

# SCOPO ROUND TABLE REPORTS

## SEPTEMBER 2011

### CONTRA COSTA

Congratulations go out to PPOACCC incumbents Probation Counselor Vice President Casandra Latula and Treasurer Mike Schroer, who ran unopposed. They will serve on the Executive Board until December 2013. A run-off election between Leandre Williams and Michelle Keith will be held on November 2, 2011, to determine who will be the Association's next Probation Officer Vice President.

Currently, through a committee, new proposed shift patterns are being explored for the Institutional Probation Counselors in both Juvenile Hall and the Orin Allen Youth Rehabilitation Facility. Once the proposal is finalized it will be forwarded to Institutional management for possible approval.

The PPOACCC's Negotiating Team continues to meet with the County for contract talks. Collectively, with Retirement Contribution, Salary Reduction and increased Medical Costs, the County is proposing approximately a 14% reduction from our paychecks, and all the while stating that they are looking at everyone for "shared savings". The negotiating team explained to the County that the Members of the PPOACCC have consistently participated in the "shared savings".

Furthermore, the PPOACCC questioned whether the County was consistent with all county employees as it pertains to "shared savings". The Negotiating team encouraged all of its Members to contact the County Board of Supervisors and voice their displeasure with latest "offer" from the County.

The Department received a significant increase in SB 678 revenue and AB 109 funding for the upcoming fiscal year. This revenue was utilized to not only save banking virtually all of Adult Services / Supervision, but also used to enhance Evidence Based Practices. Furthermore, with these funds no Probation Peace Officers will be laid off. However, the funding requirements will require some movement and consolidation of staff in the Juvenile Division.

Chief Kader and the Department are gearing up for the October 1<sup>st</sup> start date when those convicted of nonviolent and other less-serious felonies will become the responsibility of the County Probation Officers, rather than Parole Officers. Contra Costa is expecting to take responsibility for about 300 felons over the next year that would normally be on parole, or about 25 a month. The Chief explained that number would gradually decrease.

The Department continues to work on a grant and subsequent scheduling of evidence-based training using Dr. Ed LaTessa.

The Department continues to be a part of statewide DUI checks points, which include Warrant Sweeps and Traffic Enforcement Stops.

Congratulations go out to the "Late Night Readers" volunteer program, which are celebrating 20 years of dedicated time and energy to the residents of Juvenile Hall.

Good luck to Probation Counselor Liz Schooley and Probation Officer Marilou Del Rosario on their recent retirements.

On a sad note, retired Probation Counselor Dennis O'Brien, recently passed away. Condolences are extended to his family.

## **FRESNO**

Communication with our Chief and Department administration has remained fluid as we gear up for the implementation of AB 109. Our Chief held a Department forum in August to detail the pending changes to the Department and outlined the staff development of the Post-Release Supervision for AB 109. The transition will initially begin with the transfer of six officers to the developing Department Division in early September, with full implementation of supervision services set to begin on October 1, 2011. The plan is for the AB 109 caseloads not to exceed 50 per officer and will be an armed assignment. The plan also calls for additional officers to be transitioned to Post-Release Supervision at an anticipated rate of two officers per month. It is estimated from October 2011 through October 2013, Fresno County will receive 1598 returning offenders from the California Department of Correction and Rehabilitation for Post-Release Supervision services.

Additionally, after more than three years, Fresno County personnel has authorized and issued approximately 12 to 13 employment offers for the position of Deputy Probation Officer. The contingent job offers will fill currently vacant positions with an anticipated hire date of October 2011.

As our Association and Department move forward with the implementation of AB 109 supervision services and the inclusion of new hires, we are poised to bolster our ranks and make positive inroads with local officials, as to the crucial role Probation plays in community safety.

## **INYO**

Probation has undergone some serious training within the last several weeks. Our officers have completed EPICS, MI, CWS/CMS, as well as family finding and Title IVE trainings. All exciting stuff. ICPPOA is presently in negotiations for a 2011 contract. Looks like we will be taking some concessions but hoping to have a silver lining with some incentives. Could be a wash. Let's pray.

## **MADERA**

Surprise, surprise, surprise, Madera County found an 11 million dollar error while auditing their books! It appears that we are 11 million for the good! Whether it will impact our department remains to be seen. Chief Dupree is still doing an amazing job on the Probation Departments behalf; he continues to be a strong advocate for us. We will continue to be furloughed until 2012; however as of now we are not seeing layoffs in

our department. Deputy Commander Linda Perez is retiring in December of 2011, after 23 years of service to the County and Probation Department. She plans on staying on as a retired annuitant under SB 678. Linda will be developing, implementing and overseeing SB 678 & AB 109 initiatives as they relate to the department and our local criminal justice system. This will help save funding in our departmental budgets as we try to avoid off lay-offs and the elimination of programs. Otherwise we are still just clicking along, expecting the worst and praying for the best.

## **ORANGE**

Orange County is currently addressing a \$48 Million shortfall they lost as part of the state budget agreement in June. Orange County Employees Association General Manager, Nick Berardino along with Orange County Supervisor Bill Campbell were in Sacramento on Tuesday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, where they met with Assembly Speaker John A. Perez to enlist his support for helping the County restore this money. If these efforts prove unsuccessful it could result in the layoffs of 250 employees countywide. It is unknown at this time what impact the lost of this money will have for the Probation department.

Representatives from OCEA attended the most recent Realignment meeting on August 18<sup>th</sup> that was chaired by the Chief Probation Officer Steve Sentman. In attendance were representatives from the Public Defender's office, the District Attorney's office, the Sheriff's department, the Health Care Agency, the Courts and the Chief from Garden Grove Police Department. There was no finalized, or even a draft, plan in place to present to the Board of Supervisors and a number of the agencies are apparently taking a wait and see approach (?). The next meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2011.

## **SACRAMENTO**

Our Department took a serious budget hit for the third straight year resulting in 40 Institutional Officers being laid off on July 2, 2011. We have now lost 221 Members during these ongoing budget melt downs. Our Final Budget Hearings are scheduled for early September and we have been told that we will have no further reductions. Our Membership did agree to concessions for the second time in three years which prevented 16 of our Members from being laid off.

Our Department received additional SB 678 funding this year which will result in an additional 13 officers being reinstated. We have been faithfully attending our County's CCP Meetings regarding the Parole Realignment and stay optimistic that it will result in many more reinstatements.

The Mandates Lawsuit we filed in May of 2010 is still progressing through the discovery phase. We hope to be able to move into depositions by the end of the year. I again want to thank every Organization who has supported us in this unprecedented litigation. We need the help of all of your Organizations to insure we are successful. Please contact me if your Organization is willing and able to support us, we really appreciate it.

The Department and County have approved Asp's as an intermediate force option for our armed field officers. We will be meeting and conferring with the Department

regarding the policy and hope to have this critical safety tool available to our officers by the end of the year. I want to thank every County that responded to our survey question regarding intermediate force options; the information was invaluable in helping us secure this tool.

## **SAN DIEGO**

We hope to hear from the CCP group and our board of Supervisors today on the funding for AB109. Our administration feels that we will be funded adequately as they have been working together on this project. We shall see. With that said we are preparing for 40 parolees to arrive on October 1, 2011. Our plan so far is to hire 80 new staff over the next 3 years to properly supervise this group. Our department has created a whole new division for AB109.

Our healthcare has gone through the roof. This year we received a 5% increase in our flex credit toward health care. Kaiser has gone up 5%. Anthem has split it's HMO into Select and Full Access. Select went up 4.3 % and the Full Access has gone up 48%. Anthem PPO has gone up 12%. We seem to be losing more money out of our pockets every day.

Good news is that we are hiring DPOs' and Correctional Deputy Probation Officers'.

## **SAN FRANCISCO**

Adult Probation is starting to use the Compas assessment. We have also started training with the Carey Group. Morale is fair it could be better. We are still waiting for the use of force policy.

Juvenile Probation morale appears to be low with many officers on disability, creating more work for the remaining officers.

## **SAN JOAQUIN**

What a difference a year makes. Last year, we faced layoffs and demotions. This year, those that remain demoted should be reinstated within a matter of weeks, and thanks to AB 109 funding we're actually going to be hiring; the first new hires in several years. Based on the budget that was submitted and approved by the Board of Supervisors, we will see 16 new sworn positions; 15 of those for rank & file. To bring these new bodies on board as soon as possible, the Department is hiring 2 part-time background investigators to work specifically on this undertaking.

While we are happy about bringing new faces and much needed help on board, we have come to realize that with AB 109 comes a new way of doing business. Gone are the days where a first violation could lead to jail time. For our Adult Division, we'll now face a scale of graduated sanctions where the officers' discretion will be removed from the process. For better or for worse, our profession is becoming more evidenced based; which means more stat driven results. This will be seen mostly in the expansion of our Day Reporting Center and the creation of an Assessments Unit, but in time will be

spread to other Divisional operations. It is already part of the way business is being done in our Juvenile Division.

We are under contract through June 30, 2012, though the County may want to open up discussions as early as this fall on medical and retirement issues. In the end, we'll have to see if it'll be in our interest to do this sooner rather than later.

Two upcoming topics for our next Labor Management meeting are transportations, and a revision to our critical incidents policy. We have been pushing our department to revise our transportation policy to include outside medical transports (i.e. dental and medical appointments) and direct file transports to our county hospital. Both types of transports involve officer safety issues, and the lack of clear policy is a concern to us. Since the recent probation officer involved shooting in San Diego County, a revised critical incidents policy has resurfaced as a point of discussion for us. We brought the issue forward about a year ago, but at that time our concerns were heard but not addressed. Now, because of the recent San Diego shooting, and the increased possibility of use of force opportunities with the soon to be released PRCS from Prison, changes to our current policy should happen before we need to refer to the policy in response to an actual event.

## **SAN LUIS OPISPO**

San Luis Obispo County is in the last year of its contract. With the association waving it COLA for 2010, we have begun negotiations on receiving the 2011 COLA. Also with our current contract ending July of 2012 we are consider all possibilities of concessions to try and maintain our 3% @ 55 retirements. The Board of Supervisor has brought in a negotiations team to conduct all county contracts. The main items on the negotiation chopping blocks are our comparable counties and two tier retirement system. With the assistance of Silver and Kats Associates we will begin our negotiations.

Also the San Luis Obispo County has current hiring lists for our Juvenile Services Officers and Deputy Probations Officers. Once our COLA is negotiated we will hopefully being hiring to back fill the vacant positions.

## **SANTA CRUZ**

Santa Cruz County Probation Officer's Association is currently in negotiations. The primary concerns are furloughs, retirement and medical insurance. If furloughs are imposed, it will mark the third year of furloughs. As a newly formed association, officer safety concerns are being brought to the table in addition to the above stated. SCCPOA is being asked to contribute 10% reduction via a combination of furloughs and an increase in employee contribution to retirement and insurance.

Recently, Adult Officers have attended training for the STRONG assessment and Juvenile Officers in the PACT assessment. Both assessment instruments will soon be implemented. We are not certain, as are many other counties, what the direct impact of AB 109 will be.

## **SOLANO**

Greetings from Solano County.

Well things are keeping us busy these days. We are in the middle of negotiations and given the “dire situation” our County is reportedly in, only time will tell how that will turn out.

Unfortunately, our Fouts Springs Youth Facility closed causing the displacement of 17 members. They are now required to travel to our Juvenile Detention Facility, with many of them traveling 2 + hours (one way) just to get to work. Layoff notices recently went out to 17 of our Group Counselors (including the elimination of 4 Seniors and 1 Supervisor). We have been told that if the new “Juvenile Plan” is approved, all but six of those group counselors will be able to keep their jobs. Better than the 17, but still difficult to swallow. With each cut, we feel more and more impact.

AB109 and how the Department plans to handle these offenders continues to remain a mystery to those of us not in the know. We are just a month away from implementation and there has been no discussion with staff about who is going to supervise these offenders, how they are going to supervise these offenders, and if any safety considerations will be given to those who are supervising these offenders. This is scary stuff to those of us who do the work, and the minimization by those who insist this is “no big deal as they are the same people we dealt with before” is frustrating.

We hired a new Chief Deputy just a few months ago and already he is no longer with us. Recruitment continues to refill that position, as the recruitment for our Chief position is due to close on 9/30/11. Our Chief is due to retire in December and the fact that we may very well end up with two new Administrators at one time is also a daunting prospect.

Our Association grows stronger each month and we must say that we are in fact encouraged by our Chief’s willingness to have discussions with us. The lines of communication are opening and that, to say the least, is a breath of fresh air.

We will survive, we have no choice. Our only hope is that when all is said and done we will be able to provide the type of services we owe to our community in a manner that is safe for each of us.

Stay strong my friends and do be safe out there

## **TUOLUMNE**

Our Department is currently in the middle of a contract which was finalized back in December of 2010, and expires in June of 2013. Although we have been forced to take 12 furlough days through the entirety of the contract we were able to retain our current insurance benefits. However any DPO’s hired after March of 2011, went to 2% @ 50. All of the DPO’s hired before that date still retained the 3% @ 50. This was a huge step backwards for our department as we will see the negative impacts it will have on us in

the future when we try to recruit and retain good DPO's. Unfortunately, this contract was negotiated when PERS retirement was being scrutinized by the public and the County was in fiscal trouble: Also known as the "Perfect Storm." Thankfully we have not had to layoff any sworn personnel.

As AB 109 gets rolled out, our Adult Unit has been scrambling to get the much needed infrastructure in place to deal with the additional work load and high risk offenders beginning Oct. 1st. The Juvenile Unit continues to move forward with Evidence Based Practices for our juvenile offenders. Funding is always an issue as grant application was recently denied.

On a positive note our Chief Adele Arnold, who was appointed back in 2009, has been a huge asset to our department in both the leadership role and bringing up the overall morale. We are looking forward to the changes to come as we are all facing some challenging times.

## **VENTURA**

The Ventura County Probation Agency has been fortunate that during the past two years, no sworn staff has been laid off due to the widespread financial budget crisis. Only a few months ago, we wondered if the state funding for our juvenile programs would be axed. If so, it appeared officers currently working in juvenile programs would be reassigned to the expanding adult supervision units that would be soon handling the CDC inmates returning to the County due to realignment.

At the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, the governor committed to continuing to fund the juvenile programs. Because the state is also sending us CDC inmates to supervise, the agency will be recruiting ten to twelve new probation officers. This comes after the agency not hiring any new probation officers since October 2008.

The agency recently hired four new Corrections Officers which has helped reduce the instances of staff being mandated to stay over. Another CSO should be coming out of background soon.

The VCPPOA Board recently received the results of the opinion survey which was sent to line staff regarding morale issues, the direction and challenges of the agency, and the effectiveness and leadership of the executive management team. The narrative portion of the survey is still being compiled by our contracted consultant. All survey results will be discussed at the next board meeting as well as how best to use the information to improve staff morale, communication with executive management, effectiveness and leadership within the agency.