



## COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission  
222 Paul Scannell Drive • San Mateo, CA 94402

### Minutes of the Regular Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission Meeting Tuesday, June 24, 2014 5:15 p.m. 455 County Center, Room 402, Redwood City

#### **Commissioners Present:**

Susan Swope – Chair  
Rebecca Ross – Vice Chair  
Mieke Barrows  
Marianna Klebanov  
Milton Reynolds, Emeritus  
Irv Rollins

#### **Commissioners Excused:**

Rick Boitano, Emeritus  
Moniesa Carson  
Margot Rawlins  
Al Serrato

**Unexcused:** Sandra Gomez, Michael Stark

**Staff Present:** Larry Silver, Deputy Chief Probation Officer (Institutions), Christine Villanis, Deputy Director (Probation Services)

#### **Additional Attendees:**

Brook Costello – Star Vista  
Rick Halpern – Private Defender's Office  
Anita Hegedus – Notre Dame de Namur University  
Jose Mendez - UUSM  
Lara Montoya – Notre Dame de Namur University  
Loc Nguyen, Ph.D – Human Services Agency

#### **I. Administrative Business:**

- Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m.
- Roll Call and Establish Quorum: There was no quorum.
- Agenda Review: Agenda was approved as distributed.
- Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the May 27, 2014 JJDPC meeting were not approved for lack of a quorum.

#### **II. Oral Communications**

Mr. Jose Mendez commended the Commission for their efforts toward solving problems in the community. He also expressed an interest in continuing to attend JJDPC meetings.

#### **III. Probation Remarks**

Deputy Chief Larry Silver stated that the Juvenile Hall is still short staffed because of attrition. Candidates often make it through the initial interview, but fail the background investigation and/or psychological evaluations. Deputy Chief Silver and Commissioner Ross have discussed changes in the F units. Population in the Hall remains stable, at about 85 – 100.

Commissioner Serrato asked for a description of the hiring process and whether there is an ongoing recruitment program. Deputy Chief Silver said that the hiring process is pretty standard and consists of an in-depth questionnaire; extensive reference checks, and a review of the candidate's criminal history. Once vetted, the candidate then has a physical and psychological evaluation, as well as a polygraph examination. Only about 30% of candidates pass the background check. The entire process can take 3 – 6 months. The Department maintains an active list of eligible candidates.

Asked whether salaries in San Mateo County are similar to San Francisco and Santa Clara. Deputy Chief Silver stated that they are comparable.

#### **IV. Presentation on Out of Home Placement for Youth in San Mateo County: Dr. Loc H. Nguyen**

Commissioner Swope introduced Dr. Loc Nguyen, Director of San Mateo County Children and Family Services Agency.

Dr. Nguyen began by defining a group home as any facility that provides 24-hour care and supervision to children in a structured environment. State law requires that group homes be non-profit in order to qualify for federal funding. Group home licensing, opening/closing, and compliance is overseen by Community Care Licensing (CCL), a branch of the California Department of Social Services. The group home rate (the amount the state pays per child) is determined by the child's Rate Classification Level (RCL). For example, a group home with a level 12 RCL could receive \$8,000-9,000 per child. There are 14 RCLs. California does not utilize levels 1-5, or level 13. Level 14 is the most restrictive of the levels.

Commissioner Barrows asked if 100% of the funding is AFDC foster care funding. Dr. Nguyen replied that it is, but that does not mean that every child will qualify for the full amount of federal funding available. In Child Welfare, for example, a child is eligible for federal funding if the child's family income is 60% or less of the 1996 Federal Poverty Level. There are also other County funding sources available.

Commissioner Ross asked how billing is done and whether fees are billed to the County, for which the County then seeks reimbursement. Dr. Nguyen stated the group homes never bill the feds directly. They bill through the County or State.

Commissioner Reynolds asked whether youth are individually classified with an RCL and then comingled with youth of a different RCL. Dr. Nguyen said that group homes are generally designated a single RCL and then required to serve only youth of that RCL. However, in some instances, youth with a lower RCL level are placed in a group home designated for youth of a higher RCL when there is no space at a group home at the child's classification level.

Commissioner Barrows asked if it violates a youth's rights to place him in a group home with a more restrictive RCL. Dr. Nguyen said that this is a possibility, but there might also be certain situations where the County has an agreement with a group home to provide temporary placement for children of different RCLs. Each group home is required to have a bill of rights for each child in residence.

Dr. Nguyen stated that at the time the RCL was developed, permanent foster care placement was seen as the preferred option. The objective was to stabilize the child's placement. But no funding was put in place for family engagement, mental health services, treatment or aftercare.

Commissioner Ross asked if this means that no additional federal funding is available to group homes for these additional services. Dr. Nguyen confirmed that is the case. Federal funding was intended for group home placement and stabilization only and not for additional services.

Commissioner Barrows asked if group homes have to supplement Federal funding with County funds to support youth. Dr. Nguyen affirmed that group homes are often forced to do so.

Addressing Commission concerns about the Receiving Home, Dr. Nguyen stated that there are no plans either at present, or in the near or distant future, to close the Receiving Home. However, the Commission should understand that the CCL does not classify the Receiving Home as a group home, but rather, a 24x7/30-day emergency shelter.

Commissioner Ross asked whether the Receiving Home is staffed by County employees because it is not a group home. Dr. Nguyen confirmed this, stating that as a 30-day shelter, the Receiving Home is seen as more of an extension of an assessment center. It is not a permanent placement. There have been cases where a youth was ordered into the Receiving Home, but then had to be moved because it is not a group home. There are also CCL restrictions that allow no more than a 5-year age difference between residents. If this is violated, the CCL can bring corrective action against the facility that could result in a fine, an admonishment, or instructions to shut down the facility immediately.

Dr. Nguyen also stated that another CCL restriction pertaining to the Receiving Home in particular (due to funding), is that it cannot house any youth with a probation status.

Commissioner Ross asked when these rules were established, if it was a recent change, and how the County defines a youth with 'probation status.' Dr. Nguyen replied that he was not sure when the change took place, but the restriction has more to do with funding. There have been instances where the CCL will make an exception, but only on a temporary basis. Dr. Nguyen said that he would find the wording that speaks to the Receiving Home and youth with probation status and follow up with the Commission.

Commissioner Barrows asked for clarification of rumors that the County is planning to put out an RFP to have the Receiving Home managed privately. Dr. Nguyen replied that the Receiving Home was initially designed to be a 12-bed facility, but occupancy declined steadily over the past 1-2 years. Because of the decline in occupancy, the County decided to close half of the Receiving Home and allow a group home to take over the other half and run it as an independent facility. The CCL approved this, under the stipulation that there be different addresses and that the two entities be physically separated. However, in part because the group home could not accept probation youth (because of its being in the same building as the Receiving Home) it chose to shut down. HSA/Child Welfare is now looking into the possibility of turning the other half of the Receiving Home into an under 24-hour assessment center, but the restrictions pertaining to youth with probation status would still apply.

## **V. Court Remarks**

Judge Etezadi was unable to attend because court was still in session.

## **VI. Committee Reports**

### **a. Inspections Committee (Swope/Carson)**

Commissioner Carson provided a sign-up sheet for this year's inspections to be circulated during the meeting for people to indicate which facility they will be inspecting. Rise and Mac Group Homes will be added to the sign-up sheet. Commissioner Carson sent inspection guidelines to Stephanie Ross that will be disseminated electronically to the Commission. Commissioner Carson asked that those taking the lead on an inspection get started with scheduling their visits. Braulio Gonzalez has moved out of County and can no longer participate as a Commissioner, but he will continue to attend JJDPC

meetings. Commissioner Barrows asked that Joan Rosas be copied on any correspondence regarding the education portion of the YSC inspection by whomever takes the lead. Commissioner Barrows is currently in the process of setting up the Glenwood inspection.

**b. Education Advocacy Committee (Rollins)**

Joan Rosas met with the Education Advocacy Committee to review the plan for the distribution of monies that was approved by the County Board of Education. A Youth Services Principal has been hired. Commissioner Rollins will ask him to meet with the subcommittee.

**c. The YSC Liaison Committee (Miller)**

Commissioner Ross stated that the YSC is still working on the logs but has made some good progress. Direct file youth will now be housed in the general population where they will receive education and programming. Youth who have emotional/mental issues will also be housed with the general population after a 30-day assessment, unless they demonstrate the need to be segregated for the safety of others. The Department is updating its emergency evacuation procedures.

**d. Legislative Committee (Klebanov)**

Commissioners have expressed an interest in learning more about the legislative process. Connie Juarez-Diroll of the County Manager's Office has agreed to provide training at the August meeting.

Commissioner Swope reminded everyone that Commissioner Gonzalez's resignation means that someone else is needed to co-chair the Inspection Committee. Commissioner Swope will reach out to commissioners individually to see who is available.

**e. Regional JJDPC Meeting Committee (Swope)**

Commissioner Swope has been in touch with commissioners in other counties through Google Groups, and is still working to secure a date for a second meeting. Commissioner Rollins asked if it would be appropriate for the Regional group to be responsible for taking a look at the high cost of rent per square foot in the Bay Area. Commissioner Swope will bring this up with the group.

Commissioner Klebanov asked to arrange a follow-up discussion with Dr. Nguyen regarding restrictions on 300 and 602 youths being housed in the same facility. Commissioner Swope will follow up with Dr. Nguyen.

**VII. Court Remarks**

Commissioner Swope said that she has been unable to contact Commissioner Gomez, and the departure of Commissioners Singh and Gonzalez, leaves the Commission with 11 of 15 commissioner seats filled. Commissioner Klebanov introduced two graduate students from the Clinical Psychology Department of Notre Dame de Namur University who were present at the meeting and interested in joining the Commission. Stephanie Ross will e-mail commission guidelines and applications to Anita Hegedus, and Lara Montoya.

**VIII. Adjournment: 6:45 p.m.**

**Next JJDPC Meeting:**  
Tuesday July 29, 2014 at 5:15 p.m.  
Location: 555 County Center, Room 402, Redwood City CA