

JUVENILE JUSTICE DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COMMISSION

Minutes of Commission Meeting Thursday, August 25, 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
Erin Cross, Manager, Juvenile Court & Field Services
Carl Barnes, Deputy District Attorney, Santa Barbara County
John Forhan, Future JJDPC Commissioner

The meeting was called to order at 10:12 a.m.

Probation Office Report

Shean reported a slight trend up in the supervision population—currently about 220—with more than half the clients over age 18. She said Probation wants to focus on younger and at-risk youth.

Five referrals were recently processed for the Tara Haaland-Ford Restorative Justice Project administered by students from the Santa Barbara/Ventura Colleges of Law to serve the youth who did not qualify to be diverted earlier under the Youth Reinvestment Grant.

Probation is also proceeding with designing commitment programs at the Juvenile Justice Center. At an initial community meeting, three work groups were established:

- Employment & Vocational
- Therapeutic Services, and
- Evidence-Based Practices.

The group as a whole plans to reconvene in December to hear the work groups' preliminary proposals.

Questions

?—Houston asked whether Probation had any vision or entertainment of keeping the Boys' Camp operating.

Shean said the diminished population does not support it, so Probation will move forward with plans for Juvenile Hall, assuming the Camp be closing next June. She also mentioned there was a recent JJCC meeting at which public speakers expressed concerns about the closure and said the forum would continue as a place for people to voice their concerns.

?—Houston emphasized that she hears concerns and questions about the possibility of examining other opportunities at the Camp, given that “cement cells are a hard place to grow,” and sought clarification about whether the Camp’s closure is a “done deal.”

Shean said the Camp is going to be open “at least through next June and possibly beyond that,” but said that the response she gives to such questions is “we don’t have any kids to go there,” as Probation’s current population has either been convicted of violent crimes or is diverted. She also mentioned partner agencies that might like to offer programs there, such as the Fire Department offering a fire training program for youth.

?—Ferreira reiterated the explanation that a portion of the population is high risk, another portion comes in and out quickly or is diverted, and a third minimal portion might qualify for the Camp, and repeated the idea that perhaps other community members can come up with alternative uses of the Camp before the June closing.

?—Forhan brought up a related concern: mixing the young people who are incarcerated in both cells and dorms in the same facility—that is, those who have committed violent and non-violent offenses.

Shean said Probation’s vision is to design “dormitories” for the commitment treatment facility, but not congregate sleeping to accommodate privacy, and said there are few low-risk individuals there, so mixing the commitment treatment individuals with the general population would be unlikely. (There are currently only 19 individuals in the juvenile facility.) Those on the list to be waived to adult court would not be housed there.

?—Celichowski asked for clarification of the Boys’ Camp lease expiration. (December, 2023) He expressed the view it was “not worth the commission’s time” to spend much time on the discussion of maintaining the property, and would rather invest available money in programming.

Shean expressed some doubt that the Camp would actually close in June, given that a program manager had just been hired—and additional time would likely be required for planning and implementing the changes there.

?—Houston asked again for the budget for Juvenile Hall and Boys Camp.

Shean promised to forward.

Shean closed with a reminder of the inspections—Probation hoping to schedule them for September. (Commissioners to discuss possible dates in closed session.) She also said volunteers are being recruited to come into the facilities on weekends—i.e., music, art, religious instruction. (Potential volunteers can contact Shean or Melanie Davis.)

Explanation of how the local District Attorney’s Office handles juvenile cases, by Carl Barnes (D.A. responsible for South Santa Barbara County)

Barnes gave a comprehensive overview of the local procedures—from a citation or arrest through filing decision to final disposition. [The set of slides illustrating his discussion was subsequently distributed to the commissioners.]

Questions

?—Tanney asked specifically about how an 8-year repeat offender, now 11, would be handled by authorities.

Barnes replied that the D.A.’s “hands are tied” if an individual is under 12 and has not been convicted of a serious felony—such as murder or rape or sodomy by force. Such cases may be handled by Child Welfare or some other office.

?—Repa asked what are the biggest frustrations the D.A.’s office faces in handling cases, given the applicable legal constraints.

Barnes said there are times he wishes Probation was more proactive on cases—especially where a child is already a ward of the court and reoffends, but Probation does not bring that to the attention of the D.A. or the court.

He added that an additional frustration on the job is that a child may need additional services, but can only access them if he or she admits responsibility—understandable from a defense standpoint but sometimes gets in the way of providing needed help.

?—Houston asked Probation’s response for delaying or failing to report reoffenders.

Barnes said Probation may adopt the view that a youth is “allowed to make mistakes,” though he believes that rapid intervention is usually preferable.

?—Forhan asked about the D.A.’s relationship/consultation with Child Welfare, which he thought could be helpful in negotiations.

Barnes said there is usually not that line of communication with Child Welfare, mostly due to privacy concerns. An example of a rare overlap: a sex-trafficked girl who is also acting out in delinquent ways.

?—Ferreira mentioned it might be informative for the JJDPC to hear from the D.A. who deals with vulnerable victims at a subsequent meeting.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Next JJCC Meeting: October 7, 9-11 a.m. [LINK: <https://www.countyofsb.org/1740/Juvenile-Justice-Coordinating-Council-JJ>]

Inspection of 4 Kids 2 Kids STRTP in Carpinteria

Ferreira, Repa and Tanney will be conducting the inspection on August 26, 2022.

Public Comments

There were no additional public comments.

Consideration of July Minutes

Celichowski moved to accept the minutes from the July JJDPC meeting as presented.

Tanney seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting continued in closed session.

September JJDPC Meeting

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

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

Adjournment

Tanney moved to adjourn the meeting; Repa seconded.

The commissioners unanimously approved the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

The next JJDPC meeting will be on September 22, 2022, beginning at 10 am., to be held by Zoom.

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