



Minutes

November 20, 2020

Present-

Council Member:

The Honorable Calvin Hawkins, Chair PGRAB

Staff:

Nate Tutt, III, Director, Health, Human Services and Public Safety; Ashley Sharp, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of Council Member Calvin Hawkins; Colette Gresham, Esq., Legislative Officer; Donna Whitman, Legislative Officer; Lochelle Ferguson, Administrative Aide; Shirley Anglin, Administrative Aide; Leonard Moses, Office of the Clerk, Sharon Williams, CCL

Members:

Walter Simmons, Vice Chair, PGRAB; The Honorable Aisha Braveboy, State's Attorney's Office, Judge Alexander Williams, The Honorable Sheriff Melvin High, Sheriff's Department Rahim Jenkins (Presenter); Amity Pope; Archie O'Neil, PGCPS (on Behalf of Monica Goldson, CEO, PGCPS); Terry Bell, OCEX;; Dr. Carl Felton; Dr. Ronald Garrett; Leslie Johnson; Jacqueline Somerville; Terrence Davis; Guy Merritt, Department of Corrections; Gloria Brown Burnett, Director, Department of Social Services; Rhonda Hudson Fowler; Latasha Ward

Interested Parties: Lawrence Barbour; Melissa Pryce, Khalilah Denney, Alana Gayle, Dottie (no last name provided)

The meeting of the Prince George's County Re-entry Advisory Board (RAB) was called to order. The rules of procedure were discussed and an overview and the minutes were discussed, amended and approved. Chair Hawkins opened the floor to the elected officials and agency heads in the room to address the group. Sheriff High noted that it is important that we become advocates for residents that have made a mistake because it is good for the entire community. States Attorney Aisha Braveboy pointed out that ensuring that returning citizens have a successful reentry back into our community is key to creating not only a positive impact on the individual but also the community at large. Plans for an emerging adults' program were announced for those 18-26. That demographic makes up a statistically significant portion of those in the justice system. Director Brown Burnett was thanked by Chair Hawkins for her consistent presence in meetings and dedication.

Mr. Rahim Jenkins - former Director of the District of Columbia Department of Corrections/ Nationally Known Re-Entry Facilitator and Youth Advocate addressed the RAB. Housing,

education, employment and health are target areas of focus that the RAB should consider. The discussion continued about how incarceration impacts families and communities and it was suggested that Prince George's County develop creative and innovative ways to address the challenges and where resources should be applied.

Judge Alexander Williams inquired about the data relative to how many individuals are being released to the County on a monthly daily basis. The county needs to capture how the number as an indicator of the resources that are necessary.

Guy Merritt – Corrections- agreed to follow up with Secretary Green at the state level and reported the following information which correlates with the last 5 years and the number of **Prince George's County returning citizens.**

2019 – 381
2018 – 384
2017 – 378
2016 – 404
2015 – 358

Chair Hawkins - What were the biggest challenges you faced in DC and how did you get the Mayor's office involved? Rahim Jenkins noted that he had the benefit of the support of the Mayor's office through relationships with key staff from the mayor's office and that the Council was supportive because of that support. Details of how the program was established were discussed including funding by use of 1% of each agency's budget. In-kind services were used to offset some of the cost.

Sherriff High noted that business will be an obstacle and must be incentivized to gain participation. There should be set-asides in contracts for employment opportunities from the business community.

Judge Williams inquired about what Judges should be asked to do. It was noted that part of the success in DC is that the judges understand the importance of supporting re-entry efforts. In DC a relationship with the Chief Judge was fruitful and they spent significant time particularly in family court meetings with Judges and prosecutors to discuss alternative sentence. They met once a month at one point. Youth are often sentenced because the homelife may not keep them out of harm's way. Judges should be asked what is needed from the community for them to do their job. Let's have a conversation about how we are caring for our children. Terrence Davis stressed the importance of outreach to community to create relationship and keeping the doors open. In DC the MORCA office was authored by RJ and funded as a result of Marion Barry's legislation. The MORCA is not functioning as it was intended. To be prevent the problems of DC, RAB should clearly identify the roles of each component.

Regarding potential funding sources Walter Simmons noted that the Greater Washington Community Foundation could be a potential source and that the MD Dept. of Labor will have EARN funding available. EARN funding awards are normally around \$150,000 and this can be extended to as much as \$300,000. A second stimulus relief package from the federal government could mean a grant becomes available from the MD Dept. of Housing.

Dr. Garrett informed the RAB that the RAN Re-Entry Access Network will require that capacity is built to go after some of the funding.