



# **Meeting Minutes**

*Safe and Thriving Communities Youth, Family &  
Community Responsibility/Engagement Working Group  
Meeting*

Monday, May 16, 2017  
At 2:00 pm

**Juvenile Assessment Center**  
1283 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Jacksonville, FL 32209



Present were:

Terrence Harvey

Angela Tompkins

Pastor Desmond Demps

Valerie Ryals, JAC

Lawrence Hills

Assistant Chief Ruben Bryant, JSO

Betsy Dobbins, PDO

Leofric Thomas

Damian Cook

Brooke Melian

Director Michael Edwards, DCPS

Jackie Green, DCF

Alan Louder, SAO

Linzee Ott, SAO

Vicki Burke, DJJ

Officer Wesley, JSO (PTDF)

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

Following introductions, the direction for the meeting was established.

Information was provided to the group on the Memorandum of Understanding regarding Civil Citations. The State Attorney's Office is essentially taking a step back and JSO stepping forward regarding issuance of civil citations. The civil citation process was explained and a brief discussion followed. Damian Cook added that the sheriff's office has the backing of the state attorney's office regarding decision making in the issuance of a civil citation.

Director Edwards advised regarding the instruction being given to the school police. He spoke regarding subjectivity and how it was used in the past and advised regarding the criteria for being issued; specifically the agreement of the child and parents to comply with the conditions required for issuance. Of note to the group was the caveat that if an officer does not issue a civil citation, he must provide the reason in the arrest report. Implementation in the schools should happen in short order.

Damian Cook provided information regarding a software platform that will link non-profit agencies together (Universal Intake Platform). The concept is that all the case management software will be linked by the Universal Intake Platform and as referrals are made, the information can be passed on. It will be collectively developed and information can be added as agencies determine needs. A systems' assessment will be done of the computer systems of DJJ, JCC, SAO, PDO, JAC, DCF and DCPS. This assessment will determine the systems in use by each of these with the intention of creating a sort of "air traffic control" system for use with the youth being serviced and referred.

The system will allow providers to see appropriate information and get the youth back on track. There will be safeguards on information, permission settings, etc., that will allow all providers to participate and work toward the best interest of the children. Included in the program will also

be a scheduling module that allows agencies to communicate regarding scheduling of referrals. Beta version is expected to be ready in Connecticut by July.

Terrence Harvey shared information on visits to PTFD, CTC and JAC and the information gathered from each. One of the constants discovered was that many of the young men at the PTFD shared was “free time” led to them becoming justice involved. Another issue that arose was the importance of providing accurate consequence information to the youth. A lengthy discussion followed related to tools and resources to help get the information to youth before they get into trouble. Suggestions included the usage of social media campaigns (i.e., hashtag campaigns), use of peer leaders, public service announcements, billboard usage, and faith-based campaigns. Along these lines, Pastor Demps suggested that we must use the things that they pay attention to every day (Television commercials, internet ad campaigns) in order to get the information to our target audience. In this way, information regarding community centers and activities held there, as well as the truth about behavior can be provided in a medium that the youth already use.

Parent involvement was also discussed, specifically as it relates to the information provided by the youth in attendance at the last meeting. For a few of the faith-based leaders, as important as it is, they don't worry about the parents; instead, they focus on the kids. The group was reminded that there needs to be care when considering parental involvement or lack thereof, since there may be other things going on in the home that prevent that parent from becoming involved and/or engaged.

“Know the Law” publication was brought up and the question was asked about how that is being distributed. Lawrence Hills provides the curriculum at the middle and high schools in Duval County Public Schools. Assistant Chief Bryant reported attempts to present a forum for parents and kids on this very issue that have had to be cancelled because of lack of participation. Jacqueline Green suggested following the pattern of Nassau County in presenting the information - have the peers of youth to disseminate the information. There was unanimous agreement that peer-to-peer learning is extremely effective and would be the best way to get the information to the children related to “Know the Law.”

Strategy for this was discussed and the following were suggested:

- Using the platforms that already exist in social media
- Engaging youth ambassadors
- Engaging community agencies; Boys & Girls Clubs, community centers, and other youth-centered events and organizations to actively participate on the social media platforms
- Developing youth leaders

Valerie Ryals, Supervisor at the Juvenile Assessment Center added that the same level of attention needs to be paid to children who are released from the JAC. Many of them are released and have a future court date, only to come back on a new charge for something that happens in the interim. Her hope is that in the development of the plan being discussed, attention is paid to those youth and their families as well.

Pastor Demps spoke of the need to have more programs with paid staff to monitor the kids and develop relationship with kids who are asking for adult involvement, there would be more adult involvement. Bishop Thomas interjected that adults tend to respond to crisis and that the development of a mechanism to help parents understand that we are in a crisis situation with youth violence will get more parental attention and involvement. We must find a way to make parents aware of where we are as a community and why they need to be involved.

Terrence Harvey summarized that there are two tracts we must consider in determining best practices; one for the youth and one for the parents. (Red Cross crisis models) Our focus now will be the development of that model in relation to youth violence.

Additionally, when dealing with youth from the back-end , DJJ has concerns for them. There must be community places and jobs available for them that provide adult involvement for them where there is none at home at the point they are coming out of secure detention.

Crisis-fatigue leads to possible problems leading to the youth becoming criminal justice involved. The development of some kind of family hub in the community centers where people can go with issues and get help or direction would make a difference in removing layers of crisis for families. Currently full-service schools offer that, but they are not in every community. Lawrence Hills suggested a “parent assessment” to go alongside the juvenile assessment. It was suggested that this assessment could be done by a community provider (such as the faith partners) to avoid the negative connotations associated with a formal agency doing it. The parent assessment is going to be a very necessary and sustainable part of keeping the kids prosperous. Churches are already loosely providing a “home assessment” when they visit, however with a bit of guidance, they may be able to more fully assist in the big picture for the communities they serve. With the integration of the Universal System being discussed, the churches can also be on the front lines in assisting with updating information for the use of all of the other service agencies.

JAC has a parent intake form in place already, but it is directed toward information about the youth. It would be easy to add a “parent assessment” to the form. For DJJ, the interest is not as much about giving resources as much as it is about getting the family directed to a resource that works for them. With the Universal System, a lot of the barriers and excuses will be eliminated and challenges will begin to be addressed.

Co-locating services was also discussed as related to getting clients to remote services. One idea was locating services in churches with available space. That would enable the church to list, as a part of its profile, the resources that may be housed there, what it takes to use the particular resource, the cost associated with using the church to house the service, the cost of receiving the service and minimum requirements to utilize it. Another point was relayed from one of the pastors’ previous conversations with the Community Workers was the need to eliminate the need for the client to go to the services, but instead have the services come to the client.

Request from Terrence to the group for an email from the group to the Group Leads about information they need to develop the outline for Best Practices and Co-location of services and information to be submitted to Damian. On the table was placed the following question:

What information would you (what data), faith based organization, like to know about the neighborhoods around you, to help you serve them better?

Assistant Chief Bryant and Officer Wesley will survey the boys at PTDF and ask them what's going on in the neighborhoods and how we can help. In this way, we will be speaking with the "experts" and have a measure of how our plans fit with what is currently being discussed.

The meeting was adjourned by Terrence Harvey at 3:30 p.m.