

COMBAT Commission Meeting
May 10, 2021, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Zoom Meeting
Minutes

Present:

Larry Beaty
Mark Bryant
Arimeta Dupree
Alfred Jordan
Dr. Joseph Spalitto
Elizabeth Williams

Also Present:

Vince Ortega, COMBAT
Jean Peters Baker, JACO Prosecutor
Jennifer Dameron, JACO Prosecutor's Office
Jay Hayden, County Counselor's Office
Dawna J. Shumate, COMBAT
Tammie Jordan, COMBAT
Joe Loudon, COMBAT

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 PM.

NEW BUSINESS:

New Commission Chair

COMBAT Director Vince Ortega announced the appointment of Mark Bryant to serve as the new COMBAT Commission Chairperson. Director Ortega also thanked Larry Beaty for his service as chair the past two years and for helping with the transition to a new chairperson. Chairman Bryant thanked Commissioner Beaty as well for his exemplary leadership during difficult times.

Mid-Year Funding Applications

Twenty-six agencies applied for COMBAT's first-ever offering of Mid-Year Funding. COMBAT sought applications for funding in response to community partners, including participants in the STRIVIN' (Striving To Reduce Violence In Neighborhoods) initiative, for more services to address the crucial issues of Domestic Violence and Youth Employment.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, reports of Domestic Violence have increased sharply. The world-wide health crisis also traumatized youth due to social isolation, as well as disengagement from education and struggles transitioning back to in-person school. Those most affected are youth of color and those living under the poverty line. Studies have demonstrated that youth given more employment opportunities not only learn valuable life and work skills, such as taking on more responsibilities, but they are also less likely to engage in violent behavior.

To address this immediate need for more services in these two areas, the COMBAT administration for the first time accepted Mid-Year Funding applications, rather than waiting for new applications to be submitted during the normal late summer/early autumn application cycle for annual funding.

COMBAT administration reviewed all applications and submitted its funding recommendations to the Commission. All applicants for whom funding has been recommended were vetted through the County'

Compliance Office, have had a site visit by a COMBAT monitor, and were further assessed by COMBAT staff based on past history or one-on-one communications.

DISCUSSION:

Chairman Bryant noted that multiple programs were dealing with Domestic Violence, Youth Employment and Youth Counseling. He recommended that greater efficiency could be achieved through more coordination among agencies and centralizing services. Director Ortega noted that one issue that makes centralization not possible is transportation with the need for services throughout the county. He also noted that in some areas, agencies have been encouraged to and are already coordinating services, and that each agency provides specific specialized services or services only available in some areas.

Commissioner Jordan cited the number of clients some agencies noted they would serve in their applications and asked if those were daily figures or annual. Director Ortega said those figures were expected yearly totals.

Chairman Bryant also asked how many Domestic Violence hotlines COMBAT funds. While multiple agencies have hotlines, COMBAT program manager Tammie Jordan noted that COMBAT funds only one hotline.

Chairman Bryant thanked new commissioners for their service and working together to set goals for the commission and COMBAT.

MOTION:

Commissioner Williams made a motion to approve the Mid-Year funding recommendations as presented by the COMBAT administration. Commission Spalitto seconded the motion.

The motion was approved 6-0.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

The next COMBAT Commission meeting is Thursday, June 10 at 10:00 AM via Zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 1:28 PM.