

JUVENILE JUSTICE DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COMMISSION

Minutes of Commission Meeting

Thursday, April 27, 2023

Location: Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors—Conference Room
105 East Anapamu Street, 4th Floor; Santa Barbara, CA 93101

ATTENDANCE

Present

Gabriela Ferreira
John Forhan
Barbara Kate Repa
Donna Tanney

Absent

Lynn Houston

Also present: Sam Leach, Deputy Chief Probation Officer-Facilities

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m.

Probation Office Report

Leach explained the new Probation Chief, Holly Benton, was unable to attend the meeting. He gave a brief update on the supervised population, which has fluxuated some:

36 youth at the JJC; 7 at the Camp; 3 females at STRTPs

?—Forhan asked whether the JJDPC could advocate for more beds for mental health treatment. Leach said STRTPs are under the same foster care umbrella as child welfare.

?—Tanney expressed concern about the shortage of STRTPs in Santa Barbara County—and asked what can be done about it.

Leach said that individuals, including family members, need to be trained to be certified fosters. He said STRTP residents—most often high need and high risk—often perceive a disconnect between their needs and staff that is paid to “fix” them. Tanney argued that the current training is inadequate. A discussion of the problem ensued.

?—Repa asked for an update on remodeling and repurposing the physical facility at the JJC.

Leach said progress on the remodel project of Units 1, 2 and 3 has slowed greatly since—and repair work continues on Unit 5, which was damaged during last year’s uprising. The yard is getting done, with an Astroturf sporting field for exercise. There was discussion about adding a garden space, though no specific plans for one. Leach reported it is currently unclear when the redesigned JCC facility will open, and the Camp will close—likely to be a delay from the original target of July 1, 2023. He mentioned that residents’ experiences at the Camp are

currently diminished, as the place is much less robust. There was a lengthy discussion of the challenges of providing individualized treatment and services.

?—Forhan lamented that the public has a misperception of the reality—that youth crime is down, and that there needs to be education that the system is actually functioning much better than it used to function.

?—Repa asked about progress in planned programming—particularly the music program Lynn Houston has been advocating.

Leach said there is currently no space for it, and the current emphasis is on staffing levels. Other obstacles are scheduling during weekdays, when residents are already busy with programs and activities—as well as cost.

He emphasized there will be separate entrances for high-risk and low-risk youth, in addition to “a lot of exposure to options” in new programming.

Discussion on the Search for New Commissioners

One application recently came in; the applicant will be invited to attend the next meeting.

Repa agreed to provide a brief paragraph of JJDPC members’ duties for commissioners to post and include in solicitations to individuals who may be interested in joining the JJDPC.

Specific commitments:

- Forhan to solicit potential interest from past and current students
- Houston to post at NPRN, a digital hub for Santa Barbara nonprofits
- Ferreira to query a local lawyer with experience representing youth who showed interest in the past
- Repa to contact Juvenile Justice professors at SBCC and UCSB and check into posting on VolunteerMatch.com.

Presenters for Future Meetings

One possibility is a representative from foster training and recruitment; Leach agreed to help locate representatives.

For the May meeting: Forhan agreed to secure a speaker from CALM (lm4kids.org), which provides individual therapy, home visitation, parenting classes, postpartum support, group therapy and support and mental health consultation—generally for clients up to 21 years old.

JJDPC Email

Ferreira to check into functioning of JJDPC.SBCounty@gmail.com, will either forward a password to commissioners or connect through their individual email addresses.

Consideration of Minutes

Minutes from the March 23, 2023 meeting were approved unanimously.

Closed Session

There was no closed session at this meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

The next JJDPC meeting will be on May 25, 2023, beginning at 10 am at the Board of Supervisors Conference Room, Santa Barbara

###