

# M I N U T E S

MONDAY, March 23, 2009

## PALM BEACH COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

McEaddy Conference Room  
12<sup>th</sup> Floor, 301 N. Olive Avenue  
West Palm Beach, Florida 33401

### ***Members Present:***

Moses Baker  
Rosalyn Baker  
Stephen Barborini  
James Barr  
Joseph Bernadel  
Delsa Bush  
Barbara Cheives  
Max Davis  
Douglas Duncan  
George Elmore  
Rolando Garcia  
Matt Immler  
Feirmon Johnson  
Randolph K. Johnson, Sr.  
William Kramer  
Marti LaTour  
Wesley Lauer  
Karen Marcus  
Michael McAuliffe  
Martin Millar  
Marianne Rantala  
William Stern  
Carmen Veneziano

### ***Members Absent:***

Ric Bradshaw  
Sharon Bock  
Mike Driscoll  
Carey Haughwout  
Kathleen Kroll  
Luis Perez  
Gerald Richman  
Debra Robinson  
Maria Sachs  
Lee Waring  
  
Art Johnson (Ex officio  
Exec. Committee)  
  
Harry A. Johnston, II (Ex officio  
Exec. Committee)

### ***Guests Attending:***

Cristy Altaro, Court Administration  
Cerina Anderson, Delray Beach Police Department  
Leonard Berger, Assistant County Attorney  
Thomas Blomberg, Florida State University  
Wendy Cavendish, Florida State University  
Reed Daniel, City of West Palm Beach Youth Empowerment Center  
Reginale Durandisse, For the Children, Inc.  
Jeanette A. Gordon, Riviera Beach Justice Service Center  
Seth Bernstein, Boys Town  
Krista Garber, Court Administration  
John J. Green, City of Riviera Beach  
Mark Hansen, PBC School District  
Un Cha Kim, Clerk & Comptroller

Karen Mann, Florida State University  
Kim Myers, West Palm Beach Palm Beach Police Department  
Stephanie Sejnoha, Office of Financial Management and Budget  
Sharon Sheppard, Westgate CRA  
Thuy Shutt, Westgate CRA  
Javaro Sims, Delray Beach Police Department  
Craig Spataro, West Palm Beach Weed & Seed  
Inda Spencer, Riviera Beach Weed & Seed  
Jack Strenge, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office – Violent Crime Division  
Louis Tomeo, Clerk & Comptroller  
Laurie J. Van Deusen, Palm Beach Sheriff's Office – Youth Violence Prevention  
Clarence D. Williams, Riviera Beach Police Department

**Staff Present:**

Michael L. Rodriguez, Executive Director  
Journey Beard, Crime Prevention Project Specialist  
Arlene Burton, Administrative Secretary  
Wayne English, Sr. Criminal Justice Analyst  
Katherine Hatos, Criminal Justice Analyst  
Jenise Link, Sr. Criminal Justice Analyst  
Rosalind Murray, Program Development Specialist  
Brenda Oakes, Youth Violence Prevention Planning Coordinator  
Kristie Slinskey, Temporary Staff  
Mike Szakacs, Financial Analyst II  
Candee Villapando, Criminal Justice Analyst  
Becky Walker, Criminal Justice Programs Manager

- I. Chairman Barr called the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m. Welcome was extended to members and guests.
- II. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.
- III. Chairman Barr invited guests to introduce themselves.
- IV. The agenda was approved unanimously after motion by Mr. Elmore and second by Commissioner Marcus.
- V. The minutes of the February 23, 2009 full commission meeting were approved unanimously after motion by Commissioner Marcus and second by Ms. Cheives.
- VI. Under Chairman's Comments, Chairman Barr:
  - A. Congratulated Councilor Martin Millar on his recent victory at the polls to become the new mayor of South Palm Beach.
  - B. Reminded persons to use the microphone when speaking so that everyone can hear.
- VII. Under Executive Director's Comments, Mr. Rodriguez:
  - A. Reminded members of the Criminal Justice, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Reinvestment Act Strategic Plan summit to be held at the Palm Beach County Convention Center, on Tuesday, March 31, 2009 from 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- B. Reported that the Juvenile Assessment Center was granted a lease extension for five (5) years. The CJC will continue its efforts to find a permanent location for the center.
- C. Invited members to the Weed & Seed Powerhouse Partnership Appreciation Breakfast to be held at the Salvation Army Community Center on Wednesday, April 8, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. Florida's US Attorney, R. Alexander Acosta will be the keynote speaker.
- D. Congratulated Becky Walker on receiving the National Association of Social Workers 2009 award for Social Worker of the Year.
- E. Advised that staff would be distributing the annual satisfaction survey to members at the end of the meeting. He requested that the surveys be completed and returned as soon as possible.
- F. Reported that the CJC received more funds than expected for the formula grant program, and that an additional amount is also expected at a later date. He advised that the Finance Committee will meet to further discuss the budget following the CJC meeting.

#### VIII. Ethics Presentation

Chairman Barr introduced Mr. Leonard Berger, Assistant County Attorney who was invited to give the annual presentation on ethics guidelines to CJC members and staff.

Mr. Berger provided members with copies of a booklet entitled "Working in the Sunshine", a guide to the government in the Sunshine Amendment and the Code of Ethics. He encouraged members to read them.

He noted that under federal law, the code of ethics is simple. It states that one does not use their public office for private gain. He stated that the code of ethics is divided into two sets of conflict: prohibited and non-prohibited conflicts.

Prohibited conflicts Mr. Berger said, entail common sense prohibitions. This refers to the use of your office corruptly for private gains, the misuse of information available to you because of your position that would not otherwise be available to the public, and that neither you, your spouse nor children can take anything of value with the understanding that it was given to you in order to influence the way you do your job. The non-prohibited conflicts he said require more than common sense. This prohibits you from doing business with yourself, having a contractual relationship with any entity that does business with the agency by which you are regulated, and voting conflicts which prohibit you from voting on any matter by which you or your family member or a business associate may gain/lose. In the event of a voting conflict, Mr. Berger noted that members should publicly disclose the nature of the conflict, complete form 8B <http://www.ethics.state.fl.us/> and file with the person responsible for recording the minutes, within 15 days after the vote is taken.

Mr. Berger cited a case with Dade County's equivalent to CJC, involving a member who was employed with the Public Defender's (PD) office. The Ethics Commission stated that it does not amount to a voting conflict when the vote relates generally to the PD's office, but cautioned that if the program directly benefits the Public Defender financially, that employee must disclose and abstain from voting.

He encouraged members to always review the agenda ahead of time and contact him or his office if issues requiring further review arise.

With regards to the Federal Honest Services Law, Mr. Berger noted that this is when a public official conceals a private interest and secretly uses that interest to benefit himself or others, thereby violating the law. He also noted that there is a current bill in the Florida Legislature that is seeking to incorporate the Federal Honest Services Law into the Florida Statutes.

Commissioner Karen Marcus enquired if the CJC falls under the Sunshine law which does not allow members to speak with each other about voting matters.

Mr. Berger said yes to the Commissioner's question and noted the importance of not discussing matters outside that will foreseeably be brought before the Commission, as the decision as well as every step of the decision making process ought to be public.

Mr. Kramer asked about committees that are working for the benefit of the CJC, to which Mr. Berger's response was, that any committee advising the CJC is also in the sunshine, and the same laws apply.

Chairman Barr thanked Mr. Berger for his presentation to the CJC.

IX. Business Consent item(s)

There were no business consent items.

X. Old Business

There were no old business items.

XI. Under New Business,:

A. Staff requested approval for a grant application submission in the amount of \$750,000 for FY 2009 for funding under the Second Chance Act Prisoner Reentry Initiative, to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs' Bureau of Justice Assistance. Act. The initiative aids in the safe and successful transition of individuals from prison or jail to the community.

Ms. Rosalind Murray stated that the CJC is seeking to create a countywide reentry coordinator position as an umbrella and hoping to sub-contract with some of the existing agencies and businesses.

Mr. Kramer commented that it sounds like another committee is being created to do what other committees are already doing.

Commissioner Karen Marcus noted that the grant application required a 50/50 match and inquired about the source for the matching. She noted that when members are asked to support various programs, they need to know that the money is available and that a commitment is not made to something that will require additional dollars if it is not available, given the budget situation. She suggested that providing the information in advance would be helpful in this regard.

Ms. Murray responded that the match would come from existing dollars that the CJC already spent on reentry services, weed and seed services, and contracts

and grants. This, she said, would represent ad valorem and other grant funds. She assured members that the CJC would not exceed ad valorem dollars that have been spent.

Chairman Barr remarked that the CJC should itemize the matching dollars and where it will come from before this moves ahead.

The CJC deferred approval for submission of the above grant application until additional information becomes available.

- B. Mr. Rodriguez reported that the CJC applied for a grant in the amount of \$250,000 to Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance for the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program. This is a 30 month grant opportunity and the CJC is partnering with the Oakwood Center of the Palm Beaches Inc. He said this is to continue the work started in the criminal justice, substance abuse and mental health issues, for which a grant was received from the state in 2008, but did not have an available grant for this fiscal year.

The overarching goal of the request will be to address two specific gaps identified in Palm Beach County's preliminary strategic plan – the need for intensive transitional case management for the period of 30-90 days following jail release or diversion, and an expansion of traditional Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training to address the effectiveness of implementation strategies and expand the individuals trained to other criminal justice professionals.

## XII. CJC Initiatives/Updates

Chairman Barr introduced Dr. Blomberg and his team from the Florida State University (FSU) to present the preliminary two year report on the Youth Violence Prevention (YVP) program.

Dr. Blomberg noted that his presentation to the select members and staff of the CJC on Friday, March 20, 2009 proved an informative one, as the team was able to agree on an abbreviated version of the presentation that will provide the findings and necessary data. He provided a brief overview of the Youth Empowerment Centers (YEC) which began implementation of the YVP program in five (5) targeted high crime cities in Palm Beach County.

In reviewing the program component services in 2008, Dr. Blomberg noted that:

- ✚ Four (4) Youth Empowerment Centers (YEC) provided structured education, employment, and life skills sessions totaling 25,363 for 733 youth
- ✚ Local law enforcement agencies and Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (PBSO) increased use of equipment
- ✚ Two prosecutors focused resources on increasing gang-related and violence-related prosecutions
- ✚ Riviera Beach Justice Service Center served 872 adults.

The outcomes of all four (4) YECs were highlighted as follows:

- ✚ 50% of youth who received school home-work assistance experienced grade improvements
- ✚ 100% of youth who completed the computer program increased their pre/post test scores and received computers

- ✚ 100% of the youth who completed the life skills course improved their pre/post test scores
- ✚ Youth who served as members for the YEC Youth Councils experienced significant gains in their pre/post self determination measures
- ✚ Of the 950 youth served in both years, 68 had arrests before, during or after their involvement with the Center
- ✚ 23 of the 68 who had arrests only before their involvement with the Centers had no further arrests
- ✚ Only 45 of the 950 youth served had arrests during or after their participation in the Centers
- ✚ There were 297 charges based on arrests among the 68 youth, of which 18% were for violent offenses and the remainder arrest charges were for property, drug and other violations
- ✚ 458 out of 872 participating adults had arrest histories
- ✚ 343 (75%) experienced no further arrests after their involvement in the Justice Service Center
- ✚ There were 8756 arrest charges among the 458 adults, of which 12% were for violent offenses and the remainder arrest charges were for property, drugs and other.

Discussions began around the question of arrest versus charges, after which it was determined by State Attorney Michael McAuliffe that persons are charged upon arrest by law enforcement, then the state attorney's office makes the ultimate determination of which charges go forward. He also noted that for a first offense in the non violent offenders, this population possibly has a higher incidence of diversion than other populations, and cautioned the evaluators to be clear when providing explanation in this regard.

Chief Delsa Bush commented that a person can have multiple charges and advised that the words "charges" and "arrests" be used separately, and suggested that adjudications or convictions be used instead.

Major Joseph Bernadel inquired if the study encompasses ways in which to measure the percentage of students that were not arrested, and asked about the benefits to them after following the program.

Dr. Blomberg noted that while there is no real specific information on each child, he said the staff would be a good indicator and advised that a pre and post measure exists for those involved in the leadership council. He also noted the grade improvements and other types of structured life skills. He further stated that FSU is under agreement with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) with respect to the confidentiality of kids, and that they are therefore unable to disclose the identifiers. He noted that each of the five cities has a control site that matches the five experimental sites, but that until FSU receives the uniform crime report (UCR) data, they are unable to look at comparisons between the experimental and the control sites. It is hoped however, that this data will be available in the next couple of weeks, and could then be used in the presentation to the Board of County

Commissioners on April 28, 2009.

Dr. Blomberg concluded that generally, in criminal justice evaluations, the programs are not implemented as intended which then provides mixed results. With this program being no exception, he highlighted that in the case of the YECs, law enforcement, courts and corrections, the data showed that when implemented they make a positive impact, though not implemented evenly across each site. He reported the YEC's costs as approximately \$10,825 per youth served over the two years, and referred to the criminological research literature which established that for 1 youth who is diverted from a life of crime and chemical abuse, \$2.2 million is saved over his or her lifetime (Cohen, 1998. Journal of Quantitative Criminology).

Commissioner Marcus inquired how FSU would quantify the savings in the case of this new program should the kids revert into their old habits.

Dr. Blomberg said that it involves estimates and that when there is persistence there is consistency after reaching that turning point, but noted also that a part of it is due to their aging.

FSU's recommendation, according to Dr. Blomberg, is for Palm Beach County to give serious consideration to expanding the YECs into other cities with high rates of youth violence, in the continuing effort to further reduce violent crime and its costs for the county. In closing, he added that it is important for decision makers to know that one life altered, makes a difference.

Major Joseph Bernadel commented that some monies could be saved in terms of funding sources if the YECs were rolled out into the charter schools. He said the kids would have educational and other benefits, while the YECs remain as designed but would not receive funding from the county.

Mr. Rodriguez remarked that Commissioner Aaronson mentioned the idea of using schools previously, but advised that there are two considerations: first that the school may not be in a high crime area; and second that the kids will see it as just going to school if they are asked go back to school just for the programs.

Mr. Randy Johnson commented about the YECs competing with other programs such as the Boys and Girls Club, and asked what would happen if there were no YECs.

Ms. Walker added that the YECs target teens, while the Boys and Girls Clubs target the younger more well behaved kids, citing however, that Belle Glade Boys and Girls Club does have a center for teens. She also noted that before the YECs started, the teenagers were identified as the underserved population, especially in the five targeted neighborhoods. She said the Teen Councils at the YECs also focus on what programs and punishments they want in their center, thereby empowering them and creating greater partnerships.

After further questions and discussion on the evaluation, members provided additional suggestions for consideration.

At Mr. Davis' request, Ms. Oakes provided an update on Belle Glade. She reported that the Center received its certificate of occupancy and that three (3) providers are currently working with the youths. It is anticipated that the grand opening will take

place within the next month, as they await their furniture and computers. Ms. Oakes applauded the contractors for the amazing job done with the community, who are very interested in what is going on, and reported that nothing has been broken or stolen since the building went up over a month ago.

Chairman Barr thanked members for their continued involvement and valuable input in making the CJC programs as good as they can possibly be. He also thanked the participants from the sites and the police agencies that are a part of the YVP program.

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:15 a.m.