



**Okaloosa County Public Safety Coordinating Council**  
**Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Meeting: April 21, 2016 12:00 PM**  
**Courthouse Annex Extension, Fort Walton Beach**

**Public Safety Coordinating Council Members**

Present	Name	Agency
x	Carolyn Ketchel	Board of County Commissioners
x	Stefan W. Vaughn	Chief Correctional Officer
x	Judge Brown	Circuit Judge
x	Judge Grinsted	County Judge
x	Jay Jones	Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Designee
	Bill Bishop	Assistant State Attorney
	Tom Murphy	Assistant Public Defender
	Deborah Brown	Circuit Administrator, Florida Department of Corrections, Probation and Parole Services
	Kelli Huckabee	Pretrial Services
x	Tina Ferland (Ms. Davis)	Judicial Corrections Services, County Probation Provider

**Other Attendees:**

Tammy Matthews, Department of Corrections  
 Joseph Foley, Department of Corrections  
 Susan Priddy, Health Services Administrator, Corizon  
 Laurie Keller-Lithgow, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office  
 Mary Sollenberger, Clerk of Court Office  
 Valerie Broxson, Court Administration  
 Zana Davis, Judicial Court Services  
 Lisa Lydston, Bridgeway Services, Inc.  
 Dan Cobb, Bridgeway Services, Inc.  
 Kay Godwin, Deputy County Administrator  
 Alvin Henderson, Public Safety Director

Meeting opened at 12:02 pm.

**Welcome:**

**Minutes**

1. a. Commissioner Ketchel notified everyone the Courthouse water heaters are very hot as they are too large.
- b. December minutes were approved as sent.

## **2. Old Business**

- a. Mr. Peacock provided information pertaining to cashless bonds. Keeping costs down and improving efficiency is the goal of the committee. Having the ability to reduce the need to accept cash would reduce the cost involved with taking and transporting cash to Finance. The ability to process cashless bonds could reduce the amount of days a person stays in custody which costs approximately \$50 per day. The credit card company charges a fee to offset the bad debt that may be incurred. The county would incur no cost from the bad debt. A review was conducted of one day of First Appearance and in custody inmates with bonds less than \$2500 showed 146 inmates that could utilize the cashless bond system to possibly get released quicker. The only expected concern will be from the bondsmen. He is working with Chief Vaughn to put together a pilot program to check for unintended consequences.
- b. Commissioner Ketchel stated funding for the proposed Crisis Stabilization Unit did not pass. She hopes it will be presented again next year.

## **3. Jail Population Report**

- a. Commissioner Ketchel requested statistics be reviewed only when relevant or when showing aberrations. When the report is sent out, members can bring questions to the meeting to address issues.
- b. Spring Break went very well. The Sheriff's Office worked closely with correctional staff to have an aggressive arrest policy and a way to process the arrestees quickly and efficiently. The bond had been established prior to Spring Break set at \$270 to offset adjudication costs. Most arrestees were processed within 45 minutes of arriving to jail. Few were required to attend First Appearance.
- c. Ms. Sollenberger worked with Judge Maney to address the cases after release. They developed a way for the offender to resolve their case or continue their case, if necessary, to pay costs and reduce Failure to Appear numbers. The entire team worked together to make the process smoother.

## **4. Pretrial Services Report**

- a. Pretrial Services will be adding a new employee soon which hopefully will allow time for Ms. Huckabee to attend the meetings.

## **5. New Business**

- a. The count at the jail is averaging 700 to 710 inmates.
- b. Chief Vaughn reported with Baker Acts and other mental health releases of inmates, outside agencies were previously required to assist in evaluating the inmate. Routinely, the Sheriff's Office was called to transport them to the Fort Walton Beach Medical Center for review. Corizon has updated their mental health program to include 24-hour coverage, which allows staff to contact a Corizon mental health counselor to review and approve an inmate for release.
- c. Chief Vaughn continues to work with the Clerk's office to reduce the time paperwork takes to transfer an inmate to prison. The study previously completed identified a need to streamline the process. The process was taking

an average of 21 to 28 days to complete, but with coordination, and use of electronic capabilities, the time was reduced to 6 days. Now, the average is staying around 15 days. Judge Brown reported judgement paperwork is taking an average of 2 weeks and 2 to 4 weeks for probation paperwork. He would like the prison commitment paperwork to a Judge within one week.

- d. Chief Vaughn reported the University of West Florida was approved to do a study at Escambia County, but when the explosion occurred, the study is now on hold. The study would increase screening for Pretrial Services. Chief Vaughn has forwarded the information to Ms. Wright and Ms. Huckabee for consideration. Staff from University of West Florida are expected to attend a future meeting to provide additional information.
- e. Chief Vaughn has been having the use of the bond schedule monitored, which led to identifying an increase in Violation of Probation holds. From January to March, 31% of inmates held for this reason had not been issued violations. He suggested consideration of having probable cause arrests at the time of the new charge which would allow a bond set for both the new charge and the probation violation. The defendant would require processing once instead of twice.
- f. Chief Vaughn reported reviewing the number of refusals from inmates who would not attend First Appearance and court appearances. The refusals can lead to case continuances and longer time in custody. Judge Brown will suggest to Judge Flowers that an administrative order may be beneficial to get increased attendance. Chief Vaughn stated most will attend without use of force if a show of force is displayed. Judge Grinsted stated she routinely sets a bond for those who refuse to attend First Appearance, but recognizes the problem if they don't attend other court proceedings. Chief Vaughn will send out a notice to staff that inmates are to attend court.
- g. Alvin Henderson was introduced as Public Safety Director. He stated the public safety division has been working with Verizon and T-Mobile to allow texts to 911 so people may request help without others hearing the call. The system was launched yesterday. A meeting with AT&T is scheduled for next week, so they hope to get them and Sprint available in the future. The system is similar to a TTY program. They plan to get the information out in the media soon on the availability and use of the system.

The next full meeting for the Public Safety Council will be June 23, 2016.

Mr. Farnsworth will send an email reminders for upcoming meetings.

Meeting ended at 1:04 pm.

Carolyn Ketchel  
County Commissioner  
Chairperson Okaloosa County Public Safety Coordinating Council