

Okaloosa County Public Safety Coordinating Council  
Regular Meeting  
Thursday August 8, 2024

Present:

Commissioner Paul Mixon  
Nolan Weeks, Chief Corrections Officer  
April McDaniel, Major of Corrections  
Travis Huisken, Captain of Corrections  
Craig Coffey, Deputy County Administrator – Operations  
Larry McFarland, Bridgeway Center, Inc.  
Bonnie Barlow, Bridgeway Center, Inc.  
Tricia Fagan, YesCare Okaloosa County  
Susan Priddy, Health Services Administrator  
Mellony Kuester, Programs and Reentry Coordinator  
Itza Andrade, Programs and Reentry Coordinator  
Matt Harrison, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office  
Michele Burns, CareerSource Okaloosa /Walton  
Joshua Allen, Board Services Director  
Heather Paschal, Board Services Agent  
Samantha Cutsinger, Legislative Aide

Location:

Okaloosa County Courthouse Annex, Jury Assembly Room, Fort Walton Beach, Florida

Minutes prepared by Heather Paschal

Commissioner Mixon called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

1. Approve Minutes

The May 9, 2024 minutes were approved as presented by the majority.

Commissioner Mixon noted that the presentations given today are for informational purposes only due to the Sunshine Law provisions.

2. Old Business

None.

3. Jail Population/Statistical Report: Q & A

Major McDaniel said the Public Safety Coordinating Council Statistics were sent out via email. Chief Weeks said the jail population capacity has been changed from 594 to 559 due to cell closures. Today's jail population is 754.

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4. Inmate Programs Update – Itza Andrade and Mellony Kuester

Itza Andrade informed the Council that there is a total of ten (10) internal programs with 360 individuals attending and 37 on the waitlist to attend classes.

Twelve (12) external programs are in place with 98 individuals accepted and 60 pending review. Two (2) inmates have been issued State Identification cards. Staff and inmates have been having a hard time obtaining the proof address documentation for the homeless. Mr. McFarland said they should reach out to Donna Morgan with One Hopeful Place as they may be able to help with the documentation. Discussion ensued regarding State Identification card assistance.

Chief Weeks said the jail kitchen has been remodeled. They received a call of a gas leak the night of August 8, 2024. The fire department responded and discovered a small gas leak. The issue was resolved. Chief Weeks said he received a call from the fire department to advise him that the jail kitchen was the cleanest kitchen they have seen.

5. Pre-Trial Information – Kelli Huckabee

No Pre-Trial updates were presented.

6. New Business

a. New Contract for Medical Services - HSA Susan Priddy

Susan Priddy said Rick Morse of Morse Correctional Healthcare will be the new inmate healthcare provider effective October 1, 2024, replacing YesCare. Morse has demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of inmate care needs to include a detailed approach to care delivery. The current contract funds 23.75 full time employees (FTE), while the Morse model provides 31.15 FTE, with increases in physician, dental and mental health, along with appropriate staffing for Medication-Assisted Treatment. Mr. Morse has been very proactive (with the transition).

b. Inmates with Developmental Disabilities - Tricia Fagan

Tricia Fagan said there has been an increase of individuals with developmental delays being booked into the jail, creating an increased strain on staff. Individuals with *Adult persons with Disabilities* require additional involvement to include “meet and greets” with potential placements/transition calls, should the individual be accepted into a home. These “meet and greets” require the inmate to participate which requires multiple officers to escort the inmate to medical for these meetings. The increased interaction with these individuals can lead to increased risk of physical intervention due to lack of understanding on the inmate's part.

c. Current Staffing and Retention Update – Captain Huisken

Captain Huisken said there are ten (10) openings. Four (4) technicians will be sent to the academy, which lasts three (3) to four (4) months. Staff continue to schedule interviews and attend job fairs.

d. Jail Management System Update - Major McDaniel

Major McDaniel said the new jail management system contract was awarded to Pro Phoenix. The newly assigned project manager projected an eight (8) to nine (9) month transition period. The current database documents have been provided for replication in the new cloud-based system.

e. New Jail Update - Craig Coffey, Deputy County Administrator

Deputy County Administrator Coffey said the architectural design should be presented to the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) in October 2024. He then said potential property identified for the new jail may encounter issues; a meeting with the property owner is forthcoming.

Most of the Commissioners and many of the candidate have individually toured the jail and are proactive. Mr. Coffey noted that the current pod pricing is closer to \$18M rather than the \$25M previously predicted.

7. Public Comments

Commissioner Mixon said the calendar has been published for the year.

Larry McFarland said Bridgeway is participating in the Post Program. The team consists of a law enforcement officer, an EMS personnel and a clinician from Bridgeway Center who will provide rapid ongoing support and resources to individuals who have experienced a drug overdose. The team's mission is to prevent future overdoses and support individuals on their recovery journey. The team will also conduct community outreach to educate the public on available resources.

Tricia Fagan said anger management has been a big issue. Women come in with a lot of anger issues and they are being addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Michele Burns said CareerSource Okaloosa/Walton has a mobile unit with twelve (12) computers and are willing to come to the jail for inmate use. Commissioner Mixon asked if CareerSource Okaloosa/Walton offers a GED program. Michele Burns advised they do not offer the GED program; However, they may be able to assist with funding and the use of the mobile unit.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 12:36 p.m.