



1<sup>st</sup> Quarterly Meeting  
February 15, 2017

1:30pm - 5:00pm  
Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County  
Clearwater, FL 33760

Note: The following is a summary of the highlights of the proceedings and is not intended to be construed as a transcript. Please contact Frenchie Yon at [Frenchie.Yon@eog.myflorida.com](mailto:Frenchie.Yon@eog.myflorida.com) to obtain meeting materials or visit [www.flgov.com/fbcb](http://www.flgov.com/fbcb).

**Attendance Summary**

**Florida Faith-Based and Community-Based Advisory Council Members in attendance:**

- Ms. Trena Cox
- Mr. Roland Gonzalez
- Pastor Kirt Anderson
- Reverend Perry Davis
- Ms. Sheila Gomez
- Dr. Gretchen Kerr
- Pastor Pam Olsen
- Pastor Marcus Smith
- Mr. Karim Veerjee
- Pastor Blaine Whitt
- Pastor Reno Zunz
- Ms. Pat Smith, (via phone)
- Dr. Leo Mesa (via phone)
- Mr. Alan Dimmitt (via phone)
- Pastor Carl Reeves (via phone)

**Florida Faith-Based and Community-Based Advisory Council Members unable to attend:**

- Mr. Richard Albertson
- Rabbi Sholom Ciment
- Dr. Jerry Haag
- Mr. Thomas Lukasik
- Ms. Patricia Robbins



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## Proceedings

### **I. Call to Order and Welcome**

- In the absence of Chair Richard Albertson, Immediate Past Chair Pat Smith welcomed the Council members and called the meeting to order.
- The roll was called by Ms. Frenchie Yon, Governor's Office of Adoption and Child Protection, and a quorum was confirmed.
- Invocation was given by Dr. Wayne G. Thompson, Senior Pastor, 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist Institutional Church in St. Petersburg
- Ms. Judith Warren, Chief Operating Officer, Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB) of Pinellas County gave a warm welcome to the Council and provided a brief overview of JWB.
- After review by Council members, the previous meeting summary for November 2016 was approved.
- Chair Pat Smith and Mr. Zackary Gibson, Chief Child Advocate and Director of the Governor's Office of Adoption and Child Protection explained the voting process for election of vice-chair position for 2017. The vice-chair will serve in this role for one year and then move into position as chair. Volunteers and nominations for vice-chair were requested.
  - Chair Smith nominated Pastor Carl Reeves who accepted the nomination.
  - Reverend Perry Davis nominated Pastor Pam Olsen who declined the nomination.
  - Pastor Pam Olsen nominated Mr. Roland Gonzalez who declined the nomination.
- Roll call vote was taken by Ms. Frenchie Yon and Pastor Carl Reeves was nominated unanimously by Council members to serve as the 2017 Vice Chair.
- A copy of the Council's 2016 Annual Report was provided members for review with the opportunity for additions or comments. The report was approved with no additions.
- Council members were provided a draft copy of the Council's Orientation Guide for review. This information will assist new members who are appointed to the Council to be aware of processes to enable the Council to fulfill its statutory charge and follow applicable laws. Mr.



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Gibson referenced to the Council special areas of the report which pertained to becoming a member of the Council and a summarized version of the Sunshine Law.

## **II. Review of Council Workgroups and Membership**

### **A. Annual Conference Workgroup/ Florida Faith Symposium**

- Chair Pat Smith has begun coordinating this year's Faith Symposium. Ms. Smith mentioned the success of the 2016 Faith Symposium but there may be areas for improvement.
- She mentioned the upcoming meeting with the core group planning team which includes staff from the Department of Children and Families, The Executive Office of the Governor & the Department of Juvenile Justice.
- Additionally, Ms. Smith wants to expand the Symposium and believes we need to come up with a strategy for future symposiums, wants to make necessary changes, look at pros and cons and improvements.
- Pastor Pam Olsen recommended that the Symposium continue to be held in the Fall to avoid conflict with religious holidays.

### **B. Criminal Justice Workgroup Update**

- Workgroup lead, Dr. Gretchen Kerr, listed the five main points of discussion that the workgroup came up with. These points of discussion included:
  - Mapping and mentoring/ Adopt-a-school
  - Connecting juveniles through the "New Destiny" program to at risk children
  - Being better hosts to our volunteers/ Security issues within the prisons
  - Online portal for connecting with the families of inmates
  - Speaking onto legislation on the language of sex offenders/ establishing safe houses for convicted sex offenders to go upon release.
- Pastor Marcus Smith discussed the idea of mapping/ targeting specific at risk areas to help reduce the incarceration of at risk family members. Pastor Smith also mentioned the idea of utilizing this mapping portal as a resource for people to find access to a mentor/ service.



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- Reverend Perry Davis discussed the importance of the volunteers at the Juvenile Justice department and how we need to work on being better stewards by being more conscious of their time and allowing snacks to be provided to the inmates at the jails. Allowing snacks to be provided would increase meeting attendance and thus give volunteers more opportunity to interact with the inmates.
- Pastor Blaine Whitt mentioned collaborating all of the local resources into one portal/ phone service to eliminate confusion and to help people quicker and more efficiently.
- Reverend Davis commented that sex offenders need a safe house or release center to go to upon their release, instead of out in the woods where we are not sure what they are involved in.
- Additionally, Pastor Whitt mentioned that we need to work on getting degrees of sexual harassment passed in legislation.

**a. Presentation from Calvary Chapel “Mentoring Initiative”**

- Speaker, Ms. Kathy Lee, Local Outreach/Youth Mentoring Director, Calvary Chapel Church in Pinellas Park begins her presentation by noting that prisons are full of at-risk children. Her solution to this epidemic is utilizing the faith-based community to train members on how to mentor these at-risk children as a preventative measure.
- Ms. Lee noted that mentors may mentor their “Lunch pal” as long as they feel necessary and that it benefits both parties.
- Additionally, she mentioned that children that have been mentored, demonstrated significant improvement in their reading levels.

**C. Child Welfare Workgroup Update**

- Workgroup lead, Mr. Roland Gonzalez began the workgroup update by notifying everyone about child abuse prevention month and how you can raise awareness.
- Mr. Gonzalez mentioned the pinwheel campaign and how you can learn more about child abuse awareness by visiting [www.preventchildabusefl.org](http://www.preventchildabusefl.org)



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- Mr. Gonzalez noted that one in four children experience child abuse.
- Additionally, he discussed action centers where families can get free food/ resources provided by the Department of Agriculture.

**a. Presentation on Faith Based Champions for Children Initiative**

- Ms. Laurallyn Segur, Director of Foster Care Licensing and Recruitment, Eckerd Kids, spoke about promotional community faith-based breakfasts and lunches in both Pinellas and Pasco County to spread the word about child adoption.
- Speaker Brian Bostick, Executive Director, Eckerd Community Alternatives Pasco & Pinellas Counties, shared the desire to find faith-based foster parents and adoptive parents for children in care.
- Pastor Thompson shared the role he has taken in the black community encouraging faith leaders to become involved in the foster parent and adoption process. He encouraged others to get involved by influencing others, spreading the word about adoption, ask your pastor to discuss it in church, and finally pray for the children.

**D. Legislative Workgroup Update**

- Workgroup lead, Pastor Pam Olsen began the update by mentioning the National Day of Prayer at the Capitol featuring Heart Gallery photos.
- Pastor Olson continued by mentioning the importance of prayer in the legislative process and emphasized that prayer is allowed in Florida government. She added that the Senate chambers of Florida have been remodeled to display “In God We Trust.”
- Pastor Olsen mentions that you can learn about the legislative process and all about Florida government by visiting Myflorida.com and encouraged listeners to do so.
- She emphasized not overlooking the importance of the religious freedom bill.

**E. Presentations**

**a. Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County Initiatives**

- Speaker Ms. Judith Warren began her presentation by playing a video created by the Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB) of Pinellas County.



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- Ms. Warren describes JWB's goals and how they are large advocators of collective impact.
- Ms. Warren mentions that a large void for children was getting access to food during summers and holidays, and figuring out a way to get food to teens who were not comfortable taking meal packages home with them. JWB is working on getting focus groups together to find solutions to these problems.
- JWB's preventable child death campaign. Ms. Warren states that the three leading causes of child death in the United States is head trauma, close sleeping, and drowning. Although most of these deaths are accidental, they are still preventable. This campaign is making progress by getting doctors across Pinellas County involved by educating their patients.
- JWB is also involved in mentoring children in schools.
- Finally, Ms. Warren mentions that JWB's community-based resource centers are unique and created to individually fit the needs of the specific community they are in.
- Mr. Gonzalez asks about JWB's collaboration with different focus areas in which they direct their funding and community action centers.
  - Ms. Warren responds to Mr. Gonzalez by informing him that their funding comes from multiple sources including their own budget, and suggests that he can mimic these efforts in his own community.

**b. Overview of the Florida Dream Center and Faith Oriented Concepts to Serve (F.O.C.U.S.) Symposium**

- Pastor Bill Lossasso, Chairman and President of Florida Dream Center, begins his presentation by listing the main focuses of the Florida Dream Center: Community revitalization and putting an end to human trafficking.
- Pastor Lossasso gives a brief description of the work that the Florida Dream Center does, such as, remodeling drug houses for homeless families, going door-to-door asking families how they can help, being a safe house for people trying to escape human sex trafficking, etc.



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- Additionally, Pastor Lossasso mentioned his concern with the lack of grocery stores in impoverished areas and excess of alcohol and tobacco establishments.

**F. Closing**

- No public comments were presented.
- The next meeting will be held in Ft. Lauderdale. To secure meeting date, a doodle poll will go out to Council members to identify the dates that they can be available to attend.
- Mr. Gibson acknowledged former Council member, Rabbi Jeffrey Kurtz-Lendner. Because of his experience on the Florida Council, he approached the Governor of Mississippi and through his efforts was able to have a Faith-Based and Community-Based Advisory Council created in that state.
- There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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