

Re-Entry and Juvenile Justice Subcommittee

Agenda – Feb. 21, 2019

Call to Order

Introductions

Meeting timing and arrangements

10:30 a.m. Thursdays

Frequency

Assignment

This subcommittee will address issues preventing total re-entry by those who have committed or been impacted by crime. Including education, employment, housing, access to capital; social services.

This committee will also focus on matters of juvenile justice. Inventory of existing programs.

Committee members' insights and ideas

Notes of orientation discussions with SAO and Allison DeFoor

Discussion of structure of work

Next meeting

Adjourn

Laura Lothman Lambert, Juvenile Division Director, State Attorney's Office

Juvenile arrests are down substantially.

Most arrests are male, and black male.

Subcommittee members should sit through the morning calendar of Judge Suzanne Bass' court. -

SAO division has three primary areas of interest:

Prevention

Intervention

Suppression/enforcement of most violent offenders

Civil Citations

The use of civil citations for misdemeanors over the past 3-4 years has reduced juvenile arrests by about half.

Those given civil citations go to one of two courts:

Teen Court of peers

Neighbor Accountability Board of community members

State Department of Juvenile Justice's website has a treasure trove of data, down to the circuit level.

Duval has gone from the highest to among the lowest via civil citations.

Diversion Programs

SAO appointed the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee in September 2017 to evaluate diversion programs and make recommendations. (Great information on SAO website at JJACCommittee button.)

Report to be released this spring. Chair: Buddy Schultz.

Diversion funds dried up after Shorstein.

All SAO has now is two programs:

Youthful Offender

Juvenile Diversion Alternatives

Old model of diversion was one-path-fits-all. New model is individual assessment of offender and his/her needs. JJAC will advise.

Gender-Based Justice

We have great programs for girls:

Weaver Center

Pace Center

SAO has a girls' court – but not a boys' court. There are gender-specific issues. Boys and girls are different psychologically, and the crimes they commit are different. Girls: bullying, etc. Boys: guns, robberies, assaults.

“Fist, Stick, Knife, Gun,” by Geoffrey Canada, on how boys escalate into worse violence.

Funding

Need for dedicated funding for programming and long-term strategy. Not dependent on who won the last election.

Four or five counties have dedicated funding, Miami-Dade.

Silos

Police, SAO, Public Defender, DJJ, service agencies all have their own silos, and they don't share enough information among themselves, making it difficult to serve the complete child.

For example, a probation officer doesn't hear back how the child did with an agency's services.

There are some confidentiality issues, but mostly it's just thoughtlessness and turfism.

We need a comprehensive central repository of data, so everyone concerned will know about the kid in trouble.

Maybe Kids Hope Alliance?

Rev. Allison DeFoor

Confirmed very poor programs for education and vocational training in the Dept. of
“Corrections.”

Also confirmed conditions of release back into community.

Virtually none until within three years of scheduled release.

So new data show that Florida has the highest recidivism rate in the country – 860 per 100,000.
“Stunning.”

New DOC director was a brigadier general who then ran the federal prison system. Great
credentials. Should be open to changing the prisons.

Legislature waking up.

Private prisons don't have the motivation, nor do others. System built to fail.

Steve Leifman, mental health board in Miami. Took SA Nelson and Sheriff Williams there to
see. T-U article.

Street people headed toward crime get medicine, SSI, housing.

City Council passed an ordinance giving city contractors extra points for hiring ex-offenders.

Kevin Hyde's TED talk. A good resource.

If one can read and write, dealing with substance abuse, got spouse or close friends, if he
believes in something besides himself, if he's got a job, he's not going back.

Need benchmarks of who's doing it best. Miami-Dade. Dallas. Nashville.

Melissa Nelson aware of national models.

Need a coordinating council, including the chief judge.

Obvious resources

Kevin Gay at Operation New Hope

JREC - Jacksonville Re-Entry Center

Pastor Bruce Havens is a former Co-President of ICARE and Pastor of Arlington UCC Church.

“The Jacksonville Reentry Center is the key to rebuilding lives for those who come out of the penal system and need help restarting. It’s effectiveness is evident in the statistics – over 80% [check my number please] of those who get the services JREC provides do not re-offend. And the second statistic is dollars: it saves millions of dollars in rearresting, prosecuting, and jailing recidivists. But for me the most important part isn’t a statistic, it is the lives that those statistics point to – lives who get a second chance to live up to the potential God has given them, and God knows we all need second chances. Doing justice means putting God’s love into action so that someone who needs a second chance gets it.”

Problem: 33,000 people were released from incarceration into Duval County last year.

Findings:

- 1 in 3 ex-offenders will reoffend.
- \$18,064 per year to house an inmate in a Florida prison (FL DOC).
- The Jacksonville Re-Entry Center is a national model in serving ex-offenders. They provide wrap-around services to ex-offenders including clothing, I.D.s, food, mental health counseling, and other necessary services Only 1 in 5 of their clients reoffend. This center saved the city 4.5 million dollars last year.

Next Steps:

- At the 2016 Nehemiah Assembly, ICARE asked our Sheriff to prioritize this center by allocating more funds to it’s budget over the next few years. The Sheriff agreed to work with ICARE to identify funds at the state and federal level. He also agreed to do an audit of his reentry services to assess their effectiveness. We plan to hold him accountable to his commitment to increase funding.
- In 2017 the center did hire five new staff persons that allowed it to serve more people. They were especially focused on making sure that ex-offenders are receiving mental health services as soon as they needed them. However, in our last meetings with the Sheriff we found that the increased funding has been lost. He alerted us that over \$600,000 in grants were given back to the state due to mismanagement of funds. This is unacceptable. That is why we plan to challenge our Sheriff at the 2018 Action to prioritize this important program by restoring the funding that was lost.
- At the 2018 Action, the Sheriff agreed to increase the budget for JREC by \$300,000. The funding will come from the city instead of a state grant that can’t be renewed.