendance. George Elmore longest standing member of the CJC donated \$5000 to the Reentry Summit.

VII. Subcommittee Updates (Written updates provided)

- a. **Reentry Faith-Based Subcommittee**, *Rev. Kevin Jones, WPB Police Department & Dr. Angela Bess, PBC School District*

Reverend Jones provided an update on the faith based subcommittee and provided a report on the two meetings held. He is looking for anyone interested in joining this subcommittee and trying to figure out what the objectives will be. They meet on the first Friday of each month at 10:00am. The next meeting will be in September and it will be on zoom. This is open to clergy of all faiths.

Chair Haughwout added that the hope is to also develop relationship with a faith-based organization/church prior to release – so there is a place to come home to.

- b. **Sago Palm Reentry Center**, *Serena Marlow, Assistant Warden, Florida Department of Corrections*

Ms. Williams gave a brief update on Sago, highlighting the vacancy that still exists for the HVAC/heavy equipment for trainer, and Arlene spoke about the community model from the recent training she received at Sago and their hope is that the peer-to-peer doom will expand.

A discussion ensued about the heavy equipment operator position and the challenges in filling same because of the salary offered coupled with the distance to travel and hours of operation. Chair Haughwout challenged attendees to think of creative ways to assist in this endeavor, and asked if the county has heavy equipment operators and whether that avenue could be explored for assistance. Director Stephanie Sejnoha agreed to look into the county for options. Orie suggested that we put all these requests together and present it to the DOC on the state level so that they are aware of what the needs are. A suggestion to collaborate with organizations in the Glades was also mentioned.

VIII. Next Steps

- a. Recap Action Items

- i. Work group for a clergy – update provided previously by Reverend Jones
- ii. Expanding the ability to have pre-release contact with clients – Jessica reported that local Contract Manager Arnia will be pursuing options at the state level, and also noted that Arlene has shared the list of classification and release officers with case managers, and that emails are sent to each facility for their assistance in working with the residents to complete and return correspondences. The Jpay option was also discussed, and the need for this process to be improved. Meredith Powers-Lupo shared how the VA clients are utilizing Jpay.

Reentry popups and creating a reentry vide to inform the clients about available services and resources were suggest to assist with information and service provision. Connect with the top releasing facilities were also discussed as there is value to be had in this regard.

- b. **Action Items:**

- i. Popups added to the agenda of the staff meetings
- I. Participating in Upcoming seminar on 08/10/2022 – send someone from the county and another provider to have a reentry presence at these.
- II. Share the upcoming reentry events in advance with providers
- ii. Explore opening up mentor opportunities for grass root agencies, conduct presentation on grant writing, community seminars and workshops.

IX. Additional Member and Guest Comment

- a) Arlene advised that the county is looking to pivot from the LSI-r to the LSCM-I as an assessment tool for reentry
- b) Dr. Sarita Johnson thanked agencies for participating in their recent community event, and mentioned the availability of housing resources
- c) Nancy McConnel advised of housing resources available through Rebel Recovery

Next meeting date: October 26, 2022

Adjournment