

## **SCOPO ROUND TABLE REPORTS**

**OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2013**

### **CONTRA COSTA**

The wait is over! The Department has taken a very large step toward Probation Officer and Counselor safety by arming a selective group. Thanks should be given to Chief Kader for making this happen.

Regarding the ongoing issue of the Pension Lawsuit against the county retirement board, it is anticipated that the presiding judge will make a decision soon on whether not only Contra Costa, but Marin, Merced and Alameda County's employees may apply "Terminal" to their final calculations toward retirement.

The employees of the department are getting into the holiday spirit early with numerous fundraisers to benefit the Contra Costa County Food Bank.

Dr. Ed Latessa addressed the department, judges, district attorneys and public defenders regarding the EPICS (Effective Practices in Community Supervision) based program.

A three-year grant was awarded the department from the Bureau of Justice Assistance to fund the "Smart Probation: Reducing Prison Populations, Saving Money and Creating Safer Communities." This program will allow the department to contact approximately 150 moderate to high-risk probationers before they are released from custody, with a "Jail to Community" supervision model.

### **FRESNO**

Under new leadership, the department is taking the direction of implementing more training for officer's to balance the officer safety training such as range, SIMS, etc.... This training would include mental health, substance abuse, etc... providing more of a balance.

Looking to add officers, upwards of 30 to 40 when all said and done, mostly to adult division due to AB 109 and SB678. Department still struggling to fill juvenile vacancies.

Department Launched PACT, still working out the kinks.

AB 109 Caseloads still over max. Director Mike Elliott has now moved to adult division and there looks to be some changes or relief efforts for those officers.

Will be looking at re-submitting a proposal for Tasers.

Getting ready to head into Health Negotiations with County of Fresno this month.

## **MADERA**

Madera Probation is currently in negotiations with the County for our new contract. The County has presented the following changes they'd like to see in the upcoming contract-

-2 year contract (from 01-01-14 to 12-31-15)

-County Health Benefit contribution rate decrease from 100% to 90% for employee only coverage and continue to pay 50% for 2 party and family coverage.

-A temporary 3.5 % salary reduction starting January 1, 2014 for 18 months ending June 30, 2015.

-A meet and confer in January of 2015 to discuss the need for the continuation of the temporary salary reduction.

We have not given a counter offer as of this point-

MPPOA is also in the middle of officer elections as well, we like to keep the water stirred! The Juvenile Hall is currently hiring several new positions as is the Probation department- With the good comes the bad.

## **MERCED**

### Probation Services Week

Just before Probation Services Week this year Merced County Chief Probation Officer Scott Ball addressed the Merced County Board of Supervisors in a public session and said he would like to thank the Board and Merced County CEO Jim Brown for the opportunity to acknowledge all of the wonderful employees of the Probation Department as part of Probation Services Week. He then noted the following facts:

- John Augustus, who is known as the "Father of Probation", is credited with creating the probation profession in 1841 for the purpose of addressing the needs of lower level offenders, rather than holding them accountable in the same manners as violent and other high risk offenders.
- Augustus developed several efforts that remain intact today; ordering of fees/fines, court reports, providing treatment, and utilizing community based organizations.
- 172 years later, the employees of the Merced County Probation Department employ those and many other efforts to administer corrective services that hold offenders accountable for their behavior, and provide rehabilitative services in order to strengthen our community.
- Calendar year 2012 was a busy one for our dedicated employees. Our 45 deputy probation officers, 7 supervisors and 2 probation assistants:

1. Conducted 685 adult assessments
  2. Handled 2,745 juvenile referrals
  3. Supervised over 4,000 adults and over 900 juveniles
  4. Performed 3,100 searches
  5. Confiscated 109 firearms
  6. Made 237 felony arrests
  7. Had nearly 20,000 contacts with adult and juvenile clients
  8. And helped 177 minors successfully complete the Youth Accountability Board diversion program.
- Our 44 Juvenile Institutions Officers, 6 supervisors, and 5 security Systems operators:
    1. Ensured the safe and secure detention of over 800 minors
    2. Prevented any escapes from the locked facilities
    3. Engaged in communication and response techniques resulting in 0 suicide attempts.
    4. Assisted minors with completing all daily mandated activities, including education, recreation, physical education, hygiene, meals, visitations.
    5. Engaged minors in conflict resolution and individual and group therapy sessions.
    6. JIO Rachel Potter was recognized at this year's Children's Summit as a Hands on Hero for her efforts with the minors committed to our Bear Creek Academy program.
  - And our Legal Clerks processed 688 dispositional and sentencing reports and 886 Court memos.

## **MONO**

Things are going well here in Mono County. We added a new officer to our staff and we are about to get two officers back from their core training. We had an issue where our court administrator reacted to seeing a probation officer with a firearm in the court and temporarily restricted probation officers bring firearms to the court house. After some research (thank you for all the counties who responded to my request), the court administrator apologized and restored our ability to carry in the court. We are preparing to enter negotiations with the County for our MOU. We have had our first three snows and are preparing for winter.

## **MONTEREY**

We just voted and ratified a 3 year contract and the Board of Supervisors adopted it this Tuesday in closed session. First year a 3.5% raise, our PERS employee contribution drops to 12% from 13.5% and an additional 1% raise in lieu of our fitness program (which was a mess getting together last year), 2<sup>nd</sup> year additional 1% raise, year 3 additional 2% raise.

That is our latest and greatest and of course Monterey County is still busy with the gang violence unfortunately!

## **PLUMAS**

Plumas County continues to struggle in the absence of the Chief Probation Officer who has been on medical leave since April 2013. With no supervising probation officer and the loss of two more DPO's, the department is down to one adult officer handling all moderate and high risk cases including Prop 36, Drug Court, and PRCS. In August, we hired one new DPO with no prior probation experience who is scheduled for CORE in January. Currently, we have one juvenile officer supervising GHV, and all other juvenile cases.

The full-time Juvenile Legal Services Assistant transferred to Social Services. As such, we re-employed a recent annuitant to cover the fundamental responsibilities in that capacity. The part-time, Adult Legal Services Assistant is also working as a Probation Assistant while she works toward completing her Bachelor's degree which is required to apply for an officer position in this county.

Chief Doug Carver, formerly of Nevada County, has been acting chief for Plumas since July. His expertise, patience, and understanding of probation has been extraordinarily helpful in rebuilding the department's reputation with county stakeholders.

Charles Martinez, President of the Plumas Probation Association, accepted a promotional opportunity with El Dorado County Probation in early September. Kevin Allred, was elected to replace Charlie.

This year is the first that the probation department is negotiating separately from the miscellaneous employees' unit. We intend to request Safety Retirement, not only for the current (three) officers, but also as a recruiting tool to attract officers with experience. We can use all the assistance and support SCOPO can provide.

## **SAN BENITO**

We have a new Interim Chief, Donald Blevins, who began with our department in August. We are currently in the process of recruiting a full-time Chief. We have one Deputy Probation Officer I opening and have recently hired two Deputy Probation Officers to fill positions that have been vacated.

## **SAN BERNARDINO**

The Association is still in the process of building out our Association office. We expect it to be completed in about 6 weeks. We have enrolled about 300 members into the AFLAC accident /illness policy. The premiums are paid through member's dues and county short disability funds.

Our armed officers are receiving new tactical vests that will contain higher level ballistic protection. Officers that wanted back up weapons for on duty use will be issued those weapons in the future. The dept. has chosen the Smith and Wesson .380 Bodyguard and they are now on order. Officers carrying the weapon will be required to do so with an ankle holster. The department is also looking into the feasibility of deploying tasers. No decision has been reached but it appears things are going in that direction.

Our annual elections are coming up in November. President, Secretary and a handful of Director spots are coming up for election. We expect some changes on our Board as a result.

## **SAN DIEGO**

We just ratified our contract with the county and we're back debating the interpretation of some of the sections. We were able to get a premium pay for Field training officers,( FTO's), something we never have had in the past. The problem is that administrators have no idea what a FTO does so they think it's easy to put a cap on these premiums. We will get through it. As for our contract we ended up with some minor take aways, but gained in premiums. Increases in armed pay, stand by pay, FTO, uniform pay, instructor pay, healthcare flex credit, shift leader pay, overtime for cash or comp program, parking reimbursement, increase and implementation of our Retiree Medical Trust.

We still are way under staffed, mandatory overtime in the institutions and the same for our Adult Investigators. AB109 has helped us in many ways, but has had a negative effect on our Investigators. We average approximately 40-50 MOT cases each week for investigators. They must stay late or come in on the weekends to get all their work done. Staff is getting burned out and there seems to be no relief in sight.

AB109 also has placed a huge burden on our training unit. We just don't have enough trainers and instructors to handle all that's required for our field officers. The length of time for our armed officers to be fully trained has been extended due to these factors.

## **SAN FRANCISCO**

1. Adult Probation Department's (APD) CASC CENTER (DAY REPORTING CENTER) has issues with the current security. The Executive Board had a meet and confer with Chief Still and they are working on making the changes
2. The Officer's in APD's Investigation's Unit are seeing an increasing spike in the number of cases being assigned, but administration is slowly tackling the issues.
3. The morale is extremely low at APD due to excessive work demands.
4. APD's Chief still refuses to provide officers with overtime pay.
5. SF DPOA is looking at possibly hiring counsel to represent our union; members still need to vote on it.
6. Reentry Director at APD recently resigned
7. Juvenile Probation Department (JPD) has a new Chief, Alan Nance.
8. JPD has a new Dept. of Human Resources Director.
9. JPD also lost their Chief Financial Officer as well.
10. DPOA's Secretary recently tendered his resignation.

## **SAN JOAQUIN**

The Department selected four probation officers to attend Taser Instructor School scheduled for October 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, and selected two probation officers and two juvenile detention officers to attend Weaponless Defense Instructor School scheduled for February of next year. The Taser will be a new use-of-force option for our probation officers, so information learned from the school will be used to craft a Taser policy. At our August Meet & Confer over a draft version of the proposed Taser policy, the

Association suggested that rather than move forward with the proposed policy, the Department should select and send officers to the instructor school in order to have them bring back relevant information on the tool and recent trends in its usage. The Department agreed and both sides now await the training and return of our officers, so that we can move forward with the introduction of the Taser as an intermediate use-of-force option. One additional update on Tasers, the Department chose not to purchase the Taser models with the camera attachment. The Tasers we'll use will be the standard X-26 Taser *without* any special attachments.

In our other Meet & Confers, both sides reached agreement on a revised transportation policy, a new CCW policy for retirees, and a revised discipline policy. Through our Labor Management meetings we were able to finally close the book on setting up a security screening station staffed by outside security, so that those coming into our Adult Probation building could be screened prior to access to the interior of the building. The Department also made a decision to allow probation officers to again be allowed carry knives on their person, after a decision several years ago by our previous chief to not allow knives.

Lastly, our Association completed its annual survey of the Department. 59% of our members responded to the survey, which is up from 40% in 2012. Their input underscored the need for improvements in working conditions and better leadership from department executives. The chief's score, along with most all of the other categories were down from last year's survey. Trust between members and department administrative staff remained a critical issue. Trust for division-level managers improved slightly, but still fell well below average. Members gave their lowest scores of the 2013 survey to the Department for officer support in the event of a critical incident. Additionally, they were once again highly critical of promotional fairness within the Department. At the end of August, we made a presentation to the chief and one of her managers. Since that meeting, the chief's tone has changed for the better. We remain hopeful that positive changes can be made to the Department, including workloads for staff and appropriate follow through by department managers and administrators.

## **SAN LUIS OBISPO**

Our Chief has approved long guns and pending DOJ issues we would like to start out with AR-15's to the specialty units. If these issues are not resolved then we will start with Shotguns to the same units.

We have an ongoing Wanted Bulletin that we distribute weekly internally and to other local law enforcement agencies. This has led to quite an increase in clearing these warrants and ongoing collaboration with these agencies. We have also assigned our Senior Field Training Officer to collaborate with these allied local law enforcement agencies, attend their briefings and coordinate field activities in which probation can lend a supporting hand. His title is the PRCS (Post Release Community Supervision) Liaison but he is so very much more :)

There has been a substantial increase in the number of reports our Investigation Officers are responsible for completing. We are hoping to have additional lighting for our lower parking area as well as to put new windows in the Solariums. These funds will be made available from Capitol Improvement Funds.

In regards to staffing, we are currently fully staffed. We have 55 Deputy Probation Officers, 6 Deputy Probation Officer III's, 14 Supervising Deputy Probation Officers (3 are assigned to our Juvenile Hall), 4

Chief Deputies and one Deputy Chief. In our Juvenile Hall Facility we have 23 Juvenile Services Officers and 6 Juvenile Services Officer III's.

Currently our Juvenile Hall staff incurs a cut in pay when becoming a DPO. Efforts are underway to remove this significant cut in pay and progress has been made.

We currently do not have a contract and are hopeful our upcoming meeting will resolve this issue.....

Trivia: Our Adult Probation Department Building use to be a Tuberculosis Sanitarium. There is one Solarium located at each end of the building with Solarium windows and fireplaces (no longer functional) that were used to heat the Solariums. This small fact makes it real interesting coming in from the field at odd hours, odd noises.....old building. :)

## **SANTA CRUZ**

### **Staffing:**

A new hiring process has begun for DPO I. They are currently in testing phase. Minor rotations will occur within the next couple weeks.

### **Furloughs and negotiations**

The current contract is due to expire in December 2013. However, after the County imposed additional furloughs, SCCPOA decided to begin bargaining earlier than anticipated. The negotiation team has met three times. The original contract indicated furloughs would cease on June 21, 2013. The County imposed an addition 29.06 hours to be used between June 22<sup>nd</sup> and Sept 29<sup>th</sup>. While negotiating a new contract, the county imposed additional 52 furlough hours. SCCPOA has filed a grievance against the county for imposing additional hours against the contract. The County had indicated it is their right to impose furloughs for a period of time. The next scheduled meeting is October 31,2013. The negotiating team consist of four board members and two association member. Per the MOU, furloughs were to cease on June 21<sup>st</sup>

### **Training**

SCCPOA continues to struggle regarding officer safety trainings. When trainings have occurred, not all staff have been allowed to attend trainings.

### **Equipment**

The department has been updating and implementing policies and procedures. Staff were provided with department issued handcuffs, handcuff keys, and search gloves within the past month. SCCPOA will be requesting more equipment of the department during negotiations.

## **SOLANO**

Greetings from Solano County,

While visions abound for the future of Solano Probation, execution is still a work in progress. The ideas appear to be flowing faster than the ability to effectively implement the changes. This is resulting in what feels like chaos and confusion to many. Our members are doing a remarkable job of rolling with

the punches, and we continue to do the best we can at keeping morale on the high end of the spectrum. Change is never easy, but having NO idea where the whirlwind will end is very scary to many.

We continue to hire both Group Counselors and Probation Officers, and the new faces are welcome. It is about time they started to arrive. We continue to implement Evidenced Based Cognitive Behavioral groups to our Adult Offenders, our Center for Positive Change is beginning to receive referrals, and we are nearing the end of planning for a new treatment pod in our institution.

Negotiations have begun, so wish us luck.

Officer safety concerns are again at the forefront as we have had several assaults on staff at our Juvenile Detention Facility, as well as threats made against both Group Counselors and Probation Officers. Weapons continue to be found during PRCS searches, and a knife was brought into our Center for Positive Change. The need for proper equipment and policies have again made their way to the top of the Association's bucket list to include such things as OC spray in the institution, contraband/weapon screening at our Center for Positive Change, partial arming for Probation Officers, and intermediate levels of force for both if possible.

We thank everyone for their responses to our informational requests, as all information received is extremely helpful. At the end of the day we all just want to go home so we appreciate your willingness to assist us.

Till next time.....Stay safe my friends.

## **VENTURA**

Greetings from Ventura! On 10/10/13, our agency concluded its first Tri-Counties DPO Core with twenty Deputy Probation Officers participating from Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. Congratulations to the graduates!

### **Contract update:**

Since our contract expired this past June, we have had several months of exasperating negotiations. VCPPOA continues to educate the community on our profession and the effects that AB109 has had on our working conditions and public safety. We just mailed our second informative newsletter to county stakeholders and had over a third of our members attend a recent Board of Supervisors meeting. It was great to see the solidarity of our members and the sea of blue association shirts filling the room. Our Agency's executive team has failed to support us at the table by voicing their opinion that field caseloads, institution populations, and crime rates are at an all-time low, even though the majority of other county law enforcement agencies are seeing spikes in their crime rates related to AB109 clients. Although the County Board of Supervisors continues to verbally praise our member's merits, they continue to fall short at the table. The County has expressed that they are close to offering all that they are willing to offer. One could look at that statement as a negotiation's tactic. Unfortunately, given the County's history of poor contract proposals for all employee groups, this statement is likely true.

VCPPOA will be focusing its attention on preparation for impasse and the "fact-finding" process with a mediator. Additionally, we will also be preparing our membership for future job actions and post-impasse events. The VCPPOA Board of Directors has taken great pride in "leading by example" and being professional in all that we do. We know we must either fight for what we believe in or settle for whatever is being offered. Since we are not interested in settling, we have committed to fighting as hard and as long as we can for our membership. We will be asking the membership to get more involved and to continue to trust in our leadership.

#### Annual Management Survey:

For the past three years, VCPPOA has sponsored an annual evaluation of the executive management leadership of the Agency. In 2011 & 2012, approximately 1/3 of our membership participated in this survey. While the results were reflective of what was believed to be the majority of the membership, many members of the VCPA executive team felt otherwise. The survey results were criticized by various executive managers for the lack of participation by our members. As a result, very little changed in the behavior and leadership of the VCPA executive team, with a few exceptions.

The VCPPOA Board of Directors realized the challenges of increasing member participation in the VCPA leadership survey. We set out to improve communication with our members by collecting over 215 personal email addresses, by sending out regular emails pertaining to Agency issues, and by reaching out to our members in person. As a result, our members answered the call and delivered the level of participation that VCPPOA had hoped for; nearly 70%. The survey once again confirmed that the majority of the membership felt that the VCPA executive management team was not performing their jobs at an acceptable level. Detailed results have been tabulated and presented to the Chief Probation Officer and County officials. VCPPOA remains hopeful that the VCPA executive management team will finally acknowledge the validity of the leadership survey results.