

M I N U T E S

MONDAY, January 22, 2007 - 8:00 a.m.

PALM BEACH COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION MEETING

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

Members Present:

James Barr
Ric Bradshaw
Delsa Bush
Barbara Cheives
George Elmore
Carey Haughwout
Feirmon Johnson
Harry A. Johnston, II
Randolph K. Johnson, Sr.
Barry Krischer
Kathleen Kroll
Wendy Sartory Link
Andrew Lourie
Carl McKoy
Commissioner Warren H. Newell
Jay Pickens
Gerald Richman
Carmen Veneziano
Max Davis (ex officio Exec. Committee)
Art Johnson (ex officio Exec. Committee)

Members Absent:

Dale Armstrong
Dave Aronberg
Moses Baker
Rosalyn Baker
Sharon Bock
Paulette Burdick
Frank Davelli
Mike Driscoll
Douglas Duncan
Young Song
Richard Staudinger
Roxanna Trinkka

Guests Present:

Max Beverly, Dept. of Public Safety/Justice Services
Vince Bonvento, PBC Administration
Peter Blanc, 15th Judicial Circuit, Juvenile
Cory Ciklin, Criminal Justice Complex (Gun Club)
Mike Edmonson, State Attorneys Office (SOA)
C. Shahid Freeman, Sr., Palm Beach County Boy's Book Club
Jim Kelly, PBC School District Police Department
Joseph Meshil, Palm Beach County Citizen
Thomas Sharrard, FDC/Probation & Parole
Louis Tomeo, Clerk & Comptroller (for Sharon Bock)

Staff Present:

L. Diana Cunningham, Executive Director
Kathryn Bloeser, Criminal Justice Analyst
Arlene Burton, Administrative Secretary
Wayne English, Sr. Criminal Justice Analyst
Jenise Gibson, Senior Analyst
Damir Kukec, Criminal Justice Analyst
Shairette Major, Financial Analyst
Faith Martin, Community Justice Service Center Coordinator
Michael L. Rodriguez, Sr. Criminal Justice Analyst
Becky Walker, Youth Violence Prevention Program Coordinator

- I. Chair Harry Johnston, II, called the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m. This is his first full CJC meeting as Chairman.
- II. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.
Ms. Cunningham advised the members that she received a letter from School Board Chairman, Bill Graham that Paulette Burdick will be replaced by Dr. Debra Robinson. Also, Mike Driscoll is absent due to a death in his family.
- III. Chairman Johnston welcomed all guests and asked them to introduce themselves. He also extended a special welcome to Chief Jay Pickens, President of the Chiefs of Police Association and Deputy Carmen Veneziano, President of the Crime Prevention Officer's Association, as new CJC members.
- IV. The agenda was unanimously approved as amended to include Commissioner Newell's request to discuss an issue regarding fake guns at the South Florida Fair under Member Comments.
- V. The minutes of the December 11, 2006 annual meeting were approved unanimously.
- VI. Under Chairman's Comments, Chairman Johnston congratulated:
 - A. Edith Bush, the West Palm Beach Community Justice Service Center's Community Advisory Board Chair, whose organization, The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Coordinating Committee was selected as a recipient for the 2007 Palm Beach Community College Martin Luther King Leadership Award.
 - B. Our Executive Director, Diana Cunningham on her March 31, 2007 Retirement. This culminates 31 years in the Florida Retirement System and over 16 years with the Criminal Justice Commission.
- VII. Under Executive Director's Comments, Ms. Cunningham announced:
 - A. The Annual Prison Tour scheduled for March 28th and 29th. Judge Jonathon Gerber, Coordinator of the tour is holding one slot for a CJC member and she invited persons interested to speak with her. The tour is an educational opportunity for anybody in the criminal justice system. It will start at the Loxahatchee Road Prison and end at the Florida State Prison.

- B. The 19th Citizen's Criminal Justice Academy will run from February 5, 2007 through April 16, 2007. The eleven week academy will be based at the South County Courthouse, 200 W. Atlantic Avenue, Delray Beach and will include tours of the main County Courthouse, Sheriff's Office Main Detention Center, Sheriff's Office Eagle Academy, among others. She highly recommends that members who have not yet participated, do so, and invite their staff to attend. The sessions are usually made up of a wide cross section of criminal justice system professionals and citizens. Damir Kukec, CJC staff is the Coordinator of this session and may be contact at 355-1639.

VIII. There were no Business Consent items

IX. There was no Old Business

X. New Business – Regular Item(s)

1. The Commission unanimously approved the Executive Committee's recommendation of a plan initiated by Judge Cory Ciklin who oversees the Gun Club First Appearance Hearings. The pilot is a Referral and Diversion Pilot Program to handle "frequent flier" arrestees that are charged with non violent nuisance offences due to mental illness, homelessness and similar social problems. Judge Ciklin provided an overview, advising that the idea is divert appropriate offenders to the Justice Service Center where there is a vast array of social service resources, hopefully putting an end to the revolving door of incarceration. This would be an ideal way to reduce the number of costly jail days and find solutions to address those individuals committing repeat minor offenses. He advised that there are currently about 30-40 hard core repeat misdemeanor offenders. The program will operate out of the CJC's current Community Justice Service Center in Westgate and will be monitored by Judge Ciklin.

Diana advised that the Courts Task Force also reviewed and endorsed this pilot program. She also advised that the Westgate Criminal Justice Service Center is under the auspices of the Sheriff and he concurs with this approach to better utilize the resources available.

The current Center would be renamed Westgate Justice Service Center.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. At the request of Chairman Johnston, Judge Blanc provided an overview of the issue of initiating a dialogue with the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and establishing a cooperative relationship with DJJ with regard to the Juvenile Detention Center. This is mainly to determine that services are available and being provided and whether or not the County can do anything to improve services for the juveniles housed there. He indicated that he is now in possession of two reports outlining the problems being experienced.

This issue was first presented to the Corrections Task Force/Public Safety Coordinating Council (CTF/PSCC). After lengthy discussions, the CTF/PSCC recommended moving forward on this issue and presented it to the Executive Committee, who also approved the recommendation

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Cunningham advised that this would be assigned to the Corrections Task Force/Public Safety Coordinating Council for follow through.

3. Motion to accept Chief Bush's recommendation that the CJC seek legislative support for a state funded Juvenile Justice Board akin to the CJC, at the local level was unanimously approved.

Following on the Chairman's comments, Chairman Johnston referred to the advertisement in the agenda packet for recruitment of a new Executive Director. He asked that members think of anyone that they are aware of that might be suitable candidate for the position. The CJC does not feel that it is a County Department, as affirmed by County Ordinance 88-16. County Administration however, would like to be more involved in choosing a successor and to amend the ordinance to allow the Executive Director to report to the County Administrator. Mr. Johnston pointed out that we have been operating for 18 years with no substantive change in the ordinance. He thinks that the CJC is a unique organization. Mr. Johnston feels that the CJC is the only organization of this kind in the state and possibly in the country with the make up of state officers, federal agencies and elected officials on the board.

Mr. Johnston maintained that the CJC will be intimately involved with the selection of the Executive Director's replacement and the Selection Committee of seven members consists of 3 public: Ric Bradshaw, Carey Haughwout, and Kathleen Kroll, and 3 private: James Barr, Barbara Chieves, and himself. Barry Krischer was added in case of absence or tie.

Assistant County Administrator, Vince Bonvento in providing a brief history of the CJC, advised that the reason the ordinance was written in that language was because the Economic Council had a very strong role in organizing the CJC and assisted with some funding for the first couple of years, hence the decision to have the Executive Director report to the Criminal Justice Commission, independently from the Board. However, at this time, the County Administrator would like to have more authority over the Executive Director. He suggested that Mr. Weisman, County Administrator was looking at having a dual reporting relationship with the Chair of the CJC and this might be the appropriate time to make that revision since Ms. Cunningham is leaving.

Ms. Haughwout inquired about the benefits of having a dual reporting relationship and being more involved. Mr. Bonvento advised that it would allow more involvement since it is a County Department by County Charter, staff report to the Administrator.

Chairman Johnston stated that the County would complete the screening process of the applications. He has asked to have all applications available to the Selection Committee.

Ms. Cunningham pointed out that the position advertisement indicates that the position is a Department Head and that it is “At Will”, which means that the employee would serve at the will of the County Administrator. Mr. Bonvento indicated that the position is an “At Will” position. [Note: The question becomes, does the CJC Executive Director serve at the will of the County Administrator or at the will of the CJC, as per County Ordinance 88-16.]

XI. Member Comments

- A. Commissioner Newell brought to the attention of the CJC his concern that while the CJC’s efforts are to keep guns off the street, there are manufacturers producing and selling what look like real guns to kids. He shared with CJC members a “fake” gun, actually a shrink wrap lighter, that his 14 year old son purchased at the Fair. [Note: the vendors at the Fair were subsequently checked to remove all such items.]
- B. As requested by Mr. George Elmore, his correspondence to Ms. Cunningham addressing concerns that the Facilities Development and Operations Department process for building additional jail beds is not cost effective, was put “on the record”.

Ms. Cunningham pointed out that the Sheriff is responsible for operating, not building the jails. The Sheriff is involved in the design process but makes no decision regarding bidding and the amount spent, which is Mr. Elmore’s concern.

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.