

SCOPO ROUND TABLE REPORTS

MARCH/APRIL 2012

CONTRA COSTA

As of this writing, contract negotiations with the County have hit a stalemate, with the County offering a “best, last and final” offer, which pales in comparison to a like-bargaining unit. The PPOACCC President, John Ebrahimi, will continue to meet with various County Board of Supervisors explaining there is nothing else to cut from the Member’s already “25% of their salary for retirement contributions”.

In January, the Department celebrated Black History Month with a luncheon featuring delicious food, live comedy and special treats.

The Department welcomed a number of new Probation Peace Officers with a Badge Ceremony on March 1st.

Congratulations to the Juvenile Hall Scrambled Eggheads for capturing their ninth Contra Costa County Trivia Tournament crown on March 3rd. The proceeds from the 27th edition of the tourney benefited the non-profit Juvenile Hall Auxiliary.

Recently, the Department successfully completed the conversion from BI Guardware to BI TotalAccess. Now, all of the Home Supervision clients will be on GPS.

Unlike previous years, the Department will be in “the black” for the upcoming fiscal year. Additionally, the hiring continues for Field and Institutional Probation Peace Officers.

Probation Officers are currently being fitted for protective vests, department jackets and duty belts.

Congratulations to Probation Officer Petrenya Boykins, who was honored by the Board Of Supervisors on February 27th, for her 25 years of enthusiast and tireless service to the Department.

FRESNO

In late January 2012 SEIU, which represents the Juvenile Correction Officer (JCO) classification conducted a three-day work action in response to the County’s last best and final imposed salary reduction of 9%. Our Juvenile Justice Campus was maintained by a combination of Per Diem JCO(s) and Deputy Probation Officers for the duration of the

three day strike. Our Chief and Directors also worked alongside in the institution for the duration of the work action. The actual impact of the strike on labor negotiations positive or negative has yet to be determined, as both the County and SEIU have declared opposing language as to if the work action was successful.

Other events of note from Fresno is we have continued regular dialogue with our administration, have continued the hiring process for the position of Deputy Probation Officer, started the process for implementing a Department wide on-call schedule, and have consistently been notified and invited to attend local CCP meetings.

INYO

Inyo County Probation Peace Officer's Association remains in ongoing negotiations with the County of Inyo. Officers are busy with realignment and all the requirements coming out of family finding and AB 12/212. The department has undergone a variety of trainings within the last 6 months including EPICS (case management) and EM (electronic monitoring). Doesn't seem to be enough hours in the day but we're holding steady.

MADERA

Greetings from Madera! We continue to be at an impasse on our current contracts. However the County came back and gave us status quo on our medical insurance benefits, they had been looking into having us pay a larger percentage. They told us that we will continue furloughing for the next two years and suspended all COLA's in that time frame as well. On a lighter note we want to thank Sonja Jameson and Patsy Putney for all their years in the department. Have a great retirement girls, we will miss you! Happy Easter to everyone.\

MONO

Mono County is in the process of hiring a deputy to replace one who is no longer at our Department. We are very busy as we are short staffed. We have had a little Juvenile crime spree, which is unusual for our area. We are also looking forward to some warmer weather that should be approaching.

SACRAMENTO

For the fourth consecutive year the County has proposed reductions to the Probation Department. This year the initial proposed reduction is 7.5 million dollars which, if past history holds true, would equate in the approximate loss of an additional 60 officers. This of course comes on top of the over 200 officers we have lost already over the past three years. To say this would be devastating would be stating it too lightly.

To put it into perspective, currently the County only funds one Juvenile Institution in Sacramento and due to budget cuts last year it is only housing between 180-200

offenders. The County currently only funds one Juvenile Field Unit with approximately 7,000 juvenile offenders sentenced to probation. The County currently only funds the equivalent of two or three Adult Field Unit's with approximately 20,000 adult offenders sentenced to probation.

The Probation Mandates Lawsuit we filed in May of 2010 is moving into the deposition phase. We stand confident that we will prevail in this unprecedented litigation and at this point the future of our department is dependent upon it succeeding as we cannot continue to sustain reductions year after year. I want to thank every organization who has assisted us in this fight and we respectfully ask for the assistance of any other organization that can help us. We truly appreciate it.

We recently prevailed in binding arbitration and an officer who was wrongfully terminated by the department has been ordered whole and started back to work. We continue to have to address the fact that we remain grossly top heavy as a department despite all of our budget reductions. The more managers the department acquires, the more grievances and lawsuits we seem to end of filing for POBR and MOU violations.

We are currently addressing a multitude of safety concerns with the department in regards to the supervision of offenders realigned to us under AB 109 as the overwhelming majority of them are high risk offenders. These safety concerns apply not only to the field officers entering their homes but to our officers meeting with the offenders in unsecure departmental buildings. As realignment continues to evolve we know officer safety concerns will evolve with it. We have continued to attend every CCP Meeting in our County in order to stay informed of the process and to stay aware of new potential risks.

SAN BERNARDINO

AB109 implementation and our contract is the big news in our county. We were funded for an additional 100 officers for the AB 109 program, through June. We currently have the first 14 officers in basic training that will be graduated in a couple of weeks. Obviously, the 100 officers will not be hired and trained by June. In the mean time, PRCS clients continue to be assigned to our existing units, i.e. Domestic Violence, Gang, Sex Offender and Mental Health units. We also have 13 AB 109 officers spread out through out the county and the first few Police Agencies are having PO s assigned to them. A Probation Apprehension Team is in the process of being formed.

Our agency has mandated the AB 109 officers make 2 home visits per month. With caseloads already running at 130 or above, this requirement is not realistic. Some officers have begun knocking on doors alone as a way of trying to comply with the requirement. It is our association position that the making of home visits alone poses a safety risk to those officers involved. We are in the process of communicating our concern to administration.

We have been in contract negotiations for the past 4 years. The county has taken a hard

line and is now threatening to impose a contract. We are due for mediation of April 13th. The county's last contract offer was rejected by our membership 83% to 17%. The county's offer was no raises, reduction of step increases from 5% to 2.5% and employees to pay a 7% pickup for retirement. The average out of pocket cost to each member for that is about \$360 per month. The association has hired a forensic accountant to audit the county finances. We are exploring all options as we continue the negotiation process.

SAN DIEGO

As with everyone else, the approaching end of the fiscal year is upon us. The fact that we are pretty certain that the funding for AB109 is going to be non-existent our department continues to hire more and more staff. Maybe they know something we don't. Where is the funding going to come from? Especially after the department just hired a new Assistant Chief. At least wait until this funding has been identified. Also coincidentally two of our three Deputy Chiefs just quit (retired) last week after the announcement of the hire of the new Assistant Chief.

We are in the process of promoting and reassigning numerous officers within our department. This is always a good thing as long as the funding holds out.

Our institutional officers are still on mandatory overtime at our two facilities and three camps. Arming all of our new-armed officers has been a challenge. Too many new officers and not enough training officers.

Things could be worse. Let's move forward and hope that funding for us continues.

SAN FRANCISCO

We are early on in negotiations. We will have a report from a financial expert to help us. At Adult Probation we are going over various policies. Two of three investigations units have moved temporarily to another office while administration works at securing a permanent office location. We have hired a deputy chief who came from Imperial County. The administration hired a supervisor who comes from Marin County, this is the first time this has ever happened. The Union is in discussions with administration regarding moving two officers to another field office in a troublesome area of the City. We continue to have mandated training which officers are getting tired of. We are in the process of hiring 18 new Probation officers.

At Juvenile Probation several officers remain out on various types of leave. Moral is low at both Departments.

SAN JOAQUIN

Since the October 1st AB 109 implementation date, the Department had been scheduled to hire 16 POI and POII's, with the majority of them being for POI positions. To date, none of the positions have been filled, though I understand we have at least one and up to three

being hired and scheduled to start in April; though this has not been officially announced. It is of concern to us, not only because these positions were tied to AB 109 funding, but because there's a number of vacant positions that still need to be (back) filled. Because our new High Risk Unit (HRU) was created to address the influx of AB 109 offenders, several units were depleted in order to staff the HRU. As a result, those units are being worked by staff left in those units, placing an added burden on them to complete their work on top of the work created by the staffing shortage. Unfortunately, the only one that benefits from our current situation is the County, as they reap the money in the form of savings from unfilled positions.

That brings me to my next topic, our contract negotiations with the County. After approaching us initially with an "Informal Proposal," a first in the now fifth round of negotiations that I've been a part of over the years, we've moved into formal negotiations. Granted, we're in the middle of the most dramatic economic environment since the Great Depression, but our county is not in as bad a shape as other counties when it comes to financial deficits. That, in addition to us being the first bargaining unit to come out and get a concessionary deal done nearly two years ago, should afford us some advantage at the bargaining table. On top of the fact, that the County is making money off of our Department, due to the aforementioned salary savings created by unfilled AB 109 positions, and we believe we have an argument to make. We do believe that the County is looking for structural change in at least two areas though, our medical and our retirement. Based on recent contracts that were ratified by other bargaining units in the county, it appears that the County is looking for single employees to start paying for the employees' portion of their healthcare premium, up to 20%; which the County has traditionally paid. Additionally, the County wants to target savings from the employees' retirement COLA cost share at an additional 4.395%; effectively doubling what safety employees currently contribute.

On another note, our Chief of three years, Patricia "Patty" Mazzilli, retired on March 23rd with her last official day being March 25th. She worked for the Probation Department for over 27 years. Our Association had a positive working relationship with her, unlike our previous chief. On March 23rd, we found out that outgoing Chief Mazzilli had been appointed by the Governor to the Corrections Standards Authority as an executive director. Congratulations to her and good luck to her in her retirement! Our Assistant Chief, Stephanie James, was appointed Interim Chief until a new chief is named sometime later this year.

Lastly, we're about done working on two policies that we've met & conferred on, Peer Support and Transportation. Of the two, the Department's revised Transportation policy was a source of concern for us due to officer safety concerns. We believe that we are on track to addressing some of those concerns through the Meet & Confer process, with final policies being completed sometime within the next month or two.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

In San Luis Obispo County we are in the second year of our three-year contract extension. We have been able to maintain our current retirement of 3% @55 for all sworn staff. But we have waived all possible COLAS during that time. We also agreed to renegotiate our current comparable counties when our contract expires.

With AB 109 we are hiring a total of 11 officers, the department has completed the first set of oral board interviews and we are hoping to hire 3 new officers ASAP.

As far as new policies, the Chief with the support of the union has implemented a change in our arming policy. It now states “Officers who have been authorized to carry a firearm shall be armed at all times when on duty unless other wise approved by their supervisor or Chief Deputy.” This is a new step towards officer safety in our department and our union was in full support of this change.

The department is changing some of its current safety equipment. The department has previously issued ASP batons. Now the department is issuing Monadnock expandable batons.

SANTA CRUZ

Our AB 109 unit isn't quite a 100% yet, but getting close. The two DPO II positions have been filled, but a specific supervisor hasn't been assigned. The Chief recently requested that STRONG risk assessments be completed on all PRCS's before the CCP on 3/27/12. This has been extremely time consuming for all staff as this task was dispersed amongst other DPO's outside the AB 109 unit. A handful of the PRCS's have already been arrested for new offenses or experienced a flash incarceration. As with the majority of other counties, we too are receiving PRCS's that are HIGH risk, VIOLENT, and SEX OFFENDERS.

SOLANO

Greetings from Solano County

Things in Solano are looking a bit more hopeful these days. Our new Chief has finally arrived! He comes from the Federal system and brings with him new ideas and a fresh perspective. We look forward to working together with him to move our Department, and our Image, in a positive direction. Rome wasn't built in a day, we know, but we continue to look forward to what the future holds for us.

Our PRCS unit is slowly getting up and running. We now have four supervision officers, two assessors, a supervisor and a manager covering this unit. Our County has done two sweeps, to date, with a good portion of those contacted found to be either in

violation or arrested. Numerous weapons were found during each search. As is being found in most Counties, 71% of our PRCS returnees are assessing out as either high (56%) or very high (15%) risk.

We are in the process of bringing back four of our previously laid off Probation Officers, and are currently recruiting for eight more entry-level positions. That is great news.

With that we bid you a fond farewell for now.

Stay safe my friends.

VENTURA

As with most Probation Departments throughout California, our Agency is attempting to establish stable procedures to address California's Public Safety Realignment (AB109). One of the most crucial concerns of the Realignment has been how to properly equip our officers to deal with the increased dangers of supervising parolees under Post-Release Community Supervision and Mandatory Supervision. While most of our Agency's Administration supports arming a small complement of our officers, it stops short of recognizing the need to arm all of our Field Officers. This philosophy has created confusion amongst staff as to why some officer's safety is more important than others. The Agency is also struggling with the recruitment of enough interested officers for the firearms program. Some of the reasons why this is happening include; a lack of financial incentive to be armed, officers being philosophically opposed to carrying a firearm, the personal liability and responsibility of being armed, and a lack of trust, consistency, and clear objectives in the Agency's firearms program. Our Agency is also considering an intermediate level of defense for our officers, more specifically tasers. While the idea is still in the research phase, VCPPOA is hopeful that our Agency will recognize the need for a "less-than-lethal" option for our officers.

While SCOPO has been working tirelessly to create line-staff positions within the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP / SB678), our Chief, Mark Varela, has already seen the need to incorporate line-staff into the process. While current legislation does not allow for a line-staff position within the "Stakeholders" of the CCP, Chief Varela has supported, and subsequently selected, two of our armed line-staff officers to serve on a sub-committee of the CCP. While management personnel are typically the ones charged with developing policy and procedures for the work to be done within Probation Departments, it is line-staff personnel that actually gets the work done! Often times, management personnel are out of touch with the needs and requirements of getting that work accomplished. By allowing line-staff to participate within the confines of the CCP, this will allow the Stakeholders to make better, well-rounded decisions with respect to objectives of the CCP.

Lastly, our Agency recently honored the exceptional work of our Agency's staff at the 2012 Employee Recognition Awards ceremony. The event was support by our County's

Board of Supervisors and CEO's office, and resulted in standing-room only at the venue, as employees showed up in masses to honor those being recognized. VCPPOA would like to congratulate its' members recognized for their hard work and dedication to our profession; Travis Prater (CSO I), Robert Velasco (CSO II), Richard Johnson (CSO III), Renee Dagan (DPO), Robert Pacheco (Sr DPO), Michael MacLeod (Agency Instructor), and Allen Pastores (Officer Safety)."

YOLO

The Yolo County Probation Association is winding down the first of a three year contract. The first year has been a good one, despite the concessions that were made during contract negotiations. We have also been fortunate to have no layoffs in this tough economic climate.

With AB109 and Realignment, as of February 2012, we received a total of 147 PRCS clients. This is above the number of releases projected (120) from CDCR for that time period.

We recently had several promotions within or ranks. Congratulations go out to Tim Marquez and William Oneto on their promotions to Supervising Probation Officer. Furthermore, Rane Carter, Leanna Libolt, and Michelle Vermette were promoted to Senior Deputy Probation Officer. We wish you all the best of luck in your new positions!

Marschell Brumfield, Senior Detention Officer assigned to our Alternative Sentencing/Work Program/Transportation Unit was recently honored as the American Legion's Officer of The Year; a well-deserved award for a very dedicated officer.

In March, two of our Board members participated in meetings with state legislators at the Capitol, along with representatives from other Probation Associations, and Members of SCOPO. This was a very educational experience, and provided a forum for line probation staff to educate our elected representatives about what we do on a daily basis, and the many hazards we face.

Stay safe out there, and always look toward tomorrow.