

**PALM BEACH COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Meeting Date: 4/22/2008 ☒ **Workshop**

Department:

Submitted By: PALM BEACH COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

Submitted For: PALM BEACH COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

I. EXECUTIVE BRIEF

MOTION AND TITLE: **Staff recommends motion to receive and file:** the report of the first year findings of the Youth Violence Prevention Project presented by Florida State University, College of Criminology and Criminal Justice.

SUMMARY: On February 27, 2007, the Board of County Commissioners approved the Criminal Justice Commission to develop a comprehensive evaluation of the Youth Violence Prevention Project, including the commitment to participate from Florida State University's Center for Criminology and Public Policy Research. As a partner in the evaluation process, Florida State University has collected and analyzed data, provided program development assistance and produced an evaluation report by creating deliverables in the form of written reports, statistics, charts, graphs, maps, and presentations. The evaluation conducted by Florida State University has established outcome measures for each program area and they have compiled data from the monthly reports to evaluate the effectiveness of each component. They have prepared an analysis of baseline data, measures of fidelity to the model, conducted interviews and surveys with key staff and clients and identified impediments to implementation for the first year. It is intended that the funding for this project be maintained for three years.

Countywide (DW)

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION: Lake Worth, West Palm Beach, Riviera Beach and Boynton Beach have implemented major components their comprehensive plan that addresses youth violence. Youth Empowerment Centers in Lake Worth, West Palm Beach, Boynton Beach and Riviera Beach are providing activities and programs for teenage youth to keep them off the streets and involved in positive activities. Since opening over 7,491 youth have completed programs through the four centers. The fifth identified site, Belle Glade, should be operational by June 1, 2008. Riviera Beach has also opened a Community Justice Service Center to serve adults on probation or released from incarceration.

The Law Enforcement component of the Youth Violence Prevention Project, has initiated a plan which includes: the purchase of equipment including ballistics identification software and license plate recognition cameras to be utilized by local law enforcement, the PBSO Crime Lab and Violent Crimes Task Force.

Attachments:

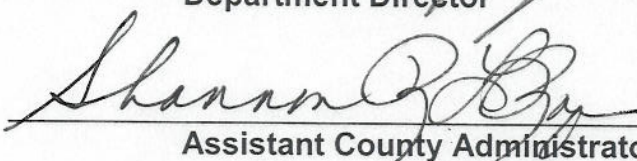
1. Florida State University Evaluation of the Youth Violence Prevention Project

Recommended by:


Department Director

4-15-08
Date

Approved By:


Assistant County Administrator

4-21-08
Date

II. FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. Five Year Summary of Fiscal Impact:

Fiscal Years	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Capital Expenditures	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Operating Costs	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
External Revenues	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Program Income (County)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
In-Kind Match (County)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
NET FISCAL IMPACT	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
# ADDITIONAL FTE POSITIONS (Cumulative)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Is Item Included In Current Budget? Yes _____ No _____

Budget Account No.: Fund _____ Dept. _____ Unit _____ Object _____

B. Recommended Sources of Funds/Summary of Fiscal Impact:

C. Departmental Fiscal Review:

III. REVIEW COMMENTS

A. OFMB Fiscal and/or Contract Dev. and Control Comments:

Samuel 4-18-08
OFMB 4/18/08 PM 4/18/08 4/18

Jim J. Jones 4/18/08
Contract Dev. and Control

B. Legal Sufficiency:

[Signature] 4/21/08
Assistant County Attorney

C. Other Department Review:

Department Director

**An Evaluation of the Youth Violence Prevention
Project in Palm Beach County**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1ST YEAR REPORT

Presented to the Palm Beach Board of County Commissioners

April 22, 2008

**Center for Criminology and Public Policy
College of Criminology and Criminal Justice
Florida State University**

DRAFT

The Florida State University research team includes:

Thomas Blomberg

William Bales

Wendy Cavendish

Karla Dhungana

Karen Mann

The 1st Year Report on Palm Beach County's implementation of the Youth Violence Prevention Project documents that the initiative is proceeding on a trajectory that has already produced and will likely continue to produce positive violent crime prevention and reduction. The initiative is being implemented in five high violent crime cities namely Belle Glade, Boynton Beach, Lake Worth, Riviera Beach, and West Palm Beach with Belle Glade executing the agreement to implement this program at the beginning of Year Two.

Overall, sites have made significant progress in implementing the program's components during Year One:

- **Law enforcement and courts** developed goals collaboratively and have made progress in meeting their goals: three of six goals met in Year One of implementation. Plans, protocols, and initiatives are in place to implement the remaining three of six goals in Year Two.
- **Courts (juvenile)** have not met three goals outlined in Year One. This is a targeted component for development in Year Two.
- **Corrections (5 sites)**: Riviera Beach has met all three goals in year one of implementation. Four sites (Belle Glade, Boynton Beach, Lake Worth, and West Palm Beach) have developed plans for the development of the corrections component (specifically, JSCs) in Years Two and Three.
- **Prevention (5 sites)**: Lake Worth, Riviera Beach, and West Palm Beach have met two of the three overarching goals in Year One. Belle Glade and Boynton Beach have not met the three goals in Year One. However, Boynton Beach has developed plans and initiatives to meet two of the three goals in Year Two. All four of the operational sites are meeting objectives that may lead to the accomplishment of the third goal (prevention of youth gang and violent crime involvement) by Year Three of implementation.

While the five cities have experienced different levels of this initiative's full implementation, the following major findings can be made:

1. The combined four sites' YECs (Boynton Beach, Lake Worth, Riviera Beach, and West Palm Beach) provided structured program services, namely education, employment, and life skills to 2,424 county youth. This count is *not* unduplicated, for instance, a youth may participate in more than one program over

the course of their involvement with the YEC.

2. The combined four program sites' YECs provided unstructured program services, namely recreational and site resources (e.g., computer lab, open gym), to 14,416 county youth (again *not* unduplicated).
3. Total county youth served by the YECs from February, 2007 through February 2008 was 16,840.
4. Each of the three active teen/youth councils (Lake Worth, Riviera Beach, and West Palm Beach) increased their self-determination skills (specifically, level of psychological empowerment and goal setting/problem solving skills) through involvement in leadership activities related to the governance of the YECs.
5. A reduction in the actual county-level rates of violent crime (murder, rape, and assault) compared to the "projected" levels (absent the program) during the project's first year of operations.
6. These crime "reductions" (actual versus projected) during the project's first year of operations resulted in an estimated economic impact of \$4,377,730 in the four cities with the Youth Violence Prevention Project. The actual number of violent crimes reported to law enforcement in the four program sites for 2007 is lower than the rate "projected" for 2007 based on multi-year trends in the crime data.
7. County-wide violent crime reductions resulted in an estimated \$14,657,702 economic impact during the first year of the Youth Violence Prevention Project's operation reflecting the county-wide impact of the law enforcement and courts components of the program.

Beyond these reported declines in the actual violent crime compared to the "projected" violent crime and their estimated economic impact, are the prospects associated with future investment. Palm Beach County, through its Youth Violence Prevention Project efforts, can be seen as having invested in services and activities for its youth, young adults, and adults that can contribute to their educational success, improved self-concept, elevated plans for the future, and likelihood of non-criminal involvement. In fact, if consideration is given to the arrest histories of youth involved in structured programs within the Youth Empowerment Centers and the young adults and adults

involved in the Juvenile Service Center, positive results are revealed. Specifically, for a sample of 44 individuals with arrest histories, 32 or 73% were arrested prior to their program involvement but not during or after their involvement. Eight or 18% were arrested before their program involvement and after, but not during their involvement and only two or four percent were arrested before, during, and after program involvement. These findings suggest that the majority of the youth, young adults, and adults who are participating in the various program services may be experiencing a potential “turning point” in their previous criminal behavior. As a result, many of the Year One program findings regarding services delivered, declines in actual violent crimes based on projections from recent crime trends, and associated economic impact may, in fact, be only a part of the program’s longer term success.