

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, May 24, 2024, 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/2024.

PSC Members Present

David E. Currey, Chairman, Chief of Vero Beach Police Department
Eric Flowers, Vice Chairman, Indian River County Sheriff
Joseph Flescher, Commissioner
Kent Campbell, IRC Sheriff's Office (IRCSO) Deputy Chief Correctional Officer
Suzanne Caudell, Director, Comprehensive Offender Rehab & Education
Dedilia Finlayson, Detention Facility Director, FL DJJ
Carrie Lester, Substance Awareness Center of IRC
Diamond Litty, Public Defender's Office
Carol Martin, Director of Consumer Services, Mental Health Assoc. of IRC
Shaun Leydon, Treasure Coast Community Health
Rayme Nuckles, Treasure Coast Homeless Services (TCHS)
Nikhol Primm, County Judge
William Wims, President/CEO, New Horizons Treasure Coast
Michelle Rhodeback, Circuit Administrator, 19th Judicial Circuit
Joseph Cracchiola, FL Department of Corrections
Michelle Zawistowski (for Nathan Peterson), Detention Facility Director, FL DJJ
William Wims, President/CEO, New Horizons Treasure Coast

PSC Members Absent

Thomas Bakkedahl, State Attorney
Ann Berner, SE Florida Behavioral Health Network (SEFBHN)
Mike Davis, FL Dept of Corrections
Nicole Menz, County Judge
Valerie Smith, National Alliance on Mental Illness

Others Present

Angela Rosado-Jones, IRC Sheriff's Office (IRCSO)
Demetria Williams, Take Flight Counseling & Consulting
Wes Samons, The Mental Health Collaborative
Vicki Soule, Treasure Coast Community Health Inc.
Veronica Wade, New Horizons of the Treasure Coast
Meredith Egan, United Way IRC

IRC Staff

Ashley Brown, Recording Secretary

Call to Order

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

Approval of the PSC Minutes for February 21st, 2024

ON A MOTION BY Joseph Flescher, SECONDED by William Wims, the members voted unanimously (17-0) to approve February 21st, 2024 minutes.

Expansion to the SE Florida Behavioral Health Network Grant (S. Leydon)

Shaun Leydon, Project Director of Treasure Coast Community Health, delivered updates to committee members. He wanted to clarify that the Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network Grant ended in September of last year, which is when his position came in. Treasure Coast Community Health is being funded to oversee the process. Regarding the Mental Health Court, there have not been too many changes. Their primary focus has been on housing to find more suitable living arrangements for those in need. They are currently working on some Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) grants.

Election of Chairman (action required)

ON A MOTION BY Joseph Flescher, SECONDED by Kent Campbell, the members voted unanimously (17-0) to elect Eric Flowers as the Public Safety Council Chairman.

Election of Vice Chairman (action required)

ON A MOTION BY Joseph Flescher, SECONDED by Rayme Nuckles, the members voted unanimously (17-0) to elect David Currey as the Public Safety Council Vice Chairman.

Opioid/ SUD/ Co-Occurring Needs Assessment-Qualitative Data Report (C. Lester)

Ms. Lester, Executive Director of the Substance Awareness Center of Indian River County, provided updates on the multi-phase Needs Assessment. She began by thanking committee members for their support. The SAC is currently wrapping up Phase 1 of gathering qualitative data. They conducted 110 interviews ranging from 60-90 minutes long that were completed in focus groups. These focus groups pertain to individuals with lived experience of substance use disorder (SUD). Additionally, they spoke with family members/ loved ones who are dealing with the residual effects of substance use and those who provide services to those with SUD. The SAC also conducted executive leadership in the community and spoke with law enforcement officers to get multiple perspectives on the complex issue.

Upon completion of the data mining, they will begin Phase 2. During this phase, they will start the qualitative survey that will be then disseminated out to the community. Ms. Lester explained that she will be needing assistance at this point in the Needs Assessment. She informed committee members that they will receive emails from her or SAC staff members requesting the completion of a survey. She

feels that the more information received the better the Needs Assessment will be. Ms. Lester stated the survey should be live as of July 1st. It will remain open for the month and will collect surveys during that period. Her goal is to have a completed final report in August. This will provide a comprehensive update as well as the next steps in the process.

Commissioner's Matters

Commissioner Flescher spoke about Police Week and the recent Wreath Ceremony that took place at the Courthouse. He was deeply moved by this event and was pleased to see committee members from the Public Safety Council in attendance. He emphasized the need to honor servicemen and women who made the ultimate sacrifice while in the line of duty. However, Commissioner Flescher would also like to see a greater citizen turnout for next year's Wreath Ceremony. Board members suggested the use of Social Media and the IRCSO's website to further promote the event in 2025.

Commissioner Flescher informed attendees that the PSC recommendation for the distribution of Opioid Settlement Funds was presented to the Board of County Commissioners. During their meeting this past Tuesday (05/21/2024), the recommendation was approved. Commissioner Flescher wanted those in attendance to know that their suggestions and decisions made during the November 2023 workshop were supported by the Board.

Committee Members Matters

Ms. Lester brought up the current vacancy as Kathy Jones is no longer with the Substance Awareness Center. She would like to fill the spot with someone else. Ms. Brown informed her was in communication with the County Attorney regarding this matter. To fill the position for the current Substance Awareness Center vacancy, Ms. Lester can personally appoint someone. Ms. Brown told Ms. Lester to keep her updated so she knows if there is a new committee member joining the Public Safety Council.

Chairman's Matters

Chairman Flowers and Captain Rosado-Jones discussed several programs at the County Jail. One involves a collaboration of nonprofits that meet with inmates prior to their release. They work with them to focus on things like where the person will live, what they will do for work and how they will sustain themselves. A total of 48 people were admitted into this program during a 6-month period. Of that group, only two have been arrested. Statistically this is a huge success as the normal recidivism rate is 75%. Furthermore, all who participated in the program are employed and consistently holding their jobs.

On July 25th there will be a Job Fair with up to 10 different vendors at the County Jail. Inmates are working on their resumes so they can bring them to this event. A variety of employment opportunities are available for them upon release including fast food service, car dealerships, construction and citrus farms. Furthermore, the farm at the County Jail is going extremely well. The pond is stocked with fish and there are goats, chickens and other livestock animals. Food grown at the farm is being donated to The Source.

They are now offering jail residents yoga, art therapy, welding classes and more. There is an in-house print shop where inmates work. Chairman Flowers said they provide a wide variety of services/ goods including t-shirts, plaques, awards and more. Lastly, Chairman Flowers discussed how he met with Mr. Nuckles to discuss the homeless population. He informed committee members that he is the homeless liaison and anything dealing with that issue.

Public Discussion Items

There were none.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:36 pm.

The next meeting of the PSC is scheduled for **August 23, 2024, at 12:00 PM**, in Building B, Conference Room B1-501, at 1800 27th Street, Vero Beach, FL.