

Connecticut Juvenile Training School
Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes, 12/1/14

Present: Karl Alston, Deputy Director, CSSD; Abby Anderson, Executive Director, Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance; Debra Bond, JCTS Clinical Director; Joseph Bruckmann, Public Defender's Office; Francis Carino, Supervising Assistant State's Attorney; Barbara Claire, Esq., Agency Legal Director, DCF; Antonio DePina, DCF Parole Services; John DiPilla, CJTS Assistant Superintendent; Felice Duffy, Assistant United States Attorney, United States Attorney's Office; Joette Katz, DCF Commissioner; Kristy Ramsey, CJTS Assistant Superintendent; Christine Rapillo, Director of Juvenile Delinquency Defense and Child Protection, Public Defender's Office; William Rosenbeck, CJTS Superintendent; Ann Smith, JD, MBA, Executive Director, AFCAMP

Invited Guest: Ken Mysogland, DCF Ombudsman

Introductions

Mr. Rosenbeck welcomed new board members and introductions took place. He clarified that this meeting begins at 5:00 p.m. with dinner for board members and open to the public at 5:30. Atty. Duffy indicated that her presence on the board is not a reflection of her office but in her personal capacity. Commissioner Katz also thanked all for their willingness to serve and thanked all for the work the board has done and the work that will be done in the upcoming months. Atty. Carino has agreed to serve as an interim chair of the board.

Review of Meeting Minutes

- August, 2014 - Meeting minutes accepted
- September, 2014 - Meeting minutes accepted.

Review of By-Laws

The board members had a lengthy and thoughtful discussion around the proposed changes to the By-Laws. Changes were noted and the revised by-laws will be sent to board members for review, finalization and vote at the next Advisory Board meeting in January, 2015. The highlights of the changes are as follows:

- Quorum to be 5 or more members.
- Collectively ex-officio members will comprise as 1 vote and the vote will be cast by the superintendent or designee. Ex-officio members who are present at a meeting could vote on the meeting minutes.
- Collectively ex-officio members will comprise as 1 member of the quorum.
- The terms of membership to be eliminated as board members are appointed by the Commissioner.

- Representative of the Student Council to be invited to an Advisory Board meeting annually. Student Council members are CJTS residents.
- Representative from the Youth Advisory Council to be invited to an Advisory Board meeting annually. This group is comprised of older adolescents in DCF custody residing in group homes or in foster care and they advise the Commissioner in the Child Protective area.
- The Advisory Board to meet four (4) times a year; once in January for the purpose of approving the report to the Commissioner which is due every February.
- Meeting dates to be posted. If additional meetings become necessary throughout the year they will be categorized as “special meetings”.
- Add a section indicating that board members can submit agenda items to the Superintendent no later than 5 days prior to a scheduled meeting. Atty. Claire clarified that board members can communicate agenda items via e-mail as long as there is not substantive discussion.
- It will be clarified in Section I that “CJTS” is inclusive of Pueblo Girls’ Program.
- Meeting minutes to be posted three days prior to a meeting.
- The board can invite guests to this meeting.

Information about CJTS / Courts

Mr. Rosenbeck presented a number of documents about CJTS. One of the documents is the Length of Stay / Discharge Protocol which was implemented in October in order to move the boys out a little quicker. This is a working document as we continue to tweak it as we are putting it into practice. As of tonight the census at CJTS is 85 boys.

Included in the information packet is arrest data from 2009 as we wanted to show number of residents who were under 16 and how it changed in 2010 as a result of the Raise the Age legislation. We now have significantly older kids which impacts how we provide services. Overall number of arrests is down and commitments is up. OPM Juvenile Justice is in the process of developing a disproportionate minority data. The JJPOC is in the process of writing a definition for recidivism.

The third document is a copy of last year’s Legislative Report. We are required to submit a report yearly in February and this is an example.

Ombudsman Process

Ken Mysogland who is the Director of Ombudsman Services was invited to talk about the grievance process at CJTS. He began by stating that in his capacity he takes phone calls from families, youth, private providers and handles complaints from CJTS and

Pueblo. He comes to the facility 1-2 times per week where he goes onto the units and talks with the youth in order to get insight into the grievances. He writes up the grievances and sends them to administrative staff for response. He meet with the youth to ensure they understand the outcome of their grievance. The grievances related to abuse, neglect or inappropriate conduct by the staff are called into the Careline. Part of the grievance process is a youth can fill out a request to speak with a Director of Residential Services. These issues are generally around food, temperatures, and maintenance type concerns. In 2013, out of the 200 grievances filed only 16% had some degree of merit and about 10% of the grievances filed in 2014 were found to have some degree of merit. Youth oftentimes file grievances out of anger and we found that 23 grievances were actually filed by 3 youth. When Mr. Mysogland meets with the youth he tries to make a connection with them by educating them on problem solving and tries to get them to understand that staff are listening to them. He meets with the youth outside of the unit if they choose as not to draw attention to themselves. He talks with staff, clinicians and attorneys around issues that come up. He oftentimes comes to the facility at different shifts and on the weekends. This two tiered process is working. Mr. Mysogland also comes to the Intake Unit as part of the youth orientation so they know how to navigate the system. It was suggested that Mr. Mysogland return after the new year with data as Board members are interested in seeing it. Atty. Carino commented that this is a novel approach to this position and suggested it be included in the Legislative Report.

Consultant and Scope of Services

Mr. Rosenbeck informed the group that Robert Kinscherff, PhD., Esq. was selected to do an independent review of CJTS and Pueblo. His background information was shared with the group. He will spend six full days at the facility and board members will have an opportunity to meet with him. One area that Mr. Alston would like him to look at is conditions of confinement. Atty. Smith commented that since he has done this work in a number of jurisdictions, she would be interested to know what his approach is, what he looks at, what he has done that has been successful and whether people are taking his recommendations and his methodology. Commissioner Katz cautioned that there may be reasons and different scenarios why his recommendations may not have been implemented.

Moving Forward

- Need to nominate a chair of the board as Atty. Carino is interim.
- Prepare more in-depth agenda for meetings.
- Post future board meeting dates on the DCF website.
- The legislative report will be sent to board members prior to the January meeting for review.

Next meeting dates:

January 27, 2015

March 24, 2015

June 16, 2015

October 6, 2015

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Irene Yanaros