

MEETING OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY COUNCIL (PSC) FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE, MENTAL HEALTH, & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

A meeting of the Public Safety Council for Criminal Justice, Mental Health, & Substance Abuse (hereafter referred to as the PSC) was held on Friday, August 25, 2023, at 12:00 PM in Conference Room B1-501 of the County Administration Building B, 1800 27th Street, Vero Beach, Florida. You may hear an audio of the meeting and review the agenda on the IRC website at www.ircgov.com/Boards/PSC/2023.

PSC Members Present

David E. Currey, Chairman, Chief of Vero Beach Police Department
Eric Flowers, Vice Chairman, Indian River County Sheriff
Amanda Busbin, SE Florida Behavioral Health Network (SEFBHN)
Joseph Flescher, Commissioner
Dawn Boulding, Circuit Administrator, 19th Judicial Circuit
Kent Campbell, IRC Sheriff's Office (IRCSO) Chief Correctional Officer
Carrie Lester, Executive Director, Substance Awareness Center of IRC
Suzanne Caudell, Director, Comprehensive Offender Rehab & Education
Valerie Smith, National Alliance on Mental Illness
William Wims, President/CEO, New Horizons Treasure Coast
Diamond Litty, Public Defender's Office

PSC Members Absent

Charles A. Schwab, Chief Judge, 19th Judicial Circuit
Mike Davis, FL Department of Corrections
Kathy Jones, Substance Awareness Center
Thomas Bakkedahl, State Attorney
Dedilia Finlayson, Detention Facility Director, FL DJJ
Carol Martin, Director of Consumer Services, Mental Health Assoc. of IRC
Nicole Menz, County Judge
Nathan Peterson, Chief Probation Officer, FL DJJ
Rayme Nuckles, Treasure Coast Homeless Services (TCHS)

Others Present

Vicki Soule, CEO at Treasure Coast Community Health, Inc.
Angela Rosado-Jones, IRC Sheriff's Office (IRCSO) Captain - Bureau of Corrections
Ian Welsch, The Motivational Edge

IRC Staff

Susan Prado, County Attorney
Ashley Brown, Recording Secretary
Kim Moirano, County Staff

Call to Order

Chairman Currey called the meeting to order at 12:01 pm; a quorum was present.

Approval of the PSC Minutes for May 26,2023

ON A MOTION BY Sheriff Flowers, SECONDED BY Commissioner Flescher, the members voted unanimously (11-0) to approve the minutes from the May 26,2023 meeting.

Expansion to the SE Florida Behavioral Health Network Grant (Amanda Busbin)

Ms. Busbin provided committee members with an update on the grant status. She said they are still in the running for two grants and should have an answer by September 30th. Furthermore, they made it through the entire process which is no easy feat due to the competition in obtaining federal grants. She proceeded to discuss how the DCF grant officially ended on June 30th, however, we met all performance measures and performance outcomes for three years. Ms. Busbin continued by sharing the successful graduation rate is now at 78%, which is very high and a huge step forward. She added this number is based on the DCF's calculation which are more conservative. There was no news about any additional reinvestment grants at this time. Ms. Busbin welcomed anyone with questions about the performance measures over the past three years to email her directly and she will gladly answer all inquiries.

Sheriff Flowers inquired about the opioid funding, to which Ms. Busbin had no further updates. Sheriff Flowers proceeded to discuss plans to create a full detox facility inside the jail once the opioid money is available. No such facility currently exists and those with substance abuse issues are overwhelming the medical wing. Sheriff Flowers estimates this project will cost several millions of dollars. However, regional funding should be in excess of \$1 million and there will be ongoing payments for 18 years. Sheriff Flowers believes with this funding and additional state funding they hope to avoid using county funds. He continued to outline his plans for the detox facility. There will be 10-12 cells strictly dedicated to detoxing inmates. He spoke with representatives in Tallahassee to verify this as an item and they are fine with his endeavor. Vicky with the Substance Awareness Center is also on board. A partnership with Cleveland Clinic is underway. Sheriff Flowers explained that Indian River County will be leading the state as no other counties have such an extensive detox facility.

Ms. Busbin asked if there were any statistics pertaining to how incoming residents could use detox on a weekly or monthly basis. Sheriff Flower's said he would have no problem providing that information. Susan Prado added she would discuss this matter with Budget Director Kristin Daniels. Carrier Lester of the Substances Awareness Center suggested that we provide family members and friends impacted by substance the opportunity to share their stories. She hopes there will be further discussion so we as a community can learn from peoples' firsthand experiences with the opioid crisis.

Commissioner's Matters (Commissioner Flescher)

Commissioner Flescher said no matter what news station you watch, it's obvious that our nation is in peril. He commended all of the committee members for trying to better our community and thanked those in in attendance. Commissioner Flescher is proud of what Indian River County has accomplished and is looking forward to what the future holds. He stated that from the 18,000-foot view, our county stands out from all the rest.

Commissioner Flescher preceded to invite everyone to the next veteran's Mental Health Court Graduation. The ceremony will be held in Judge Menz's Chambers. He emphasized that seeing the

successful relationships with our community partners, mentors and agencies is incredibly rewarding. Commissioner Flescher believes being in attendance of these graduations is an unforgettable experience. He feels that what you learn is taken home and then integrated back into the workplace.

The Commissioner expressed his excitement for Sheriff Flowers' proposed changes to the Indian River County jail. He explained there are other Commissioners that are very familiar with custody care control, classification, equitable treatment, and positive momentum within the jail structure. Lastly, Commissioner Flescher suggested the board draft a letter of support for these new programs.

Committee Members Matters

Sheriff Flowers introduced his colleagues, Captain Angela Jones and Chief Kelly. Capt. Jones is responsible for many of the new programs which are growing every day. In addition to programs such as AA, a GED program, substance abuse services, anger management, church services, Indian River County is providing even more resources to occupants of the jail. Captain Jones elaborated on several of these new programs.

IRC Sheriff's Office has been working with Career Source. They visit the jail every 5 weeks and offer inmates assistance with job searching, resume-building, and interview training. Captain Jones explained that many of the residents want to join the workforce upon release but are unsure of where to begin. The Career Source program builds up their self-esteem and provides inmates with the tools necessary for success. However, upon implementation of this new program another issue arose. Many of the inmates did not have any professional clothes to wear to upcoming interviews. This led to another service called Blessing Bags. Through public donations, they were able to launch this new project in which inmates are provided with essentials such as deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste and other personal hygiene products. These bags are given to homeless or incarcerated individuals free of charge. Through these programs, six people in the last month have gotten jobs and maintained them.

Captain Jones described additional services that are being offered to residents who truly want to change themselves for the better. Right Life is visiting the jail and meeting with inmates twice a week until they get released. At that point the discharged no longer incarcerated individuals go to a place called the "Rescue". Here they can have a safe place to stay, clothing is provided, and financial skills are taught. Residents are also educated about both obtaining and maintain a job.

In addition to these in-house programs, IRC Sheriff's Department is moving forward with a new program called River Farms. Here they have animals on a section of the jail property. The intention is to allow inmates to learn skills to get a job on a farm, Walmart or Home Depot garden centers, and other positions involving horticulture. Additionally, they are teaching inmates how to bake as that could help them obtain a job at a bakery such as Publix or Winn Dixie. Captain Jones is also working with the Treasure Coast Technical College in order to offer inmates training to become barbers, phlebotomists, forklift operators and more.

Other services include assisting inmates in obtaining a Florida ID. Not only will this help them to obtain jobs, it also keeps them from winding back in jail as if you are walking down the street with no form of identification it could get them into trouble with the law. Captain Jones finished by describing the outstanding Art Therapy program. It has been extremely helpful to residents who need to find a healthy way to express themselves. It has assisted inmates in working through certain mental health issues. Since the program's inception, the jail is much more peaceful and calmer in the areas with artwork. Captain Jones is extremely optimistic about the numerous changes being made to the county jail and can already see the positive impact being made in the lives of inmates.

Lastly, Ian Welsch, Founder and CEO of Motivational Edge provided information about his youth development agency. Mr. Welsch started this organization as a way to engage, educate, and empower the most at-risk youth we have in the community. He states those in his program are the lowest 25% performing in the school system. Many are children in foster care as well as the re-entry side of juvenile justice. The Motivational Edge utilizes arts-based activities and expression-based activities to get kids to open up. They utilize behavior technicians and licensed therapists to work with the children on the mental health and behavioral health aspects. These professionals work one-on-one with the kids as mentors. He spoke about the facility located on US-1 which is open from 8:00 am- 8:00 pm seven days a week. The Motivational Edge also offers housing for youth ages 18-23 exiting the foster care system. Those in need are provided supportive and transitional accommodations.

Chairman's Matters

There were none.

Public Discussion Items

There were none.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:03 pm.

The next meeting of the PSC is scheduled for **October 20, 2023, at 12:00 PM**, in Building B, Conference Room B1-501, at 1800 27th Street, Vero Beach, FL.