

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, December 1, 2025, 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/2025.

PSC Members Present

Carrie Lester, Chairman, Thrive IRC
Joseph Flescher, Commissioner
Amanda Busbin for Ann Berner, SE Florida Behavioral Health Network (SEFBHN)
Justin Barenborg for Diamonda Litty, Public Defender's Office
Joseph Flescher, Commissioner
Valerie Smith, National Alliance on Mental Illness
David E. Currey, Vice Chairman, Chief of Vero Beach Police Department
Wendy Parent for Nikhol Primm, County Judge
Dedilia Finlayson, Detention Facility Director, FL DJJ
Tony Barcellona, Thrive
Bill Long for Thomas Bakkedahl, State Attorney
Barbara Devoe for Carol Martin, Director of Consumer Services, Mental Health Assoc. of IRC
Donna Morris for Suzanne Caudell, Director, Comprehensive Offender Rehab & Education

PSC Members Absent

Eric Flowers, Indian River County Sheriff
Shaun Leydon, Treasure Coast Community Health
Rayme Nuckles, Treasure Coast Homeless Services (TCHS)
Kent Campbell, Dept of Corrections
Gregory Jackson, New Horizons Treasure Coast
Joseph Cracchiola, FL Department of Corrections
Charles A. Schwab, Chief Circuit Court
Nicole Menz, County Judge
Joseph Cracchiola, FL Department of Corrections

Others Present

Vicki Soule', Treasure Coast Community Health Inc.
Wes Samons, Mental Health Collaborative
Meredith Egan, United Way of Indian River County
Kyleigh Motiwala, Thrive IRC

IRC Staff

Jennifer Shuler, County Attorney
Ashley Brown, Recording Secretary

Call to Order

*Chairman Lester unofficially called an informational meeting to order at 12:07 pm; a quorum was **not** present.*

Chairman Lester called for a moment of silence in remembrance of Sergeant Terri Sweeting Mashkow and David Long.

Chairman Lester officially called the meeting to order at 12:18 pm; a quorum was present.

Approval of the PSC Minutes for August 22, 2025

ON A MOTION BY David Currey, SECONDED by Amanda Busbin, the members voted unanimously (13-0) to approve the August 22, 2025 minutes as presented.

Approval of the 2026 Meeting Dates

ON A MOTION BY Amanda Busbin, SECONDED by Wendy Parent, the members voted unanimously (13-0) to approve the 2026 meeting dates with one revision: the May 22 meeting was changed to May 15 due to the Memorial Day holiday.

Report from Indian River County Opioid & Substance Use Task Force

a) RFP Update & Recommendations from Amanda Busbin

Ms. Amanda Busbin, representing the Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network, provided an update on the Request for Applications (RFA) process related to opioid settlement funding. She reported that following the Council's previous meeting, the RFA was released on September 9, with applications due by October 15. Oral presentations were conducted on November 14 and 17, and finalists were being presented to the Council for consideration, with the intent to bring recommendations forward to the Board of County Commissioners on December 9th.

Ms. Busbin stated that nine applications were received. All applications met the minimum submission requirements and were forwarded to the Opioid Task Force for review. Five reviewers, four members of the Indian River County Opioid Task Force and one Southeast Florida Behavioral Health Network staff member, scored the applications. Applications were evaluated using a weighted scoring system, with a threshold of 420 points required to advance to oral presentations. Six applications met the threshold and participated in oral presentations; three did not.

Based on cumulative scoring and review, five applicants were recommended for partial funding approval:

- **Thrive** – Centralized intake and referral system and respite services: \$500,000
- **Treasure Coast Community Health** – Mobile MAT services in connection with central receiving: \$300,000
- **Treasure Coast Homeless Services Council** – Housing assistance and case management: \$150,000
- **New Horizons of the Treasure Coast** – Detox bed at the main unit: \$166,000
- **Rite Life Services** – Peer training and apprenticeship program: \$100,000

Ms. Busbin noted that the recommendations represent partial funding awards and total \$1,216,000 for a proposed 12-month contract period.

Council members asked questions regarding the scoring process, funding amounts, and the scope of services, particularly related to the peer workforce training program. Ms. Busbin explained that the peer training initiative is intended to build a countywide peer workforce, with training and apprenticeship hours provided locally, supporting approximately 100 individuals. She also addressed certification requirements, background screening, accountability measures, and performance monitoring for each contract.

Ms. Busbin further provided brief status updates on previously funded opioid settlement programs and outlined how staff would continue to monitor outcomes and expenditures.

Discussion & Approval of Opio Settlement Funding Recommendations

Following the discussion during the RFP update and recommendations presented by Ms. Busbin, the Council took action on the opioid settlement funding recommendations.

ON A MOTION BY Joseph Flescher, SECONDED by David Currey, the members voted unanimously (13-0) to approve the allocation of opioid settlement funds as reviewed and present the recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration in the following amounts: Thrive (\$500,000); Treasure Coast Community Health (\$300,000); Treasure Coast Homeless Services Council (\$150,000); New Horizons of the Treasure Coast (\$166,000); and Right Life Services (\$100,000).

Status & Performance Updates for Mental Health Court Program (S. Leydon)

There were none as Mr. Leydon was not in attendance.

Commissioner's Matters

Commissioner Flescher thanked the Chair, Council members, and staff for their participation and emphasized the importance of the meeting and the actions taken. He noted that the recommended opioid settlement funding allocations would move forward to the Board of County Commissioners at its next scheduled meeting and expressed appreciation for the Council's flexibility related to the prior meeting delay.

Commissioner Flescher reflected on the progress made since the initial rollout of opioid settlement funding, acknowledging early challenges and recognizing that the current process has become more structured and effective. He highlighted the County's investment in Southeast Behavioral Health Network and expressed optimism that the refined process will continue to improve in future funding cycles. Commissioner Flescher also noted that staff plan to begin the process earlier next year to ensure better timing and further refinement, with related items to be addressed on a future agenda.

Committee Members Matters

There were none.

Chairman's Matters

There were none.

Public Discussion Items

There were none.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:01 pm.

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