

JUVENILE JUSTICE DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COMMISSION

Minutes of Commission Meeting Thursday, July 28, 2022 Location: Meeting held via Zoom

ATTENDANCE

Present

John Celichowski
Gabriela Ferreira
Lynn Houston
Barbara Kate Repa
Donna Tanney

Absent

None

Also present: Kim Shean, Deputy Chief Probation Officer
Barton Clark, Deputy Probation Office Supervisor

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m.

Ferreira communicated the commissioners' preferences to keep Probation's future overviews to approximately 15 minutes to accommodate other topics of discussion during monthly meetings.

Probation Office Report

Presented by Kim Shean and Barton Clark

Shean reminded that it is nearing the time for the inspection cycle, and urged setting a timeframe for upcoming inspections of the Camp and JJC—made a little trickier due to the most recent COVID surge; both facilities are currently under quarantine.

She also reported that Melinda Barrera had been hired as a third deputy chief, with oversight authority for juvenile services; Barrera is slated to begin on September 6. JJDPC members had earlier reviewed her resume, recommending her as qualified. (Shean's role will then revert to overseeing the juvenile facilities.)

Clark reported on some of the programs in place at the JJC and Camp.

ARISE targets youth with gang intervention needs. He says the program, launched last year, teaches "core life skills"—including problem-solving, critical thinking, empathy, decision-making and self-awareness. Clark says youth enjoy this type of interactive curriculum, which is facilitated by probation officers—facilitating bonding between them and the youth in the program.

Probate is also finalizing a contract for a Reentry Navigator who will be working with those who have longer-term commitments. The last six to nine months of commitment, they'll connect with the navigator, taken from a community-based organization, who will "hold their hands" continuing up to six months after their release.

Finally, Shean reported forward movement in developing the green space in Unit 3 at JJC—part of the state grant received for secure Barrera-Cross track youth. A project manager has been hired.

Questions

?—Lynn Houston whether commissioners could receive more information about the ARISE Program—specifically the services currently being offered. *Shean promised to send a link and documentation.*

?—Lynn Houston asked for more information about the navigator. Shean said it will be a staffperson from a new partner One Community Action, though the individual has not yet been chosen. The navigator will be working inside the facility with those committed for more than a year, working on reentry and relapse prevention plans, then troubleshooting and mentoring after release.

?—Ferreira sought clarification that the navigator services are only available to those serving more than a year. Shean said the available funding is earmarked for secure track youth who have longer sentences, so they are being targeted in the initial pilot program. May also apply to repeat offenders.

?—Houston asked whether the navigator’s supervision could be extended longer than six months after release if needed. Shean said it could, but more likely, the youth would be “handed off” to another organization such as FFA (Foster Family Agency).

?—Repa asked whether there is an update on the working groups announced at the last “listening forum” on the Boys’ Camp status. Shean said there will be a link sent out for a meeting to be held on the evening of August 24.

In the meantime, Shean said Probation has been meeting with those who have lived experience who have been reaching out—including Cheech Raygoza and others at the B.I.G.E. (Beyond Incarceration: Greater Education) Club, Freedom to Choose, and soon will be meeting with Freedom for Youth.

Several commissioners expressed optimism that the two groups were meeting.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

JJCC Meetings

Ferreira reiterated that it may be beneficial for JJDPC commissioners to attend the monthly JJCC meetings or look at minutes, which are posted. (Next one: August 12.) She sent commissioners a link to the meeting schedule.

New Commissioners

John Forhan has been accepted as a new member of the JJDPC, which previously approved his application. The remaining step to finalize this is Forhan’s swearing-in, which must occur in Santa Maria.

There is currently another new JJDPC applicant, J’Aimee Oxton. Further discussion held, to be addressed closed session.

Sonoma County Group

Tanney reported the initial meeting of the group was productive, with good attendance from many county representatives to ferret out and group the issues of interest. Trying to narrow down the focus to one or two most compelling issues, to be addressed initially by a steering committee. Goal is to consolidate concerns, then force accountability and make changes to state laws that seem most pressing.

STRTP Inspections

- 4Kids2Kids: Now scheduled for August 26th at 2 pm. Commissioners slated to attend: Ferreira, Tanney and Repa.
- Serenity House: Celichowski recently conducted the inspection solo, and shared some observations. His general feeling was that the small facility was older—clean, but spare, with dirt front yard, but newer concrete back yard. Tanney, who has inspected there previously, says there has historically been a lack of accountability in the facility’s promise to move, which seems to be an excuse to delay the lack of improvements to the facility and programming. Celichowski described a limited discussion with one of the four residents there currently. Commissioners’ consensus: Return for another inspection within six months (January or February) to check status of promises of both moving and of making improvements. Concerns with what appears to be a difficult transition from a group home to an STRTP. Celichowski’s written report to be finalized and sent to additional authorities as required.

Public Comments

There were no additional public comments.

August JJDPC Meeting

The commissioners discussed holding the August meeting by Zoom, given the continuing COVID concerns.

Repa moved to do so; Houston seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Consideration of June Minutes

Tanney moved to accept the minutes from the June JJDPC meeting as presented.

Houston seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting continued in closed session.

Adjournment. Tanney moved to adjourn the meeting; Repa seconded.

The commissioners unanimously approved the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

The next JJDPC meeting will be on August 25, 2022, beginning at 10 am.

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