

LEGAL SERVICES/CRIMINAL JUSTICE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

2.1.22 11:45 AM Whibbs Room @ City Hall & Zoom

IN ATTENDANCE: Allison Patton, Ronnie Rivera, Blair Castro, Connie Bookman, Chad Wilhite, Beth Blake, Cathy White, Kaitlyn Bonham, Kyle Kopytacheck, Leslie Powell-Boudreaux, Shirley Cornett

Old Business

Ronnie asked if anyone had yet reached out to Pastor Renee at Heavenly Blessings, as she is currently running the closest thing we have to a low-barrier shelter. Ronnie will follow up- group should ask what are her needs and should see if she can possibly be compensated for her services. Group may also want to look at James Jones Triage Center in Fort Myers as a model for low-barrier shelter.

New Business

Ronnie gave an update on the move from the I-110 Bridge. Chad informed the group that there were no arrests, 3 Baker Acts, and that everyone has left and started the process of logging the belongings. The campers can come back to claim any possessions in two weeks. This area includes Maxwell to Wright Street, the whole of Hyde Park. Leslie says they have taken a few cases at Legal Services for several of the campers, in order to help address significant legal barriers in finding housing.

Allison and Leslie attended the PEACE Polk County organization research meeting for Fines and Fees Justice Center. This group makes the argument that charging high fees makes barriers greater, and seems to have a lot of bi-partisan support.

Connie brought up the U.S. Law Shield organization and mentioned hearing of inmates who have to pay fees to speak to their attorney. Ronnie is going to come back with exact information on what it costs to have a phone call in jail and to counsel in particular.

Group also discussed the potential of homeless bed availability live dashboard. We should look at various data systems to make this happen, taking into account there can be limits with confidentiality. This may look similar to a jail view portal or the COVID dashboard. This would NOT be a placement system where someone makes referrals over those of an organization.

Ronnie brought examples of the Broward Sheriff's Office Homeless Resource Guide, and the group agreed to send it to Laura at United Way for review. This would be similar to a condensed Street Survival Guide.

Add-on discussion: Can PPD develop a code to better track the homeless?

MEETING ADJOURNED at 1:10 PM

