



Okaloosa County Public Safety Coordinating Council

Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting: February 18, 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 Corrections 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:

Paul Farnsworth, Department of Corrections
 Tammy Matthews, Department of Corrections
 Joseph Foley, Department of Corrections
 Judge W. F. Stone, Circuit Judge
 John Sloan, Florida Department of Corrections
 Jon Brown, Florida Department of Corrections
 Jack Hammontree, Florida Department of Corrections
 Laurie Keller-Lithgow, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office
 Janice M. George, Big Bend CBC
 Paul Wallis, Department of Juvenile Justice
 Mary Sollenberger, Clerk of Court Office
 Allison Mikel, Court Administration
 Valerie Broxson, Court Administration
 Lisa Lydston, Bridgeway Services, Inc.

Meeting opened at 12:00 pm.

Welcome:

Minutes

1. a. Attendees introduced themselves and the agency they represent.
b. December minutes were approved as sent.

2. **Old Business**
 - a. Commissioner Ketchel reviewed the bill in legislature addressing a pilot program for a Mental Health Crisis Stabilization Unit. Our county has supported the bill and if passed will allow 1.7 million dollars for a pilot program in Okaloosa County. The program was initially scheduled for Miami, but has now transferred to our circuit. Consideration has been given to either tearing down or updating the old hospital as a location if awarded. Grant funding is also available to assist in getting the project started. Ginny Barr from the Mental Health Association is assisting in determining the number of beds needed. Chief Vaughn supports this bill and having the most beds available as the budget would allow.

 - b. Commissioner Ketchel explained how synthetic drugs play a role in the diagnosis of mental health problem, but the underlying psychiatric issue must be addressed. A Detox unit is needed in our county, but currently no funding is available.

3. **Jail Population Report**
 - a. Mr. Farnsworth reported an increase in the count of the facility over the past two months, but the count is still lower from October. He reported an increase in arrests and bookings. The county does not have a facility to handle detoxification, but none have been received at the jail for two years.

 - b. Mr. Farnsworth discussed the wait time for defendants going into the Phoenix House for treatment. The wait is currently 11 months and most defendants become frustrated. They request a sentence modification to see if they can get an 11 month 29 day jail sentence to be released sooner.

 - c. Mr. Farnsworth reviewed the DJJ billing report. Commissioner Ketchel explained that the lawsuit has completed through the Senate, but is still under discussion in the House. The outcome is pending.

4. **Pretrial Services Report**
 - a. Mr. Farnsworth reviewed the pretrial statistics. PTS has 288 active cases. The GPS monitoring has increased and their Failure to Appear rates decreased.

5. **New Business**
 - a. Ms. Sollenberger expressed regrets that J. D. Peacock was tied up and could not be present to continue the discussion on using credit cards for bonds. She explained Osceola County is using the system, so the clerk's office is looking at their use and will be ready to present information and data at the next meeting. Judge Stone reminded members that all bonds include a surety as well as a cash option. Ms. Sollenberger stated the clerk's office will be working to organize statistics on how many this will affect. Chief Vaughn collected data by hand since the computer does not tally the necessary

information. The jail looked at their population on a single day. On that day there were 67 inmates with a bond of \$2500.00 or less. If half of that number utilized a credit card for bond, approximately 33 would be released.

- b. Chief Stefan Vaughn was introduced to the committee. He has 17 years of experience working with the Okaloosa Sheriff's office and the Department of Corrections. He expressed commitment to increasing teamwork with community stakeholders, such as working with Law Enforcement to monitor and decrease gang activity.
- c. Chief Vaughn has started a review of the results from the Criminal Justice Study conducted in 2007. Some of the suggestions will need to be re-evaluated as technology has changed. He will be considering which can be implemented to improve processes and produce better data. Commissioner Ketchel asked if the committee can develop solid relationships to increased implementation of the recommendation from 10% to approximately 25%.
- d. Mental health issues are difficult to collect accurate data at booking as the data is self-reported. The booking officers do a medical screening that asks mental health questions and again by medical with their screening. The people are continued on medication as quickly as possible when they self-report. An upgrade in technology is being considered to possibly improve the collection of this type of data.
- e. Ms. Lydston expressed support of Bridgeway Center assisting the needs of the mentally ill; both in custody and as they are released. She stated they are increasing their case management program which may help in continuity of care. She asked for information on opportunities to increase substance abuse services for inmates. Ms. George stated Big Bend can assist when contacted on specific cases if a mentally ill person was arrested, but really needed treatment. Chief Vaughn presented a misdemeanor arrest example that had no criminal history which resulted in referral to Pre-Trial Services and an ROR bond.
- f. Ms. Lydston stated some counties in South Florida have mobile response units that respond to cases where an arrest could be prevented with a Baker Act or other type of intervention. The budget for that type of program is approximately half million dollars. She will present a proposal which could be presented with the pilot project for the proposal of the bill for a Crisis Stabilization Unit.
- g. Judge Brown read an editorial in the Daily New by Wendy Victoria and has questions about information provided to inmates. Ms. Matthews explained the phone information system that provides charges, court dates, sentence (if known) and account balance information. She explained the GED programs available to juveniles, youthful offenders, and adults. She reviewed the commissary program and how underclothing is provided to women if they don't have funds in their account to purchase them.

The next full meeting for the Public Safety Council will be April 21, 2016. Mr. Farnsworth will send an email reminders for upcoming meeting. Ms. Ketchel asked the members be ready to discuss the purpose of the PSCC meetings and options for appointing back-up attendees for voting purposes.

Meeting ended at 1:02 pm.

Carolyn Ketchel
County Commissioner
Chairperson Okaloosa County Public Safety Coordinating Council