

# SCOPO ROUND TABLE REPORTS

## AUGUST 2014

### CONTRA COSTA

We recently had a mass exodus from the Probation Department due to retirements. 9 Probation Officers and 1 Chief Deputy Probation Officer took advantage of their ability to utilize their terminal pay (unused accruals) to enhance their final calculation for their pensions. Chief Deputy, Paula Hernandez, found a new home and is currently the Chief Deputy Probation Officer in San Francisco County Probation.

Contra Costa County Peace Officers have been able to take advantage of this benefit for a long time, which is due to their inflated pension contributions of 22%. Unfortunately, because of the recent pension reform, this practice of SPIKING was deemed illegal and was abolished by a Contra Costa County Superior Court Judge. As a consolation, the presiding judge agreed to allow those who were able to retire, the ability to take advantage of the enhancement, but had to retire no later than July 10, 2014. Anyone retiring after that date was out of luck. PPOA President Rich Berkery was one of the Retiree's and passed the reigns of Presidency to V.P. Leandre Williams on an interim basis, until an election can be held. Congrats to Rich and his future endeavors. Rich will still represent Contra Costa County Probation on the SCOPO Executive Board.

Contra Costa County will be celebrating a 1-year Anniversary in October of having an armed component within the Department. Chief Kader, who came from the heavily armed Fresno County Probation, and his administrative team were instrumental in collaborating with the Sheriff's Department for arming and training. Currently, the Department has 1 armed Supervisor, 14 armed Adult Probation Officers and 3-armed Juvenile Hall Transportation Counselors. The Department will possibly be looking into another phase of arming, which could include some Juvenile Deputies, who are supervising serious offenders, and Adult Probation Officers.

We have been in the "Dark Ages" with our current case management system, but there is light at the end of the tunnel. The county recently purchased a new case management system, CAPITA, which should be completely operational sometime next year. This would accommodate the Department's needs, is user friendly system and should make the day-to-day operations within the Department much easier.

Congratulations and the best of luck is extended to the following Probation Peace Officers, who recently retired: Cathy Lysaght, Suzi Hibbard, Edy Elias, Angelo Moreno, Helena Flanders, Rick Meiseles, Eric Montoya and Rita Dreher.

## **KERN**

Kern County's 2014-2015 Budget is set for final approval at the end of the month. The County had a carryover of 25 million to cover additional budget request by the Sheriff's Department and District Attorney's office. The County Supervisors had all other departments with a 5% step-down from their 2013-2014 budgets.

Kern County Probation is in the process of hiring 45 new Deputy Probation Officers. The Department is having interviews this week to fill the first 30 positions. The plan is fill the vacant position that includes a complete unit of line staff for Mandatory Supervision. There is a possibility of creating another AB109 Unit as well.

The recruitment for the Chief's position closed on July 31st. The interviews will be over the next couple of months to be completed by November.

## **MADERA COUNTY**

We have resumed negotiations with the County this month. The County's new offer is for a three-year contract with a 2% raise over the life of the contract. They are also requesting employees pick up 10% of their medical cost. Currently the County covers 100% for the employee only. The County currently covers 100% of our PERS retirement. They are offering to give a 7% raise in exchange for the employee paying the 9% for the PERS retirement. We showed the County negotiator that we are paid an average of 20% less than other counties of similar size. Our counter offer to the County was for more money.

The juvenile Hall is still having problems maintaining staff. Due to the low pay, it is difficult to maintain employees. Detention officers are leaving our facility to work for other facilities that receive more pay. Probation officers are working overtime shifts in the juvenile Hall due to staff shortages.

Maryann Dawkins was chosen by the department as the officer the year. Dawkins is a probation officer that was assigned to our day reporting program. She is currently on leave attending the Air Force reserve boot camp in Texas.

## **MERCED**

- Contract expired on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Negotiations continue.
- Juvenile Facility hired several new staff members.
- Probation in the process of hiring 4 to 6 DPO's
- Filled a vacant SPO position.
- Moral on the Facility and Probation can be described as interesting

## **MONO**

Negotiations with the County are ongoing. The Probation Unit has been without a contract since December 31, 2013. It could easily be two years without a contract before we will reach an agreement. The county has asked for cuts, but the union is trying to get the County to recognize the increased responsibility from AB109. We recently had an officer leave our department and we are in the process of filling the position.

## **MONTEREY**

Monterey County Probation Association is currently working on amending the bi-laws and making changes to allow us to be a more productive group. We are working on transitioning into E-voting.

AB 109 has had a tremendous impact on probation and we continue to collaborate with various agencies to ensure the success in realignment.

New juvenile hall is in the works and it should be move-in ready in 2019 and completed by 2020.

## **ORANGE:**

- O.T. up in the institutions.  
OCEA General Manager Nick Bernardino retiring August 2015.  
BPOC class of 14 out and in the field.  
No new hiring for at least 16-18 months.  
26 out on Workman's Comp from the institutions (or 10% of our staff).

## **SAN JOAQUIN**

We've been in negotiations with the County since February, and are currently working without a contract; which expired June 30<sup>th</sup>. It's been over a month since the County and our Association met, and we're not sure when we'll next meet. Conceptually we agree to paying the remainder of our Retirement COLA Cost Share, moving to an 80/20 split across the board on medical premium costs, and moving to a General Purpose Revenue (GPR) system for wage adjustments. If agreement is reached, the biggest change for us would be the switch to a GPR based system for wage adjustments. Essentially, if the County's GPRs are up we'll receive a percentage of that increase in

the form of a wage adjustment. If the County's GPRs are down we wouldn't receive a wage adjustment. Seems like a fair formula, but when we told the County we were open to the idea and called their bluff the County appeared to shy away from the idea. It's our belief that the County's revenues will be up over the next several years, and at this time the County is only interested in building up their reserves and padding their coffers. Where does that leave us? We are prepared to go without a contract until next year if necessary; only time will tell if we'll be able to get a contract ratified before year's end.

We have several Meet & Confers that remain outstanding; including: Tasers and work hours. We haven't met since May and July is nearly over. Unfortunately, the Department has drug their feet on getting a date set for our next Meet & Confer and Labor Management meetings. Lastly, we are still waiting on the Department to present a revised critical incident protocol policy as the current one is outdated and needs revision.

All, but one of our endorsed candidates won in their June primary election. Several won outright and will be headed to their new offices beginning January 2015. Two, Jim Cooper for State

Assembly, District 9 and James Mousalimas for San Joaquin County Superintendent, will be headed to the November runoff election.

## **SANTA CRUZ**

Santa Cruz County now has a new Assistant Chief. He was the director of the adult division, and that position is now vacant. He has been one of the architects of the data driven process now in place at the department. The department is driving forward to reduce the high caseloads and to implement contact standards. The pretrial unit is involved on a national pilot project through the Laura and John Arnold Foundation to implement the new risk assessment tool, PSA Court. Our Juvenile Hall will have a new facility built by next year. Additionally, the juvenile division is still in the process of implementing the risk and needs assessment tool. The department has hired a few probation aides, and a long time supervisor is retiring.

We have now been authorized to carry OC spray, and we have been authorized to wear duty belts. We are in the process of ordering the belts and the OC spray will be issued later this year. Apparently officers must be approved to carry spray, however the policy is being written. The department has "pool" protective vests on order for each of the probation facilities. The vests may be checked out by PO's. The intensive and other specialized positions have already been issued vests.

## **SOLANO**

Greetings from Solano County

On the Probation side, we continue to move forward with the initial Arming of a small portion of our Department. A consultant has provided a final draft of an arming policy which was submitted to a committee for comments. At this time, the Department is looking at arming, on a voluntary basis, our Search team and our PRCS unit. Carry for the PRCS unit will be concealed. Carry for our Search team will be open carry and it appears our Department may also be looking at providing tazers to this team, to use as an intermediate level of force. We continue in our efforts to hire line staff, but are still finding recruitments yield small results with regards to qualified candidates who can pass the background checks.

Things in our institution are not running quite as smooth. Our new Superintendent started in April and struggles for our members abound. The Association is diligently working to establish a relationship with the new Management that will yield some positive results. Differing communication styles and conflicting expectations are slowing this process some. We continue to be hopeful that as we explain our position and demonstrate a desire to form a relationship which benefits both the Department and our members things will improve.

With new Management, comes changes, and changes are not always easy. Confusion and low morale is on the rise due to what appears to be an overall lack of communication from Management to Supervisors to line staff. Staff are lacking confidence and many don't know who to believe, or who to trust. This will take time to rebuild. In addition to this, our Institutional staff are having difficulties getting time off due to Management's desire to "reduce overtime." From their perspective, the "bottom line" is more important to Management than themselves as staff. This, too, is crushing morale.

The Association is working on formatting a 12 hour shift pattern, for our Institution staff, which we hope will solve some of these issues. Once we have a proposed schedule formulated, we will take it to our Institutional members for one final vote to see if the majority of them are still interested. If so, we will work with Management to implement a pilot run to see how it works for everyone.

At this point, we just continue to move forward, one small step at a time.

Until next time..... Stay safe my friends.

**STANISLAUS**

The Stanislaus County Deputy Probation Officers Association has begun negotiations with the County. Key items to the talks include: salary restoration, equity pay and incentive pay.

The Department has implemented a 10-week FTO program, with completion of the program being a mandate for all new hires. The SCDPOA is seeking compensation for all training officers.

Stanislaus County Probation Corrections Officers and Deputy Probation Officers are currently working without a contract since June 30, 2014. Negotiations began late due to other bargaining units struggling to come to an agreement with the county. We are currently in our fifth year of a 5% pay reduction and our 7th year without pay increases. Probation Corrections Officers are making attempts to convince the county to change our current 6/3 schedule to a 4/10 schedule. We currently are working a schedule that pays us for hours worked during that pay period. Pay periods are sometimes 64 hours, 72 hours, 80 hours and 86 hours. On short pay periods officers need to pick up additional shifts or supplement from their vacation time to make up hours. Due to staffing shortages Deputy Probations Officers are able to pick up shifts in the institutions, outside their normal working hours. This has helped to cut back on Corrections Officers being mandated for shifts at a high rate. The majority of the units in Juvenile hall and the Juvenile Commitment Facility are currently running with one staff per unit. This has also helped to cut back on mandates also. The low staffing numbers has placed a lot of stress on staff during emergency situations.

## **VENTURA COUNTY**

On 6/25/14, an unprecedented 95% of the voting probation membership (Deputy Probation and Corrections Services Officers) rejected the county's Last, Best and Final Offer (LBFO); two hundred six (206) "NO" votes to only eleven (11) "YES" votes. The Patrol Unit (Airport Operations Officers, Harbor Patrol Officers, and Park Rangers) did vote to ratify the offer for their members.

The LBFO included a back-loaded 4% across the board pay increase over a three year contract, a "market-based adjustment" according the county's inaccurate salary survey calculations that would only yield a 1% pay raise for members, and minor increases to flexible health care contributions.

Newsletters and newspaper articles are still being used to help educate county stakeholders and the public regarding the impacts of AB109 to the community.

The VCPPOA Board of Directors continues to recommend and implement job actions. Cognizant of not further impacting member and community safety, members have shown a tremendous amount of support during this endeavor. Morale has hit rock bottom in the probation agency with the majority of members struggling to comprehend the lack of understanding from our agency management and Board of Supervisors.

On 7/15/14, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors issued a proclamation recognizing National Probation Week. The membership responded by attending the meeting wearing the association's "Don't Cut Corners on Public Safety" t-shirts. Members refused to applaud Chief Varela's acceptance of the proclamation and refused to take any photographs with the Board of Supervisors and agency management.

On 7/22/14, the membership attended a scheduled Board of Supervisors meeting in an effort to keep pressure on the county. Several members and association board members made statements during the public comments portion of the meeting. However, Chief Varela, agency management, and county labor relations managers were on hand and called on by the Board of Supervisors to counter our statements. As expected, they refuse to acknowledge the relevant issues. The county and agency management continue to believe everything is alright and there is no need to address the fact that we are in last place, eight-out-of-eight, in total compensation compared to the other seven southern California probation departments. They also believe that there have been no negative impacts since AB109.

The membership and VCPPOA board of directors are patiently waiting for a date for the non-binding fact finding process.

On the lighter side, the agency opened a staff gym on 7/1/14 which is available 24/7 to all probation and corrections staff. The gym is located at our Juvenile Justice Facility in Oxnard and is full of brand new, state of the art equipment.

On 7/12/14, several VCPPOA members and management staff participated in the first Ventura County Walk like MADD 5K event. VCPPOA was proud to help sponsor this MADD event and to bring awareness to the community of the impacts of drunk driving.

## **YUBA**

Yuba County Probation recently hired two Juvenile Hall group counselors who are currently in the process of attending Juvenile Counselor Core Course.

Yuba County Probation management continues to work hard to maintain our Juvenile Division in compliance with Title IV-E. Line staff has been advised that we will be audited in the future.

YCPPOA recently contracted with IQ web page to help us set up our website. It is in the early stages and we hope to have it up and running in the very near future so that our members can access emails, union related information and links to SCOPO, PORAC, and Mastagni. Thank you San Diego County Probation Officers Association with your assistance with this.

Our revised Bylaws have been completed and are waiting for approval by the membership.

YCPPOA donated funds to the Bash Against Cancer Softball Tournament which helped raise money for a local child in need of assistance with medical costs.

YCPPOA donated funds to the Yuba County Friends of Drug Court, a local organization that provides assistance to participants of the Drug Court program.

YCPPOA is sponsoring the Yuba County Probation Department back to school lunch potluck. We are donating hamburgers and hot dogs and providing raffle prizes for those that bring with them back to school supplies that will be donated to our local schools.

The Yuba County Probation department is working towards revising the policy and procedure manual. After a year of being revised by human resources and county counsel it has been forwarded to YCPPOA for review and acceptance by our members.