



Advisory Council on Juvenile Services

Meeting Minutes

Friday, July 15, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m.

2515 South Congress Ave, Austin, Texas 78704

Advisory Council Members present:

Ed Cockrell, Chair; Lynn Hadnot, Vice Chair; Marc Bittner, Judge Larry Thorne, Shanna Floyd, Karina Browning Shandra Carter, Lou Serrano, Homer Flores and Melanie Ramsey.

Advisory Council Members not present: Judge Natalia Oakes, Christy Ashworth-Mazerolle, Judge Mark Allen

TJJD Staff in attendance:

Ryan Bristow, Noah Wright, Chris Ellison, Preston A Streufert, Rachel Gandy, Cameron Taylor, Dr. Emily Knox, Sean Grove, and Ronnie Solano,

Other attendees:

Jessica Neideffer

Call to Order/Introductions:

The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. with Ed Cockrell introducing himself and taking roll call of the Council members.

Approval of Minutes: March 25, 2022 Meeting

Vice Chair, Lynn Hadnot, made a motion to approve the minutes. Marc Bittner, seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Approval of Minutes: April 22, 2022 Meeting

Melanie Ramsey made a motion to approve the minutes. Shanna Floyd, seconded the motion. The motion passed.

DFPS Involvement with County detained youth

Lou Serrano reported that a representative from DFPS was scheduled to provide a presentation on CWOP (Children without placement) kids in the DFPS system. She was unable to attend. He reported that TJJD staff met with DFPS staff and discussed data

and other areas concerning youth in the DFPS and juvenile justice field. He reported there are approximately seventy-five kids in unlicensed facilities. This number is down from previous reports. Three out of 10 kids are actively involved in the juvenile justice system.

Mr. Serrano discussed the issues concerning locally detained kids and no parent to release them to. The hope is to have more information in the next advisory council meeting. There is a need for discussion for parents who do not want to take responsibility of kids when they are released. There is no authorization over probation departments or court to make them placed kids.

One System Survey Results by Dr. Emily Knox

Dr. Emily Know provided a report on the results of the one system survey that went out to the county chiefs in March of 2022. The purpose of the survey was to determine what the primary concerns are from the probation field and to better integrate that information across TJJD decision making. The questionnaire included thirteen questions. Ninety-Four counties completed the questionnaire. Information was broken down by regions as well as department sizes. TJJD will revisit the same questions to the field in 18 months to determine if any progress was made.

Texas Juvenile Justice Department updates:

Noah Wright of TJJD provided a presentation of youth population and staffing crisis at TJJD. He provide staffing and commitment data from FY2019 to the present. He reported that commitments from the field are still averaging at or below pre-pandemic levels. TJJD continue to try different strategies to hire new staff. He reported that counties are experiencing staff problems as well. Several are not able to staff at maximum capacity. He mentioned several counties that are experiencing shortages. The current crisis in not just a TJJD problem, it is a systemic problem.

Interim Executive Director, Shandra Carter reported on the DOJ investigation. She reported that the DOJ toured the Ron Jackson facility. They were scheduled to tour Gainesville but cancelled. She anticipate that they will tour the four remaining facilities in the near future.

Sean Groves provided an update on Sunset. TJJD is in a working stage with the Sunset Commission. As of now, the members of the sunset commission are deliberating staff recommendations. TJJD is already working on some of the Sunset recommendations. The next hearing is scheduled for October 12, 2022. TJJD continue to engage with the members on the issues.

Lou Serrano provided an update on probation services. He reported several staffing changes including that Tonya Gonzales has been promoted to Grants and Fiscal Manager, Ryan Bristow has been promoted to Project Manager - Integrated Systems, and Ashley Kintzer will be responsible for managing regionalization efforts. Covid 19 has been on an uptick. Although it is not required to report positive cases, some counties are still reporting. We started with 147

youth pending admission to TJJD. They are moving one youth on this day and five are scheduled to be moved the week of July 18th. Regionalization diversion efforts continue to be amazing. Two hundred seventeen youth have been diverted through July 14, 2022. There are currently two hundred fifteen youth in diversion placements. Thirty-one youth have been approved and are awaiting placement. There have been three hundred twenty four new admissions to TJJD through June 27, 2022. Applications for diversion are up by five percent. He reported that Fluxx, the new grant manager system is currently in use. Departments are already entering their budgets. Tonya Gonzales is currently on the road visiting with departments to assist with the new system. There are two new DSA grants available. One is for community aftercare programs and the other for residential and detention capacity. Finally, JJAEPS will receive \$86 a day reimbursement for mandatory youth.

Sub Committee Report:

Chief Hadnot reported on the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee. The committee last met on March 22, 2022. The committee determined that it was best to focus on providing input to the LAR. The committee has joined with the LAR group with representation from across the state and are collaborating with TJJD to focus on input to the LAR. This group met on June 23, 2022. The group is planning to meet again in August with a directed approach of collaboration and discussions of the SUNSET review and the LAR.

Sean Groves reported on the Chapter 344 workgroup. He reported that the current plan is to bring the proposed rules changes to the TJJD in August 2022. The plan is to propose to the Board to adopt the rule as an emergency rule that will take effect immediately. It will still go through the public comments period being posted in the Texas Register. If anyone has public comments and the Board wants to make it changes as a result of those comments, they can bring them to meeting in the fall and then adopt. The goal is to implement new standards immediately after August board meeting.

Chief Hadnot reported on the Chapter 55 Workgroup. The group met on April 7, 2022. The three subgroups submitted their proposed revisions to their sections within the chapter. The current plan is to bring a subgroup together to work on all proposed revisions and to bring a final legislative proposal for Chapter 55. The next meeting has not been scheduled at this time.

New Business

Scott Friedman requested feedback from the advisory council on proposed changes to four standards. The standards discussed were Chapters **341.200(c)** - Participation in Community Resource Coordination Groups (dispute resolution process) – TJJD recommend to Repeal, **343.222 (a) (5)** Health Service Plan (informed consent procedures) – TJJD recommend to Revise, **343.328** Medical Consent – TJJD recommend to Repeal, **344.670 (a) (1) (A) & (B), and (b)(1)-(2)** Training Methods and Limitations – TJJD recommend to Revise. The Advisory Council will reconvene the standards subcommittee to meet and discuss the proposed changes and report back to the Advisory Council.

Chief Shanna Floyd read an email from her region concerning TJJD Facebook posting of pictures and comments of a meet and greet barbeques luncheon, pictures of youth and staff

swimming, and a family day hosted with food and visitors and other activities at the five state schools. Per the email, the concern was that this was in contradiction with an email sent out justifying the halted intakes. Interim Executive Director Carter and Lou Serrano responded that youth are in and out of lock down and that not all facilities are in lock down for twenty two hours a day. They make an effort to get youth out of their rooms when they can and make every effort to provide some level of engagement and efforts to provide relief when possible.

Public Comment

Jessica Knightenberg, representing her agency, Adara Collective (Non-Profit). Ms. Knightenberg offered solutions to some of the problems TJJD is having concerning programming. Her company provides meditation and Yoga classes. She have established working with Travis County State Jail and other facilities.

Next Meeting:

The council will meet in person on Friday, Sept 16, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

Meeting Adjourn – at 12:45 pm.