

**JACKSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

**Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction**

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

**May 16, 2019**

**2:00 pm**

**Committee Room B**

**First Floor, City Hall**

**117 W. Duval Street**

Chair: Frank Denton

Clifton Anderson

Camille Burban-Excused

Linda Joseph

Ceil Pillsbury-Schellenberg

Vicki Waytowich-Excused

Donna Webb-Excused

Rob Mason- Subject Matter Expert

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

**Attendance:** Colleen Hampsey- Council Research; Crystal Shemwell - Legislative Services

For all other attendees please see the sign in sheet

**Meeting Convened:** 2:04 pm

Chair Frank Denton convened the meeting and the subcommittee members introduced themselves for the record. The group discussed the preliminary Task Force report submitted by Chairman Griffin on May 6th. Mr. Denton said that the Task Force intent is action, not research and study, and that existing studies should be utilized in order to build upon past recommendations. In his subcommittee handout, Mr. Denton integrated links to specific relevant studies.

There was a discussion about what resources are available to those who are incarcerated and after release. The members agreed that upon release from prison or jail, individuals should receive a list of programs and services which may help them with the re-entry process. Prison policies are controlled by the Florida Department of Corrections, not local governments, so Ms. Joseph suggested that the subcommittee focus on issues which the group may hold more influence with their recommendations. Each year, roughly 33,000 people cycle through the Duval County Pretrial Detention Center and 30-40 percent of those are the same people. Ms. Joseph relayed the history of the JREC program, which was created under former Sheriff Rutherford. The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office operates the Jacksonville Reentry Center (JREC), which is the "portal of entry" for all felony offenders released in/or back to Duval County- if they were arrested in Duval County. JREC serves approximately 125 people per month with a staff of 11 employees and offers assistance with housing, employment, healthcare etc. The members talked about the benefits of JREC and how it may be a subcommittee recommendation to modernize and expand the program, with additional funding. The members also discussed the shortage of available housing for those recently released from prison and jail. There are some transitional housing options in the city, but there is little oversight and the quality/safety varies.

The subcommittee talked about the driver’s license diversion program implementedy the State Attorney’s Office, “Keys to Success”. License suspension, and the fees associated with it, can trap individuals with long lasting debt and force some to continue to drive illegally (75% still do) with the chance of arrest. This SAO diversion program helps people pay down their debt and clear their license status, though many may not be aware of the program’s existence. The group also discussed probation reform, as there are numerous burdensome court fees and restitution costs which are insurmountable for some people and could lead to violations and re-incarceration.

The subcommittee talked about the importance of agency collaboration instead of isolated communication and information sharing. Mr. Denton talked about consistent funding sources, like the Children’s Service Councils used in many other Florida municipalities and are funded through a millage tax increase. Mrs. Schellenberg mentioned the risk to programs which are funded one year and then hit budget shortfalls the next year and have to shut down. The members may look into the programs currently funded by KHA (PACE, UF Turning Point, Daniel, Twin Oaks, and the Evening Reporting Center) to see if they could be expanded upon to increase capacity. The members also talked about the Cure the Violence program and how they would like the Task Force to coordinate with them in some way, and the importance of building business partnerships with schools in high poverty neighborhoods.

Public comment: Mr. Harris spoke about focusing on connecting repeat offenders, those who cycle regularly through the county jail, with services. H also talked about holding community health meetings, to connect people with needed resources. Ms. Wilkins, KHA, spoke about their budget and how their juvenile justice programs are constrained by available resources.

With no further business, Mr. Denton adjourned the meeting. The next Re-entry and Juvenile Justice Subcommittee meeting will be May 30th at 10:30 am.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 3:58 pm

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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