

**Public Safety Coordinating Council  
Pinellas County  
March 9, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

The Pinellas County Public Safety Coordinating Council (PSCC) met in regular session at 2:01 PM on this date in the Third Floor Judicial Conference Room at the Pinellas County Justice Center, 14250 49th Street North, Clearwater, Florida.

**Present**

Chris Scherer, Chair, County Commissioner  
Bruce Bartlett, State Attorney  
Deanna Carey, representing Sheriff Bob Gualtieri  
Shawn Crane, Chief Judge, Sixth Judicial Circuit  
Christopher Dudley, Department of Corrections  
Jessica Kushner, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)  
Michael Jalazo, Pinellas Ex-Offender Re-Entry Coalition (PERC)  
Jim Miller, Operation PAR, Inc.  
Sara Mollo, Public Defender  
Jennifer Parker, Sixth Judicial Circuit  
LaKeisha Randolph, representing Chauneva V. Garlington  
Melissa Reid, Department of Juvenile Justice  
Justin Shea, NAMI  
Dorothy Vaccaro, County Judge, Sixth Judicial Circuit

**Not Present**

Maxine Booker, Eleos Wellness  
Chauneva V. Garlington, Department of Children and Families  
Bob Gualtieri, Pinellas County Sheriff  
Michael Loux, Largo Police Department  
Keisha Maxwell, Department of Juvenile Justice  
Bob Neri, WestCare GulfCoast-Florida, Inc.

**Others Present**

Tim Burns, Pinellas County Human Services  
Yashira Gonzalez, Pinellas County Human Services  
Cody Ward, Assistant County Attorney  
Karen Barfield, Central Florida Behavioral Health Network  
Tristian Bentley, Pinellas County Human Services  
Katiah Fitzpatrick, Pinellas County Human Services  
Zuleka Fulton, St. Petersburg Police  
Natasha Goodley, Operation New Hope  
Dominique Randall, Pinellas County Human Services

Ryan Shields, Pinellas County Human Services  
Tammy Burgess, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk  
Other interested individuals

*All documents provided to the Clerk's Office have been filed and made a part of the record.*

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF PSCC MEMBERS**

Chair Scherer called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM and requested that those in attendance introduce themselves.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Scherer indicated that the first agenda item is approval of the minutes for the last PSCC meeting. Upon his call for a motion, Chief Judge Crane made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Mollo and carried unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No one responded to the Chair's call for public comment.

Deviating from the agenda, Chair Scherer discussed the absence of a Vice-Chair position on the PSCC and asked who would lead a meeting in the event of his absence. Attorney Ward indicated that he would review the bylaws to determine if there is an existing process for selecting a Vice-Chair; whereupon, Mr. Burns related that the item will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### Data Subcommittee Update

Ms. Gonzalez indicated that the data subcommittee met in January and February and confirmed several previously recommended indicators and identified the following questions intend for further analysis:

- Average jail length of stay for individuals awaiting competency evaluations
- Average time between evaluation completion and court competency determination
- Average number of jailed individuals awaiting placement in the Department of Children and Families' forensic restoration program
- Percentage of misdemeanor incompetent-to-proceed cases returning to jail within 12 months

Ms. Gonzalez also noted that the data subcommittee will begin meeting every two months instead of monthly; whereupon, Ms. Reid suggested an additional question regarding the number of individuals previously deemed incompetent as juveniles and who later become incompetent as adults.

### Pasco PSCC Update

Referencing discussions at the Council's December meeting regarding Pasco County's PSCC, Ms. Gonzalez indicated that she has reached out for additional information and is continuing to explore how to proceed with the matter.

### 2026 Agency Outreach – Report-Out on Member Engagement

Referring to a document titled *PSCC 2026 Planning: Member Insights Overview*, Ms. Gonzalez indicated that, of the feedback received from several of the members, three common focus areas identified were behavioral health and justice indicators, system transition and case management, and governance and issue follow-through; whereupon, Mr. Burns related that a goal for this year was for staff to meet with each of the members to obtain feedback on priorities; that the aforementioned document is intended to serve as an initial summary; and that staff anticipates presenting a full summary at the next PSCC meeting following their conversations with the remaining members.

### 2025 DCF CJMHSA Reinvestment Grant Status Update

Mr. Burns indicated that the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved the Council's recommendation for PERC to proceed with the grant application process; and that Mr. Jalazo is currently working with staff to complete the grant application. He also noted that the Department of Children and Families (DCF) extended the grant application deadline to May 1.

*Mr. Jalazo arrived at 2:10 PM.*

Mr. Jalazo provided a brief update regarding the grant application and the services which will be provided through the proposed program; whereupon, in response to a query by Ms. Mollo, he indicated that the program is anticipated to serve approximately 40 individuals each year, for a total of approximately 120 individuals over the three-year grant period.

### Open Discussion / Q&A on Old Business

This item was not addressed.

## REPORTS

### Indicators Report

Referring to a document titled *Indicators Report*, Ms. Gonzalez indicated that the document includes responses to queries raised by the members at the last regular PSCC meeting regarding U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) holds; and that the average daily population has remained in the 3,000 range.

In response to comments and queries by Chair Scherer, Ms. Carey provided information regarding responsibility for jail costs when individuals are held on both local charges and ICE holds, indicating that ICE is only be responsible for costs associated with the period during which an individual is held solely on an ICE hold; whereupon, discussion ensued wherein Ms. Carey clarified that ICE holds typically last 48 to 72 hours.

### Criminal Justice Reinvestment Grants

#### TREATMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS (TIEH)

Boley Centers Vice President of Community Services Rahim Samji indicated that census goals for the first fiscal year were met. He then provided various statistics, including data related to client enrollment, recidivism, treatment referrals, and housing placements, including that 127 clients have been enrolled in the program; and that the caseload for Safe Harbor staff was reduced by 33%, surpassing the anticipated 20% reduction; whereupon, he shared a client success story.

Responding to queries by the members, Ms. Randall, with input from Mr. Samji, discussed challenges related to permanent supportive housing and Safe Haven access, which resulted from changes to Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding and Continuum of Care requirements; whereupon, she related that, last year, Boley Centers was not selected for funding through HUD's Continuum of Care program; and that Safe Haven intakes had been suspended due to the potential funding challenges but are anticipated to resume. Ms. Randall also noted that the BCC could potentially provide gap funding for permanent supportive housing through the end of the fiscal year while funding and renewal issues related to HUD contracts continue to be addressed.

Mr. Samji then clarified that many clients were housed through reunification with family members or shared housing arrangements due to limited voucher availability; whereupon, in response to queries by Mr. Shea, he indicated that he will research the circumstances related to the reincarceration of four former clients.

Later in the meeting, Mr. Samji provided additional information regarding the four formerly housed individuals who were reincarcerated, indicating that one individual was discussing a plea agreement related to a battery charge; and that the three others involved probation violations.

#### Open Discussion / Q&A on Reports

This item was not addressed.

### **MEMBER-SUBMITTED AGENDA ITEMS / PRESENTATION**

#### DCF Update

DCF Operations Manager LaKeisha Randolph provided follow-up information related to queries previously raised by the members, including the following:

- An average of 1,072 male and 253 female forensic beds are currently available throughout the State of Florida; beds are not allocated by circuit.
- There are 40 individuals from Pinellas County awaiting placement in a State facility.
- The average number of days between court commitment orders and hospital admission for Pinellas County is currently 116 days.
- The average length of stay for restoration services following admission is currently 127 days.
- The average wait time is currently 88 days, representing a 32% increase.

In response to a query by Mr. Shea, Ms. Randolph clarified that this information is gathered from a dashboard populated with information from each facility.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### Member Designation Updates & Governance

Ms. Gonzalez related that NAMI representative Dawn Handley has stepped down from the PSCC, creating a vacancy which will be filled by a new NAMI appointee; whereupon, she noted that Chauneva Garlington will replace John Cornett as the DCF representative.

Referring to the PSCC's membership, Mr. Burns explained that several Council seats are statutorily defined while others are appointed for four-year terms; that staff would like to

designate one quarterly meeting each year to review the Council's membership and ensure appointments are current. In response to comments and queries by Chair Scherer, Mr. Burns related that staff will place the item on the agenda for the next PSCC meeting.

### 2026 Administrative Planning

Ms. Gonzalez indicated that the PSCC Strategic Plan expires this year; that the bylaws were last reviewed and revised in 2016; and that staff would like the Council to determine at which meeting the Strategic Plan and bylaws can be reviewed; whereupon, in response to a comment by Chair Scherer, Mr. Burns confirmed that the bylaws will be reviewed at the next PSCC meeting.

Referring to a document titled *PSCC Strategic Plan 2023-2026*, Mr. Burns indicated that the Council is required to maintain an active Strategic Plan for purposes of the criminal justice reinvestment grant. He also briefly discussed plans to update the existing Strategic Plan and explained that it was developed, in part, through the sequential intercept mapping (SIM) process, which was utilized to identify available community services and points of system intercept.

Mr. Burns further indicated that one of this year's initiatives is to revisit the SIM process, obtain feedback regarding any additional services which are available, and use that information to help inform updates to the Strategic Plan; whereupon, responding to comments by Chair Scherer, he related that additional information will be provided; and that a separate information-gathering meeting may be scheduled for members or their designees to provide feedback regarding the SIM process.

## **ROUND TABLE: COUNCIL COORDINATION & AGENCY HIGHLIGHTS**

### Pinellas County Justice Coordination

Ms. Gonzalez related that she has been conducting research regarding peer support specialists since it has been a topic associated with many of the programs the Council oversees; and that she met with different providers who provide peer support and intends to bring forth recommendations to the Council; whereupon, she provided details regarding the role of a peer support specialist, including the importance of reviewing organizational infrastructure and support systems when incorporating peer support specialist positions into agency operations.

Ms. Gonzalez indicated that Ms. Kushner observed drug court to familiarize herself with the court environment and determine whether NAMI has peers that may be a good fit;

whereupon, Ms. Kushner provided brief comments related to her experience observing drug court, including that she intends to attend and observe future court sessions.

Later in the meeting, discussion ensued regarding various topics, including the benefits of peer support specialists, implementation challenges related to certification and exemption requirements, and considerations related to incorporating peer support specialists into various programs and court-related settings.

Ms. Gonzalez related that the County's Juvenile Justice Citizens Academy will be held from April 23rd to June 25th; whereupon, she briefly described the program and discussed staff's efforts to coordinate for a representative from the Department of Motor Vehicles to visit the jail to assist with providing identification cards.

Mr. Burns indicated that staff will be providing a document highlighting some of the activities currently occurring which relate to the current Strategic Plan and may help inform the future Strategic Plan.

Ms. Randall noted that the Pinellas Park Police Department is hosting a Community Unity Night event on Friday, March 13, at England Brothers Park.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 PM.