

JUVENILE JUSTICE DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COMMISSION

Minutes of Commission Meeting September 22, 2022 Location: Meeting held via Zoom

ATTENDANCE

Present

John Celichowski
John Forhan
Lynn Houston
Barbara Kate Repa
Donna Tanney

Absent

Gabriela Ferreira

Also present: Kim Shean, Deputy Chief Probation Officer
Melinda Barrera, Deputy Chief-Juvenile Services

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m.

Probation Office Report

Stats from August, 2022

Shean reported a slight trend up again in the supervised population—currently 231 total

Race and gender stayed fairly constant:

87% Hispanic, 9% White, 3% Black, 1% Filipino

17% female, 83% male

Ages range from 13 years old (two individuals) to 20 (sixteen individuals)—with the majority ages 16, 17 and 18

Location: 34% Santa Barbara, 38% Santa Maria, 28% Lompoc

Bookings received from law enforcement: 12

6 new law violations

4 arrested on warrants

2 transferred in custody

Juvenile Hall

Average daily population = 24

Race: 92% Hispanic, 4% White, 4% Black

Age: Majority are 16 years old

Location: 72% Santa Maria, 16% Lompoc, 12% Santa Barbara

Boys Camp

Current population = 4 (down from 8 in June)

Race: 100% Hispanic

Age: one 15 year-old, one 16 year-old, two 17 year-olds

Location: 100% Santa Maria

STRTPs

One individual at Serenity House in Santa Maria

Questions

?—Tanney asked whether Probation still planned to place qualified individuals at the Camp.

Shean said yes, but emphasized that there were not a lot of youth in Juvenile Hall without high risk factors.

?—Houston asked whether the Camp closing date was still slated for June of 2023.

Shean said that was the original projection, but things move slowly. She reiterated Chief Heitman’s statement that if the Camp population goes down to two or three, it will not be feasible to keep it open. Lease there is set to expire in December, 2024.

?—Houston asked about the likely cause of the uptick in the supervised population.

Shean said she and Barrera planned to do a “deep dive” into the data in the week to come.

Relevant Legislation

Shean then briefly reviewed a number of relevant legislative proposals currently under consideration.

AB 503

Status: Passed both House and Senate; awaiting Governor’s approval/rejection

Proposes that the maximum length of Probation should be six months, with the possible extension of six-month increments if it is determined to be in the best interest of the young person.

?—Forhan asked whether youth groups were involved in lobbying efforts relative to the legislation

Shean said that youth groups tended to support less Probation (less justice system involvement and more community resource involvement); she acknowledged nationwide research showing very lengthy Probation involvement.

?—Forhan asked whether Probation was exercising pressure with respect to those who are heavy substance abusers and need a longer period to have supervised rehabilitation, drawing the parallel with adult supervision for two to three years to oversee sobriety

Shean opined that the problem with the current legislation related to juveniles is the lack of crime differentiation.

AB 2417

Specifies that the Youth Bill of Rights would apply to youth confined in any juvenile facility, and sets out additional monitoring and reporting requirements for ombudsmen.

Additional Topics

Shean responded to statements recorded in the minutes by a guest speaker at the last JJDP meeting, Deputy District Attorney Carl Barnes, who expressed his view that Probation is sometimes not proactive enough in cases where an individual is already a ward of the court and reoffends. She expounded on her view that Probation works proactively.

Facility Inspection Dates

Tentatively set for October 7 for the Boys Camp and October 21 for Juvenile Hall

?—Houston asked whether it is part of Probation’s program that when youth come into the system who have committed serious and violent crimes, whether their mental health is looked at seriously.

Shean says Probation contacts Behavior Wellness, staffed with three fulltime therapists who conduct mental health assessments or (Child & Adolescent Needs Assessment or CAN) and the judge has discretion to order a full psychological evaluation She added that because many of the youth will be held for a long time, it is important to monitor their mental health wellness over time.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Public Comments

There were no additional public comments.

Consideration of August Minutes

Celichowski moved to accept the minutes as presented.

Houston seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Next JJDP Meeting

The commissioners discussed holding the meeting tentatively scheduled for October 27, to be held by Zoom, given the continuing COVID concerns.

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

Some discussion of the possibility of meeting in person in the future, as well as rejiggering the upcoming meeting dates—especially given the current substantial inspections commissioners are scheduled to conduct before the year’s end.

The meeting continued in closed session.

Adjournment

Forhan moved to adjourn the meeting; Houston seconded.

The commissioners unanimously approved the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m.

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