

**JACKSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

**Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction**

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

**May 30, 2019**

**2:00 pm**

**Don Davis Room**

**First Floor, City Hall**

**117 W. Duval Street**

Chair: Frank Denton

Clifton Anderson-Excused

Camille Burban-Excused

Linda Joseph

Ceil Pillsbury-Schellenberg

Vicki Waytowich

Donna Webb

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:** 10:35 am

Chair Frank Denton convened the meeting and the subcommittee members introduced themselves for the record. The group discussed various aspects of state prison programs: roughly 4000 out of 96,000 receive vocational training while incarcerated, vocational programs vary by facility and are only available within three years of release, and there are long wait lists for GED classes. Ms. Joseph described a private prison she recently toured, which had somewhat better services (shorter wait for GED classes and better vocational training options like AutoCAD). The group noted that while affecting state corrections policy may be outside the purview of the Task Force, Florida does not spend nearly enough on corrections as compared to other states which impacts the communities in which ex-offenders are released.

The subcommittee talked at length about driver’s license issues. Florida drivers can have their licenses suspended for a variety of reasons (chronic school truancy, unpaid parking tickets, child support non-payment, drug possession, DUI, and other moving violations) and then have difficulty paying the fines associated with license restoration. Commonly, out of necessity, these drivers will continue to drive regardless of license status which can lead to repeated infractions and/or jail time. Recently incarcerated individuals struggle even more with the license process upon release. Some lack the proper documentation to renew their license, some have had theirs permanently revoked, and some have accrued more fines than they can ever afford to pay and the debt is sent to collection agencies (affecting credit etc.). Approximately 75% of Operation New Hope clients do not have a valid driver’s license, making finding employment even more challenging. The driver’s license diversion program recently started in the State Attorney’s Office offers a pathway to license restoration, but only if the person’s arrest included driving with a suspended license. The subcommittee also talked about the various methods to measure recidivism (25.7% statewide and 8.64% for Operation New Hope clients) and needed probation reforms (there are roughly 8000 people in Jacksonville currently on probation).

Possible upcoming guest speakers: Lenny Wright (JREC), Coral Messina (SAO), Dr. Michael Hallett Professor of Criminology & Criminal Justice at the University of North Florida, someone from probation, and JSO Chief George Pratt.

Public comment: One attendee spoke about the need for real life job training for those recently released from prison, including forklift and truck driving and logistics. One attendee spoke about the enduring hardships associated with a felony record, which impacts employment and housing. One attendee spoke about the need to have more random drug testing in the workplace to diminish the demand for drug use.

With no further business, Mr. Denton adjourned the meeting. The next Re-entry and Juvenile Justice Subcommittee meeting will be June 20th at 10:30 am.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 12:26 pm

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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Posted 6.5.19 5:00 pm

Tape: Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction Re-entry and Juvenile Justice Subcommittee -Legislative Services Division 5.30.19