

**JACKSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

**Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction**

**Re-entry and Juvenile Justice Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

**February 21, 2019**

**10:30 am**

**Lynwood Roberts Room**

**First Floor, City Hall**

**117 W. Duval Street**

Chair: Frank Denton

Clifton Anderson

Camille Burban

Jeff Golden

Linda Joseph

Ceil Pillsbury-Schellenberg

Vicki Waytowich

Donna Webb

**Topic:** Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction – Re-entry and Juvenile Justice Subcommittee

**Attendance:** Colleen Hampsey- Council Research; Chiquita Moore- Mayors Office; Crystal Shemwell and Jessica Smith- Legislative Services

For all other attendees please see the sign in sheet

**Meeting Convened:** 10:41 am

Chair Frank Denton convened the meeting and the subcommittee members introduced themselves for the record. Mr. Denton then reviewed the agenda, which included meeting times scheduling, a discussion about subcommittee work structure and a review of his conversations with Laura Lambert from the State Attorney’s Office and Reverend Allison DeFoor, Canon to the Ordinary, Bishop of the Diocese of Florida, Episcopal Church.

Ms. Lambert, according to Mr. Denton, said that overall juvenile arrests have decreased in Jacksonville recently. The three main areas of interest for the SAO as related to juveniles are prevention, intervention and suppression/enforcement. Ms. Lambert and Mr. Denton also talked about civil citations, the use of which has reduced local juvenile arrests by half over the past 3-4 years. Juveniles who receive civil citations are sent to either Teen Court (peers) or the Neighborhood Accountability Board (community members). The SAO also has two juvenile diversion programs, although funding in recent years has dwindled. A SAO appointed Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee recently evaluated the diversion programs and a report is forthcoming this summer. Ms. Lambert, according to Mr. Denton, spoke about gender specific justice programs (Pace Center, Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center and Girls Court) which address the psychology of criminal behavior based on gender differences. Ms. Lambert and Mr. Denton discussed the lack of a dedicated funding source for children’s services, which some other Florida counties have, and the disadvantages of not sharing information and databases across agencies.

Chair Denton recently spoke with Reverend Allison DeFoor about prisoner re-entry in Jacksonville. Reverend DeFoor told Mr. Denton that in his opinion there is not enough vocational training in prison, so many ex-offenders are unprepared to support themselves when they are released. Subcommittee member Linda Joseph, Operation New Hope, shared some information about the re-entry processes at the federal, state and local levels. Operation New Hope provides support, life and job skills training for people with a history of involvement with the criminal justice system, and places them in employment to reduce recidivism. Last year, Operation New Hope assisted 450 ex-offenders with re-entry services.

Ms. Joseph explained that when released from federal prisons, ex-offenders are required to live in transitional housing for a period of time and they also receive wraparound services. When released from Florida state prisons, there is not a transitional housing requirement and ex-offenders are released from prison with $50 and a bus ticket to either the county of arrest or a different pre-approved Florida location. In Jacksonville, offenders who are arrested within the city and are returning to the city after incarceration are eligible for services at the Jacksonville Re-entry Center (JREC). Upon release from incarceration, JREC offers assistance with day-to day functions, such as life skills and filing for social services, needed to re-enter society.

Chair Denton talked briefly about scheduling and suggested meeting again on February 28 at 10:30. At the next meeting, the subcommittee will identify several topics for each member to individually study and then report back to the subcommittee.

With no further business, Chairman Denton adjourned the meeting.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 11:51 am

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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Tape: Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction Re-entry and Juvenile Justice Subcommittee -Legislative Services Division 2.21.19