



**Norfolk Re-Entry Council Meeting Minutes  
Workforce Development Center  
July 15, 2016**

**INTRODUCTIONS:**

Chief Kathryn Hall extended greetings to members and guests present. Members and guest introduced themselves.

**PRESENTATION:**

A special presentation was done by Joel Miller, Re-entry Unit Specialist for the Central Region. Mr. Miller presented a video in reference to his personal life and empowered the professionals who work in re-entry about the work they're doing. He provided excellent feedback to questions asked of attendees along with his contact info for anyone interested in following up with him; (804) 297-1586, [Joel.miller@vadoc.virginia.gov](mailto:Joel.miller@vadoc.virginia.gov) or [iamjoelmiller@gmail.com](mailto:iamjoelmiller@gmail.com).

**PROGRAM UPDATES:**

- **Child Support Enforcement** – Joy Sullivan shared her appreciation for being allowed to take her computer into Indian Creek Correctional Center for use during the recent Resource Fair. She also mentioned that DCSE will be offering the 1-for-1 on TANF arrears beginning August 1<sup>st</sup> – September 1<sup>st</sup>, a statewide incentive. This is a program where the state will match dollar for dollar any payments made towards arrears during this time. If a person comes in and talks directly to their worker about their case they will receive a 5% reduction. Individuals incarcerated are not eligible to participate.
- **DHS Programs** – Garry Cofield reported out on the Family and Community Engagement services provided to clients during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of this year. He also provided an update on the mentoring program which continues to serve clients, currently there are 10 mentors and 8 clients paired with mentors. Mr. Cofield also shared about a recent interaction he and a co-worker had with a client. “The man was referring to his past life in crime and was becoming teary. Our staff, at that point, simply responded to the client by saying, “Your past deeds DO NOT define who you are as a man today!” Our staff person’s simple affirmation was like a piece of gold to our client!

**INSTITUTION UPDATES**

- **St. Brides** – OWDS’s, Chris Walton and Josh Coleman reported out about the Nehemiah Empowerment Project which is run by Elders on a monthly basis; Don Roberts from WAVY TV 10 was the most recent speaker. Mr. Roberts spoke with about 100 men and shared letters written by kids of incarcerated parents. The Outside Reaching In Program will be held on August 30<sup>th</sup> at 12:50 pm; a Transitional Fair (Housing Resources) will be held on September 20<sup>th</sup> and the next Resource Fair will be held on December 7<sup>th</sup>. This year, there have been 95 graduates from the Ready to Work Program. Forklift classes are still going well



and a cook out was held with 27 different performances. Also reported that a discussion on black on black violence was held during a learning team meeting.

- **Indian Creek** – Warden Keeling shared that forklift and Serve Safe classes are still going well. A basketball tournament was held and guys who usually don't work together were paired up. Family members were invited, 25 people came and light snacks were provided. There were 2 winning teams and the event was very motivating to the men.
- **Greensville** – OWDS, Leo Akujuobi reported that an innovative cognitive community graduation was held. Ready to Work, over 200 returning citizens participate in this flagship program. Greensville will be piloting a program with the resource room and treatment offices. 50 returning citizens came back to speak. A 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual veterans resource fair will be held in August, the date will be announced later.
- **Probation & Parole** – Sr. Re-Entry PO, Ebony Sessoms shared that she and Garry Cofield will be conducting a Family Reunification Seminar on July 26th 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm at the Workforce Development Center. She also has recently attended 3 Resource Fairs at Deerfield, Indian Creek and St. Bride's.
- **Veterans/VEC** - Diane Murray reminded everyone of services provided to homeless veterans and shared about upcoming hiring events.

#### OTHERS:

- Lilly Smith with Loving Steps provided an update on the Fatherhood Summit they held in June. They are looking to update their work plan. Meetings are held every Wednesday 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm at Park Place.
- Sandra Brandt of Step Up Inc. provided an update about legislative efforts and mentioned that the Virginia Supreme Court will be hearing the case soon regarding the Governor's recent restoration of rights of 206,000 people.
- Elaina Dariah of 211 (Planning Council) shared that they continue to work on keeping their database updated. If you are a service provided make sure you get your organizations information in the database

#### COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- **Planning Committee** – Madonna Flores shared that the first block party that precluded the F.U.S.E. Festival was held on 6/30/16 at Calvert Square. The committee along with members of the council were on site offering a Voter Registration drive, along with researching rights restoration and confirming voter's registration status. The Voter Registration was facilitated by the Tidewater League of Women Voters and Virginia Organizing also assisted by advising of their services. She shared about a woman who learned her rights were restored at this event and the joy she expressed while completing her voter registration application. Ms. Flores also advised that a recent Save the Date email was sent out advising

- ❖ Faith-Based & Community Initiatives Committee
- ❖ Hampton Roads Re-Entry Employment Committee
  - ❖ Juvenile Re-Entry Committee
  - ❖ Planning Committee

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that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Community Collaborations Re-Entry Summit will be held on October 17<sup>th</sup> at the Ted Constant Center 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. Information about registration will be emailed in August. The planning committee will meet today after the council meeting.

- **Juvenile Re-Entry Committee** – Madonna Flores shared that the committee is partnering with Teens with a Purpose (TWP) to offer some activities at the upcoming F.U.S.E. Festival on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Some activities will include another Voter Registration Drive, an interactive workshop and assisting with the Performing Statistics art display. Anyone interested in volunteering at this event should contact Ms. Flores. The next committee meeting will be on 8/9/16 at 9am at WDC.
- **Faith-Based Committee** – Madonna Flores reported that the Faith-Based Resource Guide is currently in draft version and should be available for distribution at the next council meeting. The committee is currently working with 1 church on implementing a mentoring program and another church has reached out and expressed interest. A mentor training will be facilitated for committee members at the next meeting; the next committee meeting is on 7/18/16 is at 10am at WDC.
- **Employment Committee** - Jason Ewers reminded everyone about the upcoming 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Hampton Roads Equal Opportunity Job Fair on Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup> from 10am – 1pm. The next committee meeting is on 7/19/16 at 9am at WDC.

**Upcoming Events:** 8/30/16 – Men’s Panel at SBCC presented by formerly incarcerated men.

**Next Re-Entry Council Meeting – September 16, 2016, 9:00 a.m. at Workforce Development Center.**

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- ❖ Hampton Roads Re-Entry Employment Committee
  - ❖ Juvenile Re-Entry Committee
  - ❖ Planning Committee