

# Core and Consulting Joint Committee Meeting Safe Haven: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant

Wednesday, January 21, 2015 at 12:30 p.m.

Emergency Operations Center, Building 3, 1769 E. Moody Blvd., Bunnell, FL 32110



## Agenda

### Attendees:

- Judge Raul Zambrano, Committee Chair (7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, Flagler County)
- Commissioner Barbara Revels, Committee Vice-Chair (Commission Flagler County)
- Judge Sharon B. Atack (Retired)
- Trish Gaiccone (Executive Director, Family Life Center)
- Eric Losciale (Director Harmony House, CHS)
- Stewart Maxcy (Program Coordinator Sally Safe Haven)
- Kim Pleasants (Executive Director, CHS)
- Abby Romaine (Volunteer, Safe Haven Grant)
- Sally Sherman (Deputy County Administrator)
- Danielle Stansbury (Director of Programs, Domestic Abuse Council)
- Robert Sterner (Family Court Services Mgr)
- Arnold Anderson ( DCF)
- Carla Harris (CBC Volusia/Flagler)
- Christine Davenport CHS)
- K Vazquez ( Flagler County Sheriff's office)
- Karen Wells-Headley (Children's Advocacy)
- Katrina Townsend (Flagler County Schools)
- Kim Bannister (CLSMF)
- L. Blum (Flagler County Sheriff's Office)
- Mark Jones (CBC Volusia/Flagler)
- Reggie Williams (Children's Advocacy)
- Susan Hiltz (CBC Volusia/Flagler)
- T. Barrett (SMA Behavioral)
- Terri Karol (Children's Advocacy)
- C Bell (SMS Behavioral)

### Agenda Topics

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Chair Comments
5. Visitation Center
  - a. Facility updates
  - b. Facility needs
6. Program Update
7. Committee Comments
8. Public Comments
9. Next Meeting - TBD
10. Adjournment

Judge Zambrano

Stewart Maxcy

Kim Pleasants

## **Core Partner Meeting- Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grant Minutes**

**October 20, 2014**

**Members Present:** Judge Raul Zambrano, Committee chair (7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, Flagler County), Eric Losciale (Director Harmony House, Children's Home Society), Abby Romaine (Volunteer Safe Havens Grant, Flagler County), Robert Sterner (Family Court Services Manager, 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Court), Kim Pleasants (Executive director, Children's Home Society)

**Members absent:** Judge Sharon Atack (Retired), Trish Giaccone (Executive Director, Family Life Center), Danielle Stansbury (Director of Programs, Domestic Abuse Council)

**Staff Present:** Sally Sherman (Deputy County Administrator, Flagler County)

**Guest:** None

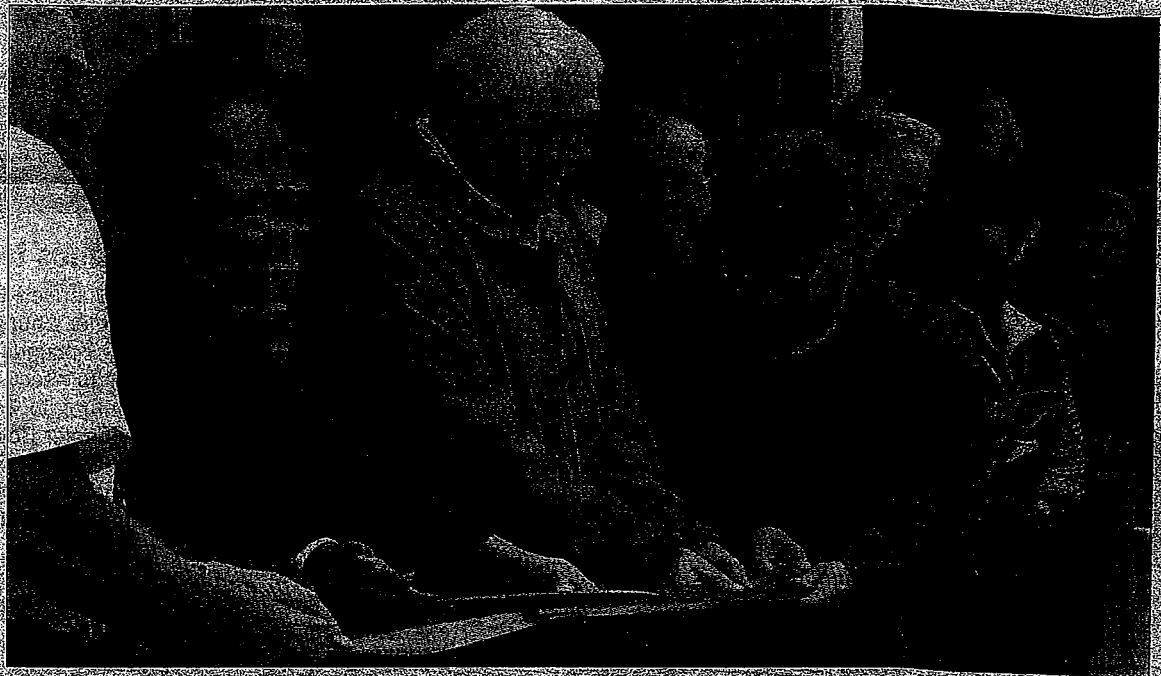
1. Pledge of Allegiance- The meeting was called to order at 12:45 with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Chairman Judge Zambrano
2. Roll Call by Judge-verbal roll call showed a quorum was present
3. Approval of minutes: done
4. Chair Comments- "We are getting close and looking at November"
  - a. Facility name: Sally's Safe Haven
5. Visitation Update: Sally Sherman
  - a. The meeting was held at the new facility. Updates were provided regarding construction, furniture, donated and purchased items.
  - b. Program Coordinator was hired; Stewart Maxcy
6. Core Committee Comments:

- a. Information about Safe Haven needs to be sent out to the judges. In addition, notification needs to go to Volusia, Flagler, Putnam, and St John's County attorneys.
- b. Invoicing and federal payment for service hours, not families, was discussed.
- c. Panic buttons, security cameras, and local authority notification was discussed.
- d. A date for the ribbon Cutting Ceremony was determined; December 8<sup>th</sup>, 11:30

7. Public comment: no public attendees

8. Next meeting: TBD

9. Adjournment



County Commissioners **Barbara Revels**, **Frank Meeker** and **Nate McLaughlin** celebrate the opening of a new facility, which will give a safe place for estranged parents to exchange their children for visitations. Jonathan Simmons

banner day By Jonathan Simmons | News Editor

# Sally's Safe Haven

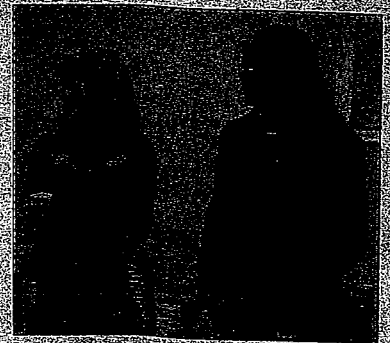
The facility is funded by a \$400,000 domestic violence grant.

In the past, when a Flagler County parent was barred from unsupervised visits with their child, the two would either have to travel to Volusia County to see each other in a court-approved visitation facility, or not visit at all. Parents who swapped children for visits but had a history of domestic violence with each other had used the flag pole outside the county courthouse as a makeshift neutral meeting place, because there wasn't any better option within the county. That's about to change.

With a ribbon-cutting cere-

mony Monday, Dec. 8, attended by officials from the county and the cities of Palm Coast, Flagler Beach and Bunnell, Flagler County opened Sally's Safe Haven, a roughly 2,000-square-foot visitation facility near the corner of State Road 100 and U.S. 1 in Bunnell.

It will begin opening three days per week in the coming month, Children's Home Society of Florida Associate Executive Director Kim Pleasants said, and will probably host about six



Flagler County Sheriff's Office Corrections Division Director **Becky Quintieri** and Flagler County Deputy Administrator **Sally Sherman**

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visits a day. The Children's Home Society will run the center.

"This provides a safe place for kids to visit with the offending parent and for the victim parent to be present," Pleasants said. "The whole purpose really is to provide a quality visit and for there to be relationship building."

Families will come to the center through a judge's order from family court, she said. In the future, the center will expand its hours and possibly also begin hosting supervised visits of foster children with their birth parents.

The center has three rooms for different ages and two entrances for parents who are not permitted contact with each other. Toys and children's books line the shelves, and the walls are painted in cheery pastels.

Though modest, the center, housed in a county-owned building at 103 State Road 100, was a long time coming. It was conceived three years ago, said Flagler County Deputy Administrator Sally Sherman — who's hard work to make it a reality placed her name in the center's title — but the county only recently received the \$400,000 federal grant that will allow it to open and operate.

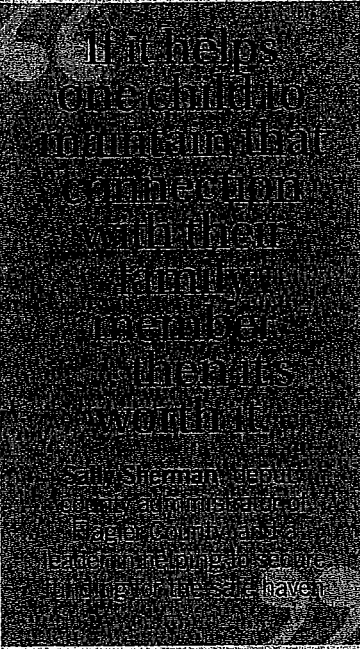
The initiative started with Judge Raul Zambrano when he worked in Flagler County. "It came as a result of a tragic

event, a case that I had where I had no place to send a mother to visit with her children on a Thanksgiving eve," he said. "As it turned out, my bailiff at the time, Julie Martin, decided to take this mother to her house, and the children to the bailiff's home so they could have visitation on Thanksgiving day. And I can tell you this: Not a Thanksgiving goes by where I don't remember what happened on that day, because it became very meaningful to me roughly about three weeks later when that mother passed away, and all I could think was going back to that day when she got to see her children on Thanksgiving because my bailiff decided it's important that mom sees her child on that day. That's what brought to my attention the need for a facility such as this."

Zambrano was on the Public Safety Coordinating Committee, chaired at the time by County Commissioner Barbara Revels. He brought the idea to Revels and to Sherman, who "picked up the ball and ran with it," he said.

Flagler County families commuting to the Volusia centers have caused long waiting lists at those facilities, Sherman said, and the commute is hard on kids and families.

"At the end of the day, if it helps one child to maintain that connection with their family member ... then it's worth it," she said.



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## Safe Haven Dedication Shines Despite Weather

**December 9, 2014 Bunnell Fl.** -- Despite blustery weather and a light rain, a crowd filled the halls and rooms of Sally's Safe Haven on Monday for the dedication of the new facility.

The Safe Haven is a place for supervised visitation services allow child of adult victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, or child abuse to have parent-child contact in the presence of an appropriate third-party supervisor.

The Safe Haven is named after Sally Sherman, Deputy Flagler County Administrator who worked diligently along with Flagler County Commission Barbara Revels and others to secure the federal grant and a county facility in which to operate the program.

The need for the program was identified by Judge Raul Zambrano as part of the Public Safety Coordinating Committee, a committee consisting of law enforcement representatives, members of the judiciary and the legal system.

Judge Zambrano spoke at the dedication ceremony and he said the need was brought home to him by a situation arising out of an actual case had in Flagler County.

"It was right before Thanksgiving and a mother wanted to visit her children and there was no place for them to go," Judge Zambrano said. "My bailiff Julie Martin took the mother and the children to her home and they were able to have the visit there. Three weeks later the mother died. . . there isn't a Thanksgiving that goes by that I don't think about that. She had the opportunity to visit with her children on Thanksgiving."

"Children may not remember what you said to them," Zambrano said "but they will remember how you made them feel."

County Administrator Craig Coffey handed out certificates to County employees who took part in creating two offices at either entrance to the facility and pastel colored rooms with furniture, toys and puzzles in each room for children.

"Nothing gets done without team work," Coffey said. "and I have a some great team members who made this transformation possible."

The Safe Haven is next door to the Bunnell branch of the Flagler County Library. At 103 East Moody Boulevard.

The creation of a Safe Haven was made possible through a \$400,000 grant provided by the Office of Violence Against Women. In divorce cases where domestic violence is an issue, parents either had to drive to Daytona Beach to exchange children or meet at the flag pole in front of the Kim Hammond Justice Center in Bunnell. The Safe Haven will provide a safe place to make the exchange with separate entrances for both parties and offer counseling and other services to parents and children.

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District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Charles Ericksen, Jr.	Frank Meeker	Barbara Revels	Nate McLaughlin	George Hanns

The Safe Haven's name sake, Deputy County Administrator Sally Sherman, was pleased with the results of the renovation and construction. She was complimented by everyone who spoke for her dogged determination to keep the project alive and secure the federal funds.

"If it helps one child maintain the connection with family members, it will be worth the effort," Sherman said.

The program will be operated by The Children's Home Society on behalf of Flagler County. The Children's Home Society also operates visitations centers in Daytona Beach and in DeLand.

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