



City of Jacksonville – The Jacksonville Journey

Law Enforcement Deterrence Sub-Committee

MINUTES

OF

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

WORKGROUP

February 19, 2008

The Jacksonville Journey – Law Enforcement Deterrence

Sub-Committee

Administration of Justice Workgroup

February 19, 2008

4:15 p.m.

PROCEEDINGS before the Jacksonville Journey - Administration of Justice Workgroup, taken on Tuesday, February 19, 2008, Edward Ball Building, 8th Floor - 214 N. Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida commencing at approximately 4:15 p.m.

Administration of Justice Sub-Committee

John Jolly, Chair

Frank Mackesy, Member

Michael Weinstein, Member

Howard Maltz, City of Jacksonville Staff Representative

APPEARANCES

COMMITTEE CHAIR & MEMBERS:

JOHN JOLLY, Chair

FRANK MACKESY, Member

MICHAEL WEINSTEIN, Member

PROFESSIONAL STAFF:

HOWARD MATLZ, Office of General Counsel

STAFF:

RENEE STOLTZ

GUEST SPEAKERS:

JAY PLOTKIN, State Attorney's Office

PROCEEDINGS

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Call to Order and Comments. Chairman Jolly called the meeting to order at approximately 4:15 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes. Mr. Weinstein moved to approve the minutes from the February 5, 2008 meeting, seconded by Mr. Mackesy. All members approved said minutes.

2. Purpose of Meeting. Mr. Jolly began the meeting by introducing guest speaker Jay Plotkin of the Duval County State Attorney's Office (SAO). Chairman Jolly gave a brief synopsis of prior meetings for Mr. Plotkin, identifying the information that committee members were seeking from him. In particular, the committee is attempting to determine whether the SAO is providing services which are beyond the core scope of the SAO and which could be deferred to other agencies or entities, thereby making more SAO resources available for prosecution of cases.

Mr. Plotkin began his presentation by providing a brief discussion regarding budgeting issues within the SAO and the manner in which the SAO is provided funding by the state legislature.

Mr. Plotkin continued his presentation with a discussion of the 13 diversion programs currently being managed by the SAO: seven adult programs and six juvenile programs.

Mr. Plotkin discussed the adult diversion programs which include consumer mediation, restitution enforcement, tax collection enforcement, felony pre-trial intervention, misdemeanor pre-trial

intervention, pre-trial restitution, and drug court. Mr. Plotkin provided that many aspects of these programs are conducted by SAO volunteers, and SAO staff involved in the programs are multi-tasking between these programs and other duties. Additionally, Mr. Plotkin advised that some of the programs collect fees from participants which recoup SAO resources used to provide the programs.

Mr. Plotkin then provided information concerning the juvenile diversion programs which include juvenile arbitration, intensive delinquency diversion services, teen court, truancy teen court, truancy arbitration, intervention for at-risk youth, juvenile drug court, focus on females (a program targeting female juvenile offenders), and program for at-risk students (school-based program).

A discussion followed concerning the various truancy programs and the role of the School Board and school personnel in those programs. Mr. Mackesy inquired as to whether it was possible for the School Board to become more involved in the truancy programs so that the SAO would not need to be involved until prosecution was necessary, thereby freeing SAO resources for pursuing prosecution of other matters. Mr. Plotkin advised that, historically, the School Board and/or school personnel conducted such programs but with limited success. Mr. Plotkin believes that the current programs are successful because of the involvement of the SAO and the threat of prosecution that results from the SAO presence in the proceedings.

Mr. Plotkin advised that there are currently other programs in

development, including programs targeting juvenile domestic battery cases and prostitution cases, as well as the development of mental health court to assist in alleviating jail overcrowding which results in part from incarceration of mentally ill offenders.

A discussion followed regarding staffing issues within the SAO, including current numbers of assistant state attorneys, increased case loads, utilization of paralegals and volunteers, and diversion of cases. Mr. Plotkin agreed that the SAO could benefit from the hiring of additional prosecutors.

In conclusion, Mr. Weinstein requested that Mr. Plotkin provide to the committee information concerning the costs of the diversion programs in comparison to the fees and/or funding that the SAO receives to operate those programs.

Following Mr. Plotkin's presentation, Mr. Maltz provided additional statistical information to the Committee which had been requested at the conclusion of the February 5, 2008 meeting.

A general discussion followed concerning the information provided and topics for the next meeting.

3. Action Items

Any requests for additional information and/or statistical data should be directed to Mr. Maltz.

Next Meeting. The next Administration of Justice Subcommittee meeting is currently scheduled for Tuesday, March 4, 2008 at 4:15 p.m. Mr. Mackesy advised that he will not be available for that meeting. Accordingly, the committee will attempt to reschedule the next meeting for a date and time convenient to all members.

Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:35 p.m.