



Texas Juvenile Justice Department

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January 6, 2012

Texas Juvenile Justice Department Board Hires Executive Director

AUSTIN – The Board of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) today selected Cheryl K. Townsend to serve as the newly created agency’s executive director. The appointment is effective immediately.

Townsend previously served as the Executive Director of the Texas Youth Commission from Sep. 1, 2009 through Nov. 30, 2011. Prior to that, she was the agency’s Executive Commissioner from October 2008 through Aug. 31, 2009. From January 2006 through September 2008, she served as Director of Juvenile Justice Services in Clark County, Nevada and, from January 1996 through August 2005, was the Director of Juvenile Court Services for the Superior Court of Arizona in Phoenix.

TJJD Board Chairman Scott Fisher of Bedford said applications for the executive director position were received from around the country and that board members were impressed with the qualifications of each of the finalists considered for the position.

“We felt that each of our finalists would have brought considerable experience and expertise to the agency and we were fortunate to have such a talented pool from which to select an executive director,” Fisher said. “Ultimately, the board selected Cherie Townsend.”

Townsend will direct an agency that was created on Dec. 1, 2011 to assume the duties and responsibilities of the former Texas Youth Commission and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. Those agencies were abolished in an effort to create a more streamlined and comprehensive approach to juvenile justice issues in Texas, including an emphasis on prevention and early intervention. The TJJD currently oversees 165 juvenile probation departments statewide and operates six secure detention facilities and nine halfway houses throughout Texas.

The TJJD board’s next meeting will take place Jan. 20, 2012, in Austin.

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Contact Jim Hurley at 512-424-6016 for more information.