



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

Minutes of the Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission

Oct. 24, 2017

5:15-7:15pm

455 County Center, 4th Floor, Room 405, Redwood City

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Co-Chair Michele Gustafson; Co-Vice Chair Sonoo Thadaney; Co-Vice Chair Rebecca Flores; Melissa Wilson; Al Serrato; Mary Oleksy; Valerie Gibbs.

Commissioners Excused: Co-Chair Susan Swope; Toni Barrack; Nick Jasso.

Staff Present: None from Probation Department.

Additional Attendees:

Clara MacAvoy – San Mateo County Youth
Commission

Ghada Ahmed – Parent

Ashraf Shah – Parent

Sophia Vahanvaty – San Mateo County Youth
Commission

Janelle Kwofie – High school student

Hon. Elizabeth K. Lee – Superior Court
Juvenile Supervising Judge

Jan Ellard – Deputy County Counsel

Doug Winter

Nafeesah Mustafa – Assistant Principal, Court
Schools Program

Adam Wilson – Program Coordinator, Youth
Commission

I. Administrative Business:

- a. Call to Order: Co-Chair Gustafson called meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. and announced Commissioner Irv Rollins has resigned effective immediately due to health reasons. He hopes to rejoin as an emeritus member as soon as he is able.
- b. Roll Call and Establish Quorum: A quorum was established.
- c. Introductions
- d. Agenda Review: **Approved** as distributed.
- e. Approval of Minutes: Sept. 26, 2017: **Approved** as distributed.

II. Oral Communications:

- a. Janelle Kwofie, Carlmont High School sophomore, provided background about her activities in the community and said she was attending the meeting to learn about opportunities to participate.
- b. Doug Winter, of Half Moon Bay, stated he recently returned to the Bay Area after finishing law school in San Diego. Doug previously assisted the Commission by authoring a paper on ACEs. He said he is interested in juvenile justice issues and is seeking networking opportunities.
- c. Ghada Ahmed and Ashraf Shah, parents of a minor in the juvenile justice system, addressed the Commission regarding their son's placement at Canyon Oaks. They explained that he has high functioning autism and voiced concerns that there was a lack of programs to help youth on the spectrum once they've been in contact with the juvenile justice system. They also expressed frustration that there was a lack of transparency and communication in the decision-making process that led to the placement at Canyon Oaks.

The parents also provided material for the Commission's consideration regarding overrepresentation of youth with disabilities in the juvenile justice system and providing support for minors with disabilities and their families. To avoid conflict of interest, Judge Lee left the room while the parents addressed the Commission.

III. Court Remarks (Judge Lee)

- a. Judge Lee remains interested in creating a public library of resources and will continue with the work. The Commission has formed a working group to identify those resources that might be most helpful for youth and family in the juvenile justice system.

IV. Probation (Gustafson presented information provided by Deputy Chief Roy Brasil)

Juvenile Hall Population: 60 (52 males & 8 females).

Camp Kemp: 9 females

Girls Empowerment Program: 8

Camp Glenwood: 11 males

Co-Chair Gustafson said the Commission still hopes to invite a placement unit supervisor to speak at a future meeting and asked the Commission for specific areas or issues on which to receive information.

Commissioner Melissa Wilson stated she'd like to know: 1) the current status on group homes; 2) how the receiving home fits into the placement process; 3) how foster parents or group home facilities interact with Probation; and 4) to what extent family services are being offered to foster youth and their families.

Many of Commissioner Wilson's questions tied in with the implementation of the state's Continuum of Care Reform. Judge Lee discussed some aspects of the Continuum of Care Reform. She stated that group homes are being phased out and/or converted to licensed, Short-Term Residential Treatment Programs (STRTPs). The STRTPs will provide a range of therapeutic, medical and educational services within a period normally limited to 90 days, after which point youths could "step down" into therapeutic foster homes or go back to their relatives or their own families, if possible. Judge Lee added probation departments have been given an extension to 2019 to figure how to deal with delinquent youth in the foster care system. One alternative may be longer placements in the juvenile hall or camps if kids have no other options, which the Commission agreed was not an acceptable alternative.

Commissioner Al Serrato asked if out-of-state placements will end under the Continuum of Care Reform. Judge Lee said she wasn't sure how the Continuum of Care Reform would affect out-of-state placements, but added there also is a federal law that limits the ability of the courts to place kids in long-term care. She said there could be a certain segment of juveniles who go from the Hall to the Camps to DJJ because eliminating group homes strips the courts of an option to place kids in a less-restrictive setting. She added it is too soon to know how things will play out. Judge Lee also discussed other aspects of the new law, including child and family teaming to deliver child welfare services with input from the child, family members, professionals and other stakeholders.

Commissioner Serrato asked if there is a shortage of foster care homes in the state. Judge Lee said there is a shortage in San Mateo County, adding juvenile may have to go as far away as Bakersfield or Modesto to be placed into foster homes, which could complicate family reunification efforts.

Commissioner Serrato asked why there aren't more foster homes in San Mateo County. Judge Lee cited the Bay Area economy as a significant factor. For example, she said a family with a three bedroom, two bathroom house could easily rent out a spare bedroom for two or three times the amount they would get from the county for housing a foster child. Also, it is possible there are fewer spaces for foster children in the Bay Area than years past because more families are allowing adult children to move in due to the high cost of living.

Co-Chair Gustafson said she'd like to know how Probation will track the progress of delinquent youth in the foster system under the state's Continuum of Care Reform mandates.

San Mateo County Youth Commission member Clara MacAvoy said she'd like the Commission to receive more information about how out-of-state placements work and their effect on youth and families.

Judge Lee and County Counsel Jan Ellard offered to help identify officials from Probation and HSA to invite to a future JJDPC meeting to address these and other questions regarding wards and dependents in the foster care system.

V. Liaison/Study Group Reports (6:35-6:55)

- a. M:/Gustafson to approve the Camp Kemp Inspection Report with the following changes: On Page 5, change pronoun for juvenile who identifies as a male; on Page 6, change "filed trips" to "field trips." **Approved unanimously** (Commissioner Serrato left the meeting early and was absent for this vote).
- b. Court and Probation Liaison (Wilson)
No report for Court Liaison. The Commission discussed difficulties scheduling Probation Liaison meetings. Commissioner Wilson had been provided with three Probation Liaison contacts, but none consistently responds regarding meetings. The Commission needs to identify an appropriate liaison or at least have a discussion with Probation to determine the need for ongoing Liaison meetings.
- c. Youth Commission Update (MacAvoy)
The San Mateo County Youth Commission will hear a presentation from BHRS on Thursday on local marijuana legislation in light of the legalization of recreational marijuana in California.

VI. San Mateo County Office of Education (Mustafa)

Nafeesah Mustafa of the Court Schools Program reported that the program's new three-day orientation class for newly admitted juveniles is going well. She also informed the group that Project Change just wrapped up its latest college readiness course with a party for students.

VII. Participation in JJC/JJDPC Workshop in Sebastapol (Gustafson)

Co-Chair Gustafson sought input on the Commission's top successes, issues and needs. She said she would use the information in her presentation at the JJC/JJDPC Workshop in Sebastapol on Nov. 4.

Top successes were identified as expanding Project Change and adding breadth and depth to the Commission. Top issues were identified as 1) fulfilling the Commission's delinquency prevention role and 2) determining how to influence discussion regarding placing delinquency and dependency youth under the Continuum of Care Reform and understanding

whether our youth are being placed with foster families or elsewhere and what the outcomes are. Top needs were identified as 1) defining our inspection role, 2) advancing our delinquency prevention role, 3) increasing visibility into state-level initiatives, 4) developing a better network between JJC/JJDPCs, and 5) justifying a budget.

VIII. Project Updates

a. Community Resources Project (Flores)

Commissioner Flores and Co-Chair Gustafson discussed the Commission's project involving identification and collection of community resources serving youth and families. The first step will be to call various agencies listed in the HSA's Community Information Handbook to see which ones serve youth and families involved in the justice system. Gustafson said she would like to recruit Youth Commission members to help make the calls to gain insight into how different agencies respond to young people seeking information. Flores said the next step in the project will be to identify agencies not listed in the handbook which could be valuable resources to include in the project.

IX. Projects for 2018: Ideas and Brainstorming

The Commission discussed possible projects for 2018. The following ideas were presented:

- Judge Lee recommended reviewing the level of mental health services available to the Probation Department's Juvenile and Institutions divisions with recommendations to the County to take necessary steps to upgrade those services when needed.
- Commissioner Wilson pointed out that we need to continue to work on the Continuum of Care Reform.
- Commissioner Thadaney suggested establishing peer mentoring space with other local JJC/JJDPCs.
- Commissioner Oleksy suggested studying performing "system testing" to understand the delivery of services in the juvenile justice system from the perspective of minors and their parents/families.
- Commissioner Gustafson suggested setting up a recognition for staff providing juvenile justice related services who go above and beyond.

X. Commissioner Comments/Announcements

- a. Conference on Education in the Correctional Facilities, Sacramento, October 18, 2018 (Jasso, Casillas)
- b. Bay Area Summit on Children of Incarcerated Parents, Oakland, November 29 (Thadaney)
- c. Project Change Summit, Sacramento, January 26, 2018 (Gustafson)
- d. New Commissioner Handbook and BSCC Training Presentation from Long Beach Conference available online (Gustafson).
- e. Legislative Updates (Gustafson)

Meeting Adjourned 7:17 p.m.