



**City of Jacksonville – The Jacksonville Journey**

**Intervention and Rehabilitation**

**MINUTES**

**OF**

**INTERVENTION & REHABILITATION**

**SUB-COMMITTEE**

**February 4, 2008**

# The Jacksonville Journey – Intervention & Rehabilitation

## Sub-Committee

February 4, 2008

2:30 p.m.

PROCEEDINGS before the Jacksonville Journey - Intervention & Rehabilitation Sub-Committee taken on Monday, February 4, 2008, Edward Ball Building, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor - 214 N. Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida commencing at approximately 2:30 p.m.

### Intervention & Rehabilitation Sub-Committee

John Coxwell, Chair  
Ron Autrey, Member  
Bob Baldwin, Member  
Gordon Bass, Jr., Member  
Karen Bowling, Member  
Lad Daniels, Member  
Latroy Daniels, Member  
Ron Foster, Jr., Member  
Reginald Gaffney, Member  
Kevin Gay, Member  
Michael Hallett, Member  
Elder Harris, Member  
Wyllie Hodges, Member  
Joseph Hutchinson, Member  
Cal Jackson, Member  
Sharon Kirkland, Member  
Ray Reid, Member  
David Stevens, Member  
William Sulzbacher, Member  
Angelia Turner, Member  
Sherron Watson, Member

## APPEARANCES

### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS & MEMBERS:**

JOHN COXWELL, Chair  
BOB BALDWIN, Member  
GORDON BASS, JR., Member  
KAREN BOWLING, Member  
LAD DANIELS, Member  
REGINALD GAFFNEY, Member  
KEVIN GAY, Member  
MICHAEL HALLETT, Member  
WYLLIE HODGES, Member  
SHARON KIRKLAND, Member  
RAYMOND REID, Member  
DAVID STEVENS, Member  
ANGELIA TURNER, Member

### **ABSENTEE MEMBERS:**

RON AUTREY, Member  
LATROY DANIELS, Member  
RON FOSTER, JR., Member  
ELDER HARRIS, Member  
JOSEPH HUTCHINSON, Member  
CAL JACKSON, Member  
WILLIAM SULZBACHER, Member  
SHERRON WATSON, Member

### **STAFF:**

KERRI STEWART  
GINNY WALTHOUR  
STEPHANIE BARNETT  
SHAWN JEROR

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

RANDY JENNINGS, GATEWAY COMMUNITY CENTER  
W. EARL KITCHINGS, CEO, SPORTIVATION  
DOUG MURR, CHARACTER FIRST  
JAY PLOTKIN, STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
NEILL VINING, FIRST COAST NEWS

## **PROCEEDINGS**

February 4, 2008

Intervention and Rehabilitation Sub-Committee

2:30 p.m.

**Call to Order and Comments.** Chairman Coxwell called the meeting to order at approximately 2:36 p.m.

**Purpose of Meeting.** Discuss the Mayor's crime initiative - The Jacksonville Journey - Take a Step - Intervention and Rehabilitation Sub-Committee.

Chairman Coxwell presented motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Motion was approved and carried.

Chairman Coxwell turned the floor over to Kerri Stewart to give the committee a brief update on Friday's event featuring Reverend Eugene Rivers, keynote speaker on the topic of the Ten Point Coalition. Summary of all information to be provided to all committee members.

Following the discussion on the event, Chairman Coxwell gave an overview of Steering Committee meeting housekeeping items.

The next item on the agenda was a presentation by Jay Plotkin from the State Attorney's office, featuring topics on the Juvenile Justice system, trends in juvenile crime, diversion, aftercare programs, intervention, and re-entry. A handout of the presentation was given to committee members. Questions from committee members were asked throughout the presentation.

Q. How do Jacksonville's numbers compare to the numbers in other parts of the state? Many of the areas where offences are decreasing are lower than other parts of the state. You will see,

however, that some areas offences are on the increase.

Q. I have seen statistics that show Jacksonville has a larger juvenile population than ever. What contributes to the reduction in the number of juveniles charged as adults? Even though juveniles' charges as adults have decreased over the years, there are other areas where criminal activity is on the rise.

Q. Are there enough alternative schools available? Many have been shut down due to funding.

Q. When you talk about at-risk juveniles, who are you referring to? The focus is on children in the alternative schools. We also extend the offer to middle schools in the area.

Q. Of the programs you have discussed, how do you measure success and which ones are your most successful? The Program for At-risk Students (POS) is very successful. To determine the success rate of the programs, we look at arrests, issues at school, etc. The most successful programs are ones that offer one on one attention.

Q. Can you summarize what factors are considered in charging a youth as an adult? Factors would include the type of crime, the reoccurrence of offending, and age. There are also some statutory stipulations which mandate how the offender will be charged.

Q. Will the changes in crack cocaine charges lead to more juveniles being incarcerated? The changes are at the Federal level and will not have an impact on local facilities.

Q. Do you think that judges and the state attorney's office should focus more on placing juvenile offenders in diversion programs as opposed to incarceration? We are in the process of a test program for court ordered programs in lieu of incarceration.

Q. Are there incentives available to employers who hire criminal offenders? Yes, there are incentives available, and the government is working to add more.

Q. What happens to juvenile offenders who have less than a 6<sup>th</sup> grade education? There is a full-time school in the jail. We have to make education important to these kids as well as make it available.

Q. What is the cost of incarceration? I believe it is about \$55,000 per year.

Q. Has there been formal discussion with the school board to take measures limiting the amount of out of school suspensions? There were some meetings a few years ago, which resulted in a general consensus. However, there has not been much action since then.

Q. What is the average age of juveniles arrested and what is the youngest? There is a spectrum of all ages, but I would say the average is 14 to 16 years of age. I have seen arrests as young as 8 years old.

Q. What can we do to stop out of school suspensions? Suggestion has been made to the Truancy Sub-committee to provide more people at the school level to keep kids in schools. There are funding issues, however.

Q. In looking at demographics, do you see problems with juvenile crime in middle income areas? Yes, crime crosses over socio-economic barriers, however, most criminal offenders tend to be from lower income areas.

Q. What is the success rate of your programs? Teen court has about a 90% success rate and the other diversion programs have

about a 70% success rate

Q. Are there more intensive programs for juveniles who are having discipline issues but have not been arrested? Currently there is the Youth Crisis Center, but no other programs that I am aware of. Chairman Coxwell thanked the speaker for his presentation and moved to public comment.

## **2. Public Comment**

The first attendee to speak was Doug Murr with Character Counts. He discussed his program for youth and stated that forgiveness is the key element in turning around criminal behavior. More mentoring and training are needed for at-risk juveniles.

The next speaker was Ysryl with Jacksonville Youth Works. He recalled his troubled past as a youth and stated that the youth need positive influences to help them turn their lives around.

Following this speaker was W. Earl Kitchings with Sportivation. He asked Jay Plotkin a question regarding his presentation.

Q. Why can't some of the money spent on incarceration be put forth into additional programs to divert criminal behavior? It possibly could be with the reduction of crime.

Q. Why don't your programs target high school aged children? Since the age a child can drop out of school is 16, we try to focus our program to younger children to make a difference earlier in life.

Q. Can the age of 16 be changed? It is a State of Florida law that allows this.

With no further requests to speak, Chairman Coxwell closed the floor to public comment.

### 3. Action Items

Chairman Coxwell requested a vote for the next meeting to support the Mayor regarding the plan presented by Reverend Rivers at the recent event as well as bringing to the table any ideas committee members may have regarding prevention and rehabilitation.

### 3. Discussion Items

None.

Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.