



Advisory Council on Juvenile Services

Meeting Minutes: November 22, 2013

11209 Metric Blvd., Austin, Texas

Austin, Texas

Members Present:

Estela P. Medina, Chair; Doug Vance, Vice Chair; Mark Williams, Mike Griffiths, Phillip Hayes, Carrie Barden, Randy Turner, Homer Flores, Tiffany Richards for Audrey Deckinga, James Williams and Teresa Stroud.

Others Present:

Buddy Silva, Hidalgo County; Aris Johnson, Gregg County; Ross Worley, Smith County; Karol Davidson, TJJD; and Brett Bray, TJJD

Agenda Item I: Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. by Estela P. Medina, Chair of the Advisory Council. Ms. Medina welcomed everyone. Advisory Council members and others present introduced themselves.

Agenda Item II: Review of Minutes

The minutes of the September 19, 2013 Advisory Council Meeting were approved.

Agenda Item III: Texas Juvenile Justice Department Updates (TJJD)

The TJJD Update was presented by Executive Director, Mr. Mike Griffiths. He informed members that commitments to TJJD as of November, 2013 were higher than the number of commitments the previous year. TJJD is closely monitoring the information regarding any trends or activity that may require further attention by TJJD and the Advisory Council. Advisory Council members expressed that they will also continue to review these efforts and to determine the impact to counties. The new target for the 2014-15 biennium is 926.

Mr. Griffiths will be sending a notices to the field regarding ongoing Strategic Planning efforts on behalf of TJJD. The goal is to meet with Regional Associations during the months of January – February. More information will follow on a confirmed date and time. The Advisory Council continues invested in working on the strategic planning efforts that include participation from Juvenile Probation Departments and regional representatives. The information will also be presented to the field of Juvenile Probation at the upcoming Chief’s Summit scheduled for January 26-28, 2014 in San Marcos, Texas.

He presented that nominations to the Advisory Council are being accepted for members that have terms due. The Regional Associations have received notice for the Chief positions to the Advisory Council; a judicial position and a representative from Commissioner’s Court, are also included in upcoming nominations. The nominees will be presented to the TJJD Board at the January 31, 2014 Board Meeting.

As part of the TJJD update, Mr. Griffiths indicated that TJJD is making efforts to develop further partnerships with the mental health communities and state Health and Human Services Commission. This includes and upcoming webinar regarding the waiver program and services. TJJD will also be working on an application to the MacArthur Foundation regarding a policy academy. This will involve system of care initiatives. However, it will focus on how to bridge with local mental health authorities in order to find ways to provide services to families.

Regarding institutions, TJJD is still awaiting a decision on the Corsicana facility. Mr. Meyer, Ms. Brooke and Mr. Griffith met this week with staff members at the Lieutenant Governor’s office regarding the Corsicana facility. Mr. Griffith discussed the number of youths currently in care to be here sixty three (63) as well as finding various placements. He noted budgetary concerns with the closure as well as funding not appropriated to cover six (6) facilities. Discussions between TJJD and LBB regarding TJJD’s budget are ongoing. While no firm date was decided, more guidance on this matter is expected in December. Mr. Griffiths also informed the council that the next TJJD board meeting will be held January 31, 2014.

Agenda Item IV: TJJJ Budget Updates & Discussion

Mr. Mike Meyer, Chief Financial Officer presented the council members with Budget Updates and information following up on the grant withholding process. Mr. Meyer stated there has been positive feedback on the withholding process and there have been no objections and will proceed with implementation in January 2014. Another item briefly discussed was regarding a grant calendar. Feedback was also positive regarding this item. Mr. Meyer stated they are in the process of determining what, if any funding will be available during the winter cycle. Shall the funds be available top priority will be given to those departments which are implementing JCMS.

Agenda Item V: TJJJ Board Meeting Update, October 18, 2013

Ms. Medina provided the council with a copy of the report that was presented to the board on behalf of the Advisory Council during the October meeting. She briefly reviewed the report. There were no questions regarding the update. As previously indicated, the next TJJJ Board and committee meetings are scheduled for January 30 and 31, 2014.

Agenda Item VI: Update & Discussion Chapter 343:816 Chemical Restraints

Chief Medina explained this item was placed back on the agenda following many questions as well as concerns from advocacy groups and media attention. She added that legislative staff has also raised concerns and questions regarding this standard. Although this topic was discussed in October, additional discussion and review may be warranted. Mike Griffith recommended studying the standard through various stakeholder reviews. Doug Vance stated that it would be a good opportunity for additional review and that this could provide finding alternatives and solutions that are of the upmost safety concern for all parties. Mr. Griffith further discussed the results of a survey that had been sent to the field regarding the use of OC spray. Linda Brooke stated that approximately fifty four (54) counties received the survey; thirty five (35) responses were returned. Of the respondents there were eight (8) counties that indicated that they may use the OC spray. Mr. Griffith also provided that the type of spray and potency used is an important factor in the decision making process. Advisory Council members were all in agreement to form a committee to further research and study the current standards as well as to discuss alternatives. Members also agreed on a May time frame in order to allow sufficient time for research. Ms. Medina also informed that this would be presented to the TJJJ Board at the May 2014 Board Meeting.

Agenda Item VII: Code of Ethics Requirement

Chairperson Medina introduced Brett Bray and Karol Davidson to present this item. They provided proposed revisions on the language and standards used in the Code of Ethics.

Revisions were made in order to make these items more “user friendly” and to ensure they match current expectations and practices. Ms. Davidson informed the Advisory Council that most of the changes that are being presented are not substantive but there are a few that require an overview. She discussed provisions to Section 345.103, 345.200, and 345.310. The council was asked to review the revisions and submit any recommendations they may have by Friday December 6th. TJJJ staff will be presenting these revisions to the TJJJ Board in January, 2014.

Agenda Item VIII: Sub-Committee Report(s)

Standards Sub-Committee

Doug Vance updated the council on Sub-Committee reports. The committee completed Chapter 355 and the board has adopted the standards. He informed the members that during January’s board meeting the council would like to extend a thank you to all those who participate on the Standards Sub-Committee and present members with certificates. He explained the next project regarding a review of 343 will begin in January, with the exception of “OC Spray “which will be led by a different committee. Focus on disciplinary seclusion and PREA certification of the state will be revisited. Mr. Griffiths briefly updated Advisory Council members of a meeting he attended at the Governor’s office with TDCJA where PREA certification was reviewed. As of today no definitive clarification was given as to the state of Texas status pertaining to PREA certification. He stated that it is not a question of whether the Governor’s office will certify the state or not; but more so it is looking at how to review monitoring at the state level. Many options and factors are being discussed. These include cost considerations. Mr. Vance asked the Regional Association to recommend representatives to the Standards Sub Committee who previously worked with 343 in order to establish a working group consisting of members familiar with the topic.

Parole

James Williams provided an update on status of Parole Committee. He mentioned a meeting with Regional supervisors in which they discussed what areas they are having a difficulty covering. Although the Parole offices have had to cover major areas, they have managed to stay within budget. There have been some changes in process used. Ms. Medina also informed Mr. Williams of two Central Texas region counties who are interested in doing Parole; and that some counties have not received contracts. Mr. Williams is working on these contracts and will be following up with the interested counties.

Cost of Probation and Program Evaluation/Data Research Committees

Ms. Medina indicated that these two committees will begin meeting in January, 2014 allowing TJJJ to complete current strategic planning work. She asked if there were any members who wanted to chair either of these committees to please notify her. The structure of the new committees will be discussed at the January 2014 Advisory Council Meeting.

Performance Measures Committee

This committee consists of Homer Flores, Estela Medina and Mark Williams. Homer Flores will act as Chair. In January the Advisory Council will also add other potential committee members.

Agenda Item IX: Senate Bill 393

Mary Schmid Mergler and Karla Vargas, Attorneys on staff with Texas Appleseed presented for Ms. Deborah Fowler, Deputy Director, Texas Appleseed who was unable to attend the meeting. They asked that Advisory Council members and the field of probation pay particular attention to information regarding referrals from schools. They added that the goal in the enacted legislation through SB 393 was not to expand referrals but rather to pay attention to what offenses are being charged by law enforcement at schools. Materials were provided.

Agenda Item X: Old Business

No old business was presented for review.

Agenda Item XI: New Business

Ms. Medina presented new business to the council. This included a draft agenda from Mr. Ron Quiros for the Chief's Summit. The Summit will be held January, 27- 28, 2014 at the Embassy Suites in San Marcos. This year's summit is being sponsored by the Regional Associations. During the summit there will be an opportunity for Regional Associations to hold meetings and to be involved with TJJJ strategic planning discussions. The Advisory Council discussed potentially holding the next Advisory Council meeting during those dates, to allow for discussion and/or focus groups taking advantage of the opportunity with those present at the Summit. Ms. Medina will follow up with the arrangements and scheduling of the Advisory Council meeting on Tuesday, January 29th.

Ms. Medina announced that Audrey Deckinga will be retiring in December. Ms. Medina and Mr. Griffiths indicated an interest to present Audrey with a form of recognition on behalf of the Advisory Council. Tiffany Richards will be sending out information regarding the scheduled reception for Ms. Deckinga.

Mr. Mike Griffith reminded the members of the need for nominations for a County Commissioner's Court representative to the Advisory Council and that either a County Commissioner or County Judge could be nominated.

Agenda Item XII: Public Comment

No public comment was presented

Agenda Item XIII: Advisory Council Member Updates & Announcements

JCMS roll out and Techshare updates were discussed. Randy Turner presented that the conversion required a data transfer from the old system to the new version; that there were few issues, but that they had been addressed. There are about 70 departments using the basic JCMS system. Confidentiality issues regarding juveniles were being addressed at meetings set up by Ms. Lisa Capers.

Next Advisory Council Meeting

The next advisory council meeting will be held Wednesday, January 29th 2014.

The meeting adjourned at 1:33p.m.

Submitted:

Estela P. Medina

March 26, 2014

*(Revisions received on April 5, 2014)

Approved:

*(Revisions pending review by the Advisory Council Meeting on May 16, 2014)