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RESEARCH DIVISION**

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**SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO REVIEW JSO PRIMARY FACILITIES:
WORKING GROUP ON ADJUDICATION, INTAKE AND REHABILITATION**

Meeting Minutes

**January 26, 2024
9:00 a.m.**

Location: Lynwood Roberts Room, 1st floor, City Hall

In attendance: Council Members Jimmy Peluso and Michael Boylan; Charlie Cofer, Public Defender; Coral Messina, SAO; Asst. Chief Paschal, JSO; Mark Fontaine and Tom Olk, Civil Citation and Deflection Network; Cindy Schwartz, the Miami Model

Also: Brooks Dame, District 7 ECA; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research Division

Meeting Convened: 9:00 a.m.

Chairman Peluso convened the meeting and called for introductions. He said that this meeting will cover civil citations as a means to decrease burdens on the courts and the jail.

Mr. Fontaine and Mr. Olk, Civil Citation and Deflection Network, gave a presentation on pre-arrest diversion programs. The Civil Citation and Deflection Network is a nonprofit operating out of Tallahassee, with the goal of promoting the expansion of both juvenile and adult pre-arrest diversion programs. Mr. Fontaine spoke about structured intervention with accountability in lieu of traditional arrests for low level non-violent offenses. He talked about *Florida Statute 901.41*, which authorizes and encourages pre-arrest diversion programs for juveniles and adults in local municipalities. Mr. Fontaine talked about how they track data and how program evaluation is developed to reflect the needs of specific populations.

There was discussion as to what entity manages/implements local diversion programs. In some locations it is under the auspices of the State Attorney's Office, in other places it is under the Sheriff, in Leon County it is managed through DISC Village, a comprehensive behavioral health service provider. Mr. Olk noted that in all of the locations, the programs rely on cohesion and support from all stakeholders, the

Public Defender, SAO, law enforcement, courts and local legislators. Deflection programs' success also depends upon agency capacity and access to an array of services.

CM Boylan asked about cost benefits from diversion programs, which save on expenses for jails, courts and law enforcement. Mr. Fontaine said he will send CM Peluso data related to cost savings and a report on the program implementation in Pinellas County. He said that when programs are being designed, the municipality decides what offenses will be included and whether or not there will be limitations on multiple citations. He explained that civil citations are not simply tickets for which the offender pays a fine, but it is an early intervention that defers prosecution and avoids a criminal record but instills accountability through community service, therapy and classes. For offenders who do not complete the requirements, the deferred prosecution agreements may be nullified.

There was a discussion about law enforcement's discretion in utilizing civil citations. Mr. Olk talked about police training sessions and officer usage tracking. He talked about oversight through a local Steering Committee that meets quarterly. Coral Messina, SAO, asked about cost to the offender and she mentioned provider shortages for mental health and substance use disorders. There was discussion about funding, through state and federal grants and potentially with opioid settlement monies which are permitted to pay for civil citation programs per the settlement agreements. David Kilcrease, MHOP, asked about the length of time for offenders to complete the program requirements. Mr. Fontaines said it varies, but on average may be 1-3 months.

Mr. Cofer said he will be in Tallahassee next week and will set up a meeting with Mr. Olk and Mr. Fontaine. CM Peluso said he wants the gentlemen to return and give a presentation to the full committee at a later date.

Cindy Schwartz, the retired Project Director of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida Criminal Mental Health Project- Jail Diversion Programs spoke about the 'Miami Model', where she worked from 2003-2022. The Miami Model is a diversion program that targets those with serious mental health issues and provides linkages to community-based treatment and services. Ms. Schwartz said that 64 percent of those in local jails have behavioral health diagnosis, and 15 percent of those have significant mental illnesses. That 15 percent spend 8 times longer incarcerated and face an increased risk for suicide and early death. She described the concept of recovery, which involves stable housing, healthcare, social support and a sense of purpose.

Ms. Schwartz explained the Sequential Intercept Model, which details how individuals with mental and substance use disorders come into contact with and move through the criminal justice system. She noted that "intercepting" individuals pre-booking keeps them from falling further into the system. She said the last intercept model in Jacksonville was conducted in 2020 by USF, and she said it would be recommended to update it. Ms. Schwartz talked about 40-hour crisis intervention training (CIT) for law enforcement and said that more than 7000 officers in the Miami area have completed the training to learn de-escalation techniques. She talked about crisis stabilization units (there are 4 in Miami, plus Jackson Memorial Hospital) where police may take someone in crisis using Baker Act authority. Officers transport individuals with mental illness to community mental health facilities for evaluation, treatment, and referrals instead of making an arrest. Ms. Schwartz noted that CIT training sessions and the stabilization units have decreased the overall number of arrests, decreased police use of force and officer injuries. She talked about jail in-reach and a grant just awarded to Sulzbacher for MHOP staff to work inside the jail facility to assess and identify eligible participants for diversion. Ms. Schwartz highlighted the role of peer specialists for support for those in the diversion program. She mentioned the one stop shop, Miami Center for Mental Health and Recovery that is about to open. Ms. Schwartz spoke about trauma informed programming and evidence-based therapies. She concluded the presentation by saying

that jail diversion systems can keep more people with mental illnesses out of jail and get them the help they need.

CM Peluso talked about state and federal funding for local diversion programs, and about increasing the number or capacity of stabilization centers in Jacksonville. The group talked about the county funded stabilization center in Orange County, available for police drop-offs. They spoke about the Baker Act and how there must be enough providers to offer the needed care. CM Boylan talked about methods to coalesce the community behind diversion programs. Ms. Schwartz suggested making a new sequential intercept model, which would bring folks together, followed by a community summit to gain public input and support. CM Peluso said he will discuss crisis stabilization centers and the sequential intercept model at his upcoming meeting with Mr. Cofer.

Next meeting: Noticed meeting between Mr. Cofer and CM Peluso about final recommendations at 2/2/24 at 12:30 pm.

With no further business, CM Peluso adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 10:44 a.m.

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research Division
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1.26.24 Posted 5:00 p.m.