



Advisory Council on Juvenile Services

Meeting Minutes

Friday, March 28, 2025 @ 10:00 a.m.

Virtual Teams Meeting

Advisory Council Members present:

Chairman Lynn Hadnot, Ed Cockrell, Judge Foy O'Brien, Judge Mark Allen, Vice-Chair Jason Davis, Lindsey Van Buskirk, Maryann Denner, Judge Teana Watson, Shandra Carter, Ashley Kintzer, Ross Worley, Troy Navarrette.

Advisory Council Members not present:

Karina Browning

TJJD Staff in attendance:

Dr. Evan Norton, Nathan McDaniel, Marqus Boyd, Patrick Williams, Todd Novak, Alawan Thomas, Kaci Singer, Daryl Liedecke, Daniel Guajardo, Chelsey Oden, Stefan Richards, Anthony Tsao, Don Finley, Carmella Sanchez, Danny Butts, Cameron Taylor, Casey J Koenig, Jerry Adams, Ashley Terrazas, David Ellis, Darrin Thomas, Kristin Hammock, Scott Friedman, Chris Ellison, Ronnie Gamez.

Other attendees:

Call to Order/Introductions:

The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. with Lynn Hadnot introducing himself and taking roll call of the Council members. New members of the council recognized by chairman, welcomed and thanked for joining the work of the council.

Approval of Minutes: January 10th, 2025 Meeting

Judge Teana Watson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Chief Ed Cockrell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Texas Juvenile Justice Department Announcements/Updates:

Shandra Carter, Executive Director of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department reported having recent engagement discussions with the President's Council and being actively working through the legislative session. Two (2) riders being considered by the legislature. One rider gives directive to evaluate current facilities for future closure analysis. Second rider looks to potentially return 400 youth back to county operated facilities, targeting youth who have been in

state custody for six (6) months or less. Director Carter and team working to educate policy makers regarding the types of youth in state facilities and potential impacts on county operations and public safety. The determinate sentencing bill is set to be heard next week. Some policy makers and advocates believe the bill is intended to streamline sending more youth to adult prison. Metrics show the most violent offenders within state custody of indeterminate-sentence offenders. Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) conversations are ongoing with the house being very supportive of requests of the field and the senate being more supportive of correctional (state operations) requests. Director Carter advised of the state's request for new technologies (scanners) for improved facility operations. The state requested fourteen (14) scanners, seven (7) for state facilities and seven (7), if funded by the legislature, being offered to the field through the state grant process. Funding would improve facility safety and eliminate the need for facility strip-searches for youth in both state and county facilities.

Emily Anderson, Deputy Executive Director-Agency Operations and Efficiency briefed the council on details of the legislative appropriations request (LAR). Exceptional item report detail included priority (exceptional) item 2, increasing pre and post funding by 25% or \$26 Million to address increased cost of services at the local level. This request would maintain current service levels. House funded fully but request not funded by senate. Priority 10 request included additional funding for community-based programs. Last LAR included \$2.5 Million. Senate approved \$2.5 Million of a \$5 Million request. State received approximately \$4.7 Million in funding request this past year. House did not appropriate any funding to this request. Priority 17, one-time detention and capacity upgrades discussed. Exceptional item 19, Regional vocational training centers and facility enhancements were very supported by the house with \$64 Million allocation. Senate did not designate funding. Consensus building opportunities remain for the field to engage with law makers on initiatives being supported by side of the chamber but not the other. All exceptional items supported by at least one chamber apart from prevention and intervention. Adjustments to the introduced bill include \$26.8 Million for salary increases in both HB/SB 1. Funding increase will include open positions and clinical positions increases previously not provided. Population increases projections also updated. Senate rider (rider 24) updated reporting requirement for TJJJ to provide additional information surrounding regional diversion reporting and work of the taskforce, should the rider be adopted. The legislature is tasked overall with submitting a balanced budget between both chambers and the budget not increasing by more than 3% overall.

Chief Denner reported receiving questions from state representatives regarding parole (length of the supervision and number of parole officers).

Ashley Kintzer, Director of Probation Services reported on regionalization. RDA placement included 104 kids being placed through diversion. 34 kids also placed in expansion-bed projects. Work has begun work on the updated iteration of the facility handbook. Copies of facility templates will be sent out soon with hopes of work being completed by the end of July. The state will be looking to streamline Discretionary State-Aid (DSA) process. Current process often includes delayed award notifications. Hopeful to have new processes in place by the next award schedule. Ryan Bristow no longer with TJJJ, having joined Dallas County Juvenile

Services. All questions surrounding regionalization should be forwarded to Director Kintzer at this time.

Todd Novak, Director of Parole and Re-Entry Services reported 172 youth currently in the community on parole services with only two (2) currently being in local county facilities. Emphasis remains to keep youth out of county facilities. San Antonio area (region 1) has the most kids on the ground with 43. Region 2 (Dallas/Fort Worth) seeing increases in the number of youths served, currently sitting at 38. There are currently 21 parole officers. Emily thanked for increasing physical office capacity in Houston and San Antonio to accommodate officers returning to office efforts. Mr. Don Finely has retired, and recruitment efforts are underway to fill the position. Field safety initiatives discussed. Mr. Novak spoke to the impact of expanding halfway house opportunities on waitlist and system, should the resources come to fruition. A new Superintendent for Ayres House, Dr. Eric Gordon has been hired. Active recruitment underway for Assistant Superintendent position. There are currently no open positions within the parole division. There are an additional four (4) contract-parole officers. There is significant contrast in case management size between the adult system and juvenile. The plan to have parole being a more focused resource request next session and within the 10-year strategic plan will be considered. Parole service delivery is not limited to “kids on the ground.”

Dr. Evan Norton, Deputy Executive Director reported Lou Serrano now manages the TJJD waitlist as Director of Youth Services. Mr. Serrano will also manage youth movement throughout facilities and back into the community. Waitlist information will be provided to council per request. A request was made for additional information to be provided to the North region regarding regionalization/diversion application approval/denial methodology. Director Kintzer stated she and her team are willing to provide education and support as needed upon request.

Sunset & Legislative Update & Council Objectives:

Rachel Gandy, Chief of Staff provided an update on sunset recommendations. All but three (3) directives have been completed. One of the remaining directives is new facility builds. Chief Smith of Ellis and Chief Teat of Brazoria thanked for their support and time with new build work with the state. ANE (Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation) legal sufficiency review needs some additional funding resources to move forward, and the risk-based monitoring initiative has begun with Teri Dollar and her team. The council has developed a subcommittee to complete the work in partnership with the state agency. Timeline for work completion on the risk-based monitoring discussed. The next sunset review may be a limited scope review. A part of the review will be 10-year review of regionalization (SB 1630). The state continues to work closely with one-voice to provide data regarding pending legislative bills.

TDFPS Update:

Lindsey Van Buskirk, DFPS, CPS Director of Field reporting averaging about 6,000 youth who would meet criteria for potential dual-status pursuant to age (age 10-16 years of age) in care. There are currently 30 youth who are currently in care and without placement. The agency is working closely with Director Kintzer to develop solutions. The state is really paying attention to SB300 which addresses communication between TJJD and TDFPS. After-hours information

sharing processes is a focal point for work initiative. Once process is finalized, the tool will be shared with the state and field. Tracking approximately 737 bills with potential impact to agency.

Subcommittees:

- **Risk Matrix** – Director Kintzer reported nominations for subcommittee have been requested from each region. Initial meeting will set for next month to discuss and review draft proposal developed by Teri Dollar and her team.
- **Standards** – OC Spray standard workgroup met this week. Kaci Singer provided guidance regarding the current standards language and proposed revisions. The subcommittee will reconvene in the coming weeks.
- **Funding Formula** – Review of variables is required. Changes are not mandated but the subcommittee will be asked to review and make changes if needed. Subcommittee members are being identified and work to begin soon.

New Business:

Chief Hadnot recommended the council consider review of TAC: 344, specifically recertification requirements for juvenile supervision and juvenile probation officers to provide operational relief for the field. Chief Hadnot moved to have the review be added to subcommittee work. Motion seconded by Judge Mark Allen. Motion passed unanimously. Chief Ed Cockrell recommended we have several trainers on the subcommittee.

Old Business:

Chief Lynn Hadnot recommended Chief Jason Davis be appointed to serve as vice-chair of the council. Chief Ed Cockrell seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment:

None

Next Meeting:

The council will meet virtually on Friday, July 18, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Meeting Adjourn – at 11:25 AM