

**JACKSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

**Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction**

**Family Engagement Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

**May 16, 2019**

**10:30 am**

**Don Davis Room**

**First Floor, City Hall**

**117 W. Duval Street**

Chair: Ellen Glasser

Tom Geismar

Phyllis Hall-Excused

Timothy Sloan-Excused

Alicia Sitren-Excused

Shamika Wright

Mia Allen, Subject matter expert-Absent

**Topic:** Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction –Family Engagement Subcommittee

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

For all other attendees please see the sign in sheet

**Meeting Convened:** 11:30 am

Chairperson Glasser convened the meeting and welcomed the members. This was the seventh meeting for the Family Engagement Subcommittee. Assistant Chief Travis Cox and Garland Scott, Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office, were in attendance to speak about the gang intervention/de-escalation project (Hammer and Hope) with which they are involved. In this violence reduction strategy, gang members and those who may be gang associated, are targeted, receive custom notifications and are offered an opportunity to change their life trajectory. The project has seen a success rate of approximately 30 percent. Working with numerous agency partners, those who accept the chance to participate are given assistance with safe passage if needed, driver’s license restoration, child support, clothing, employment, education/GED classes. Mr. Scott acknowledged that the building of trust is an integral component. 20 local pastors have also received specific training to be a part of this project.

When asked what would be needed to continue and or expand the program, Mr. Scott said that additional staffing and funding (particularly for tangible items like clothing for interviews, work shoes, diapers, and travel to safe houses) would be necessary. The group discussed root causes of crime and Mr. Scott spoke about the generational effects of poverty. When asked about the impact of mentoring on the population targeted by this program, Mr. Scott indicated that the participants are not usually ready for such a relationship and that these particular men/boys were likely to have dropped out of school are unlikely to have been involved with mentoring programs when they were still enrolled.

When asked what would move the needle on crime to see measurable reductions, Asst. Chief Coax and Mr. Scott said that they need more funds, more staff, and expanded partnerships with the business community. The individuals targeted for this program turned toward criminal behavior out of financial desperation, lack of social support or lack of other options. The subcommittee asked about long and short term steps that might help reduce crime. In the long term, Mr. Scott said that better preschool teachers could make a big difference, as would trauma recovery classes. In the short term, there are immediate needs for the group this program targets such as help covering bullet holes with sheet rock so as to not be evicted from public housing. Mr. Geismar commented on the level of need prevalent in parts of the city, for necessities like food and shelter as well as education and employment assistance.

Public comment: Two attendees from the Jacksonville Public Library spoke about the adult, youth and teen programs offered throughout the city. The library has GED classes, safe places for teens, care carts with free personal hygiene products, frees summer lunches (funded by KHA), technological training, resume/job application assistance, parent-child story time sessions, and book distributions for local daycare centers.

The members approved the minutes from the previous meeting. Ms. Glasser said she will draft a short synopsis about the needs of many residents of the city and those who are trying to provide service. There was some discussion about the preliminary Task Force report and things not addressed in it (such as public awareness campaigns and gun policies). With no further business, Chairperson Glasser adjourned the meeting. The next Family Engagement subcommittee meeting has yet to be scheduled.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 1:28 pm

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

CHampsey @coj.net (904) 630-1498

Posted 6.17.19 5:00 pm

Tape: Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction Family Engagement Subcommittee -Legislative Services Division 6.13.19