

Public Safety Coordinating Council

March 29, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Council Members (or designee) in Attendance:

Chairman Proctor	Leon County Commission
Augustus Aikens	Judiciary
Owen McCaul	State Attorney
Norman Mack	Leon County Sheriff's Office
Jessica Yeary	Public Defender
Chad Cutkomp	Department of Corrections
Teresa Broxton	Office of Intervention & Detention Alternatives
Rebecca Kelly-Manders	REfire Culinary Program
Nancy O'Farrell	NAMI – Tallahassee Chapter
Anne Meisenzahl	Big Bend AFTER Reentry Coalition

Also, in attendance:

Craig Carroll	Leon County Sheriff's Office
Jason Laursen	Tallahassee Police Department
Ina Hawkins	Court Administration
Kendra Brown	Court Administration
Ceressa Haney	Office of Intervention & Detention Alternatives
Amanda Chandler	Apalachee Center, Inc.

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 PM

Issues Reviewed

- I. Approval of the February 22, 2022, Meeting Minutes
The Council reviewed and approved the minutes.

- II. LCDF Population Update - Norman Mack, Leon County Sheriff's Office
Chief Mack reported 1,112 individuals are in custody in the Leon County Detention Facility: 980 males, 132 females, and no juveniles housed at LCDF. He advised 2 juveniles are housed in Jefferson County. Chief Mack provided a breakdown of the types of charges for individuals in custody: 1,052 felony and 60 misdemeanor charges. The average length of stay is 259 days. There are no COVID cases in the facility.

- III. Overview of Court Mental Health Programs and Mental Health Services – Kendra Brown, Criminal Court Manager, Brenda Mueller, Criminal Court Coordinator and Amanda Chandler, Director of Residential & Forensic Services

Ms. Mueller presented a PowerPoint presentation (Attachment #1) providing an overview of the Court Mental Health Program including the role of each program in the process.

- Criminal Court Coordinator
- Mental Health Pretrial Release
- Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)
- Court Mental Health Procedures
- Misdemeanor Mental Health Docket
- Mental Health Probation (Misdemeanor (County) or Felony (Circuit))

Jessica Yeary inquired of the capacity for the Misdemeanor Mental Health Docket and requested clarification that individuals with a felony charge are not eligible for this docket.

Ms. Mueller explained that Judge Jones presides over the Misdemeanor Mental Health Docket monthly, and they have found that it runs smoothest with an average of 30 participants. This allows for better interaction with the participants as well as a safe environment for those attending court. She explained that although the title was Misdemeanor Mental Health Docket, there are circumstances where a charge that is reduced to a misdemeanor is eligible if the root cause of the offense is due to mental health issues and the defendant is not eligible to go into any other problem-solving court, they will place them on this docket to assist in their stabilization and to move the case along in the process.

Chairman Proctor inquired of the purpose in punishing someone that is mentally ill. Ms. Mueller advised the goal is not to punish the defendant but rather to get them in court and back into treatment to stabilize and keep them from reentering the criminal justice. There may be a multitude of reasons as to why they became unstable, and this helps them get the treatment they need.

Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) is designed to teach law enforcement officers about mental illness and other disorders and routinely facilitates 2 to 3 classes per year. Since 2004, 800 law enforcement and other public safety officers have graduated from this training. There are 3

classes scheduled for April, May, and October 2022. The curriculum for the May class is designed for School Resource Officers.

Chairman Proctor asked if there are any state requirements for law enforcement officers to participate in CIT. Ms. Brown shared that the CIT program is the recognized program throughout Florida and most circuits have implemented a CIT Program. Currently, the only requirement in statute is that when a law enforcement is executing a Baker Act, whenever possible, a CIT-trained officer handles it. Ms. Brown shared that the benefit of not having statutory requirements is that it allows counties to formulate this training based on the population served in their communities. Ms. Brown shared that not having this training standardized results in a better turnout. Chief Mack and Deputy Chief Laursen also spoke to officers benefitting most from the training when they have years of experience for a frame of reference to certain situations. Deputy Chief Laursen advised approximately 185 officers have graduated from CIT and that Chief Revell is given direction for all front-line officer to complete CIT.

Ms. Brown explained there is a strong relationship with the Florida Sheriff's Association to have referrals sent over for this free training. CIT Trainers are professionals that work with mental health and volunteer their time to educate law enforcement officers and others within this field. She also shared that not having this training standardized results in a greater turnout. Chief Mack stated that Sheriff McNeil also embraces the CIT Program. He spoke about his personal experience and stated he enjoyed the training as it was conducted in multiple locations in Leon County which made it interesting.

Nancy O'Farrell with NAMI commented that having CIT Officers called to scenes makes a tremendous difference. NAMI educates families to request a CIT Officer if they need to call law enforcement due to a mental health crisis.

Ms. Mueller explained Mental Health Pretrial Release allows defendants to be in the community while participating and receiving treatment. Ms. Yearly inquired if defendants charged with a felony can be released on Mental Health Pretrial Release. Ms. Broxton advised defendants are placed on Mental Health Pretrial Release by court orders regardless of charge level. Ms. Brown added this is typically ordered at First Appearance; however, it could happen anytime in the process before disposition.

Chairman Proctor asked Mr. McCaul if there was any consideration when there was a mental health issue. Mr. McCaul responded that the State will always be concerned if mental health issues are present. Ms. Brown added the courts work to get competency evaluations completed as soon as possible; however, there is a backlog of evaluations due to a shortage of experts available to complete the evaluations which is a state-wide issue and not isolated to the 2nd Circuit.

Ms. Chandler presented a PowerPoint (Attachment #2) on the full-range of services available through Apalachee Center including psychiatry, case management, and in and outpatient treatment for the 2nd Judicial Circuit in addition to Taylor and Madison Counties. Ms. Chandler explained that Apalachee serves as the Central Receiving Facility when law enforcement officers are bringing in individuals for Baker or Marchman Act for evaluation and are then admitted to either Eastside Psychiatric Hospital (EPH), Tallahassee Memorial Hospital Behavioral Health Center (TMHBHC), or Capital Regional Medical Center (CRMC) based on

patient preference or a rotation process. Ms. Chandler provided a summary of inpatient beds: 32 beds with 12 being children's beds (ages 6-17) at EPH, 24 beds at PATH (typically for uninsured clients), a short-term residential treatment, and a detox unit. Forensic residential units: 2 in Leon and 2 in Gadsden. She explained all beds are full and there is currently 10 people on the waiting list; however, there are plans to build another 16-bed unit in Gadsden County.

IV. Other Business

Meeting adjourned at 5:08 PM

Next Meeting: *Tuesday, April 19, 2022*

4:00 PM

Commission Chambers, 5th Floor, Leon County Courthouse

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