

**COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA
JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes – September 14, 2021
Via Zoom**

Commissioners Present: Victoria BurtonBurke, Chair
Carol Rhoads, Secretary
Nora Manchester
Darius Parakh
Diana Traub
Heather Angove
Jean Pennypacker
Lionel Allan
Lissa Thiele
Penny Blake
Ron Hansen

Commissioners Absent: Lisa Macias
Paula Escobar
Stephen Betts, Vice Chair
Vaishali “Shali” Sirkay

Also Present: Honorable Katherine Lucero, Superior Court
Honorable Franklin Bondonno, Superior Court
Honorable Maureen Folan, Superior Court
Honorable Frederick Chung, Superior Court
Shannon Hanna, Superior Court
Anjelica Hayden, Superior Court
Britney Huelbig, Superior Court
Kara Garasky, Superior Court
Graciela Gonzalez, Behavioral Health
Vanessa Cornejo, Behavioral Health
Veronica Robles, Behavioral Health
Nick Birchard, Probation Department
Marc Utsey, Probation Department
Mike Simms, Probation Department
Jill Ugalde, Probation Department
Ann Huntley, District Attorney’s Office
Nisreen Younis, Public Defender’s Office
Damon Silver, Public Defender’s Office
Morena Cruz, Probation, Research and Development
Andrew Cain, Law Foundation of Silicon Valley (LACY)
Preeti Mishra, Dependency Advocacy Center
Mark Camilleri, AED Principal SCCOE
Jessica Bonduris, SCCOE
Eugene Santillan, SCCOE
Dane Caldwell-Holden, SCCOE
Jim Elliott, San Andreas Regional Center
Lanphuong Le, Valley Medical Center
Ruth Maurice, OMOS

Pat Tondreau, Citizen (Ret. Judge)
Alyssa Cayabyab, Fresh Lifelines for Youth
Michaela Austin, First Place for Youth
Rachel Carlos, First Place for Youth
Dev Ghoshal, Citizen
Marcie Bellicitti, Citizen

Call to Order & Introductions: Chair BurtonBurke called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

Agenda Approval: The agenda was approved by all Commissioners present.

Public Comments/Oral Petitions: None.

Approval of Minutes: August 13, 2021 Minutes approved by all Commissioners present.

- Additions: Rachel Talamantez from Behavioral Health Services indicated that the minutes should read: they are currently onboarding 2 new clinicians without the specification that they are dedicated to the Secure Track Program.

REPORTS

Presentation: First Place for Youth: presented by Michaela Austin, Grants Manager and Rachel Carlos, Regional Director.

- First Place for Youth is a nonprofit organization that provides necessary life skills to foster youth to give them the skills needed to build a successful transition to self-sufficiency and responsible adulthood.
- First Place for Youth came to Santa Clara County 6 years ago, and has grown to accommodate 6 counties within the state of California: Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Solano.
- Two main goals are to be able to provide results driven by direct services to youth involved in the program and to improve the lives of as many transition age foster youth as possible.
- Comprehensive strategy for First Place for Youth: Providing housing, individualized programs (to each youth member), expand agency, policy change.
 - Housing - Provides a stable foundation for positive outcomes.
 - Individualized programs - Youth is provided with an intensive support team that creates a personalized action plan and set of goals for each individual. Plan is set up with the intention of creating self-sufficient individuals, able to support themselves in the county. Evaluation provides data to be able to make real time improvements to the program, to assist staff in creating road maps for youth, determine intervention if needed, and to determine the type of plan that works best for each individual.
 - Advocacy - To help make regulatory changes to help create opportunities for foster youth. Help expand the amount of resources available to foster youth throughout the nation.
- Each year in Santa Clara County, 150 youth age out of foster care. 83% of young people are either unemployed or underemployed upon program entry, 31% have had an arrest, 6% have had previous convictions, 62% have come from an unstable housing situation.
- Services provided:
 - Safe, free, stable housing for individuals in exchange for moving towards education and employment goals

- Intensive case management provided by primary advocate, education and employment specialist, and housing specialist.
- Foster care services usually extend through 18, extended foster care can help youth through the age of 24. Impact of extended foster care can be seen through the reduced rates of homeless, arrested, convicted youth. First Place for Youth has tracked an increase of young people obtaining a diploma/GED, decrease in youth pregnancy, increase of young people enrolling in college.
- Santa Clara snapshot: 93 youth were served in the last fiscal year. Of those, 92% of those who exited the program were able to exit into stable housing. 95% of youth who were pursuing a high school diploma or GED were able to obtain it. 82% enrolled in secondary education. 82% have obtained employment or were employed at the time of exiting the program. 100% of youth enrolled were able to avoid being arrested.
- Judge Lucero asked about the age range of youth served. Michaela answered, the age range of youth served in Santa Clara County is 18-24.
- Commissioner Rhoads noted that the project's outcomes look very impressive. Commissioner Rhoads asked, what can that success be attributed to? Does this agency have a different approach than others? Michaela answered that wrap-around support and weekly check-ins with the youth help them stay on track and move towards their goals. Youth also average staying with the program for 1 year, which allows the program to really impact these youth. Commissioner Rhoads asked, after the youth exit the program, does First Place for Youth do any follow up with these individuals? Michaela answered that though connecting with these individuals is not always possible, an effort to collect data and check in with those individuals is made.
- Commissioner Hansen noted that this presentation was very informative. Commissioner Hansen asked, is this program capturing most of the foster youth? Why would individuals who exit foster care not join this program, is that due to funding or other aspects? How is this program funded? Rachel answered, other programs also serve transitional age foster youth in addition to this program, so youth not captured in this program may go to others. Michaela answered, 70%-80% of funding comes from public contracts which is used to cover most of the housing costs. Private funding like foundations, corporate, etc. makes up the rest of the funding received.
- Judge Bondonno asked if this organization is considering working with non-foster youth. Rachel answered that she would need more information on the population that needs to be served, right now a majority of the youth population served by Youth First is dependency and transitional age foster youth (21-24yrs). Other counties serve different populations of youth, homeless, etc.
- Judge Tondreau noted that the Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY) program and First Place for Youth programs have closely aligned missions. Judge Tondreau will recommend that FLY board reach out to First Place for Youth to potentially work in collaboration.

Civil Grand Jury Announcement: Britney Huelbig reported that the Civil Grand Jury recruitment is currently underway. The court is actively seeking applicants to serve in the 2022 Civil Grand Jury. The deadline is quickly approaching: September 17, 2021. Recruitment materials were linked [here](#) and in the chat box. Please share these resources with any interested parties.

- Commissioner Allan noted that he and Commissioner Hansen previously served on the CGJ and found it to be a worthwhile, vital service to the community, and he urges those who are interested to reach out to Britney to apply.

Chair's Report: Chair BurtonBurke reported on the following:

- Public meeting survey participation is appreciated and will be incorporated on the way these meetings move forward.
- The practice of rotating which group speaks first will continue. Presenting groups are asked to provide a greater background of services provided in this county. If there is a topic of special interest, please address that issue at the beginning of your report.

- Law enforcement agency inspection is coming to a close, it is near the editing stage, and hopes to approve it during the executive session in October.
- Inspection of James Ranch is continuing and nearing completion.
- The Continuum of Care Committee which looks at the foster system is meeting twice a month, and includes looking at all dependency partners and youth in scattered sites.
- Continue to have meetings with probation and head of DFCS.
- COE and Probation are praised for their work to assist our youth in being college ready, but providers of services have noted that we are missing youth that need vocational education. COE has put together plans for James Ranch, however this is the beginning of a process. Currently looking to have a task force to expand vocational education for all of those coming out of the juvenile justice system. If you are interested in assisting this task force, contact the juvenile justice bench or Commissioner BurtonBurke.

Juvenile Justice Court: Judge Lucero reported on the following:

- 110 people attended the last court systems training on police and trauma on juveniles.
- The next training will be 10/13/21 on the Dually Involved Youth Initiative presented by Probation and DFCS.
- The commission is urged to support Justice Ed work, looking for the program to be permanently funded and housed in the juvenile probation stakeholder arena. Ideal funding would come from the County Office of Education, Behavioral Health, and the Department of Probation.
- The closing of truancy court saves the County 1 million dollars.
- The Juvenile Court Judges are of one mind in that they do not want to see Juvenile Hall as a long term solution for secure track youth. Voiced desire to see long term planning for youth with assistance from others.
- New court coordinator for the individualized treatment of adolescents: Kara Garasky. Kara will run the dual diagnostics court moving forward.
- Judge Bondonno thanks Probation, the County Office of Education, and colleagues as they try to put together a pilot for tutoring. More information to follow at a later time.

Dependency Court: Judge Chung reported on the following:

- Last update was to reopen Dependency Court for in person morning calendars on 8/30/21, after further consultation with justice partners and further consideration of current circumstances, the date will be postponed to 11/1/21.

Medical Services: Lanphuong Le reported on the following:

- 63.6% of youth have completed COVID vaccinations.
- 36.4% of youth remain unvaccinated.
- Currently at James Ranch 72.4% of youth have been vaccinated, 27.6% declined, 4.1% unable to ask/answer.
- Currently able to provide COVID vaccines to all youth.
- Now vaccination clinics are held on a weekly basis.

Law Enforcement Agencies: None present to report.

District Attorney's Office: Ann Huntley had nothing new to report.

Public Defender's Office: Nisreen Younis and Damon Silver reported on the following:

- Nisreen thanks Judge Lucero for speaking about the Judge's standing together about Juvenile Hall not being a long term solution for secure track youth.
- Judicial Council is seeking an advisory council developing the new matrix of the secure track.

- Damon Silver reports that a rotation of a new attorney in Juvenile is going to be added, more details to follow next meeting.
- Nisreen comments that positive outcomes in light of the pandemic have been to have fewer court dates. Every court date can be considered entrenchment in the system and is taxing on the families that have to come to court.
- Commissioner Manchester asked, regarding a past training on legislation and advisement of rights, can you update us on where that stands, updates that have taken place and what changes in the law have been made? How is that system working? Nisreen answered, it is working well, when SB395 first passed initially for youth under 15, now for youth under 18, is entitled to speak to a lawyer without waiving Miranda rights or consultation without speaking to a lawyer first.
- Commissioner Manchester asked, do you have any concern about the police departments discouraging attorney advisement or allowing youth to have privacy when they contact an attorney? Nisreen answered, when the officer puts the youth on the phone the office is able to ask the youth “Where are you seated, are you in a police car? Is it closed? Can anyone hear you? Are you out of earshot?” to confirm the situation. If not, the office tells the officer that they need to facilitate confidential communication. Nisreen notes that in a few instances, officers have challenged the confidential communication by contacting the youth on the phone or at their home. Commissioner Manchester notes that JJC is interested in addressing these concerns as they come up. Nisreen notes that Captain Shaffer has been a point of contact when coming across concerning police reports to address the issue.
- Commissioner Jean Pennypacker asks, now that we have heard from the courts and DA’s office, what are some positive changes that can be continued? Can the reduced number of youth be kept out of custody after the pandemic ends? Will virtual hearings continue after the pandemic ends? Judge Bondonno notes that fewer youth in Juvenile Hall has been terrific, now convinced that fewer court dates are better for the youth. Judge Bondonno anticipates virtual hearings to continue for certain case types. Ann Huntley agrees with Judge Bondonno, considering the current situation of the pandemic and vaccinations, maintaining vigilance on a limited number of in-person hearings has been working well for the Public Defender's office, DA’s office and the youth.
- Damon Silver notes that further creative thinking is still needed in virtual hearings and materials being sent out to families that do not speak English. Notes to make sure that English speaking families and non-English speaking families are being served equally throughout the process. Judge Folan notes that interpreters are and can be present by phone.

Alternate Defender’s Office: None present to report.

Independent Defense Office: None present to report.

Legal Advocates for Children & Youth (LACY): Andrew Cain reported on the following:

- Positive changes to note in light of pandemic: There has been lots of positive growth and enhancement on supporting financial security and stability for foster youth, making sure foster youth are connected to benefits to enhance financial stability, providing education on financial literacy and protecting against theft. Considering the lack of financial stability that foster youth experience impedes progress, gaining access to these resources now can positively affect youth in the future.

Dependency Advocacy Center: Preeti Mishra reported on the following:

- Last Friday September 10th, dependency virtually celebrated family reunification day. Families that were successful in their goal to reunify were honored along with community partner, Child Advocates of Silicon Valley.

- Child Advocates of Silicon Valley were honored due to their collaborative efforts in working with Dependency Advocacy Center, being able to provide resources to clients in addition to technology resources and transportation resources to families.

The Office of Mediation and Ombuds Services: Ruth Maurice reported on the following:

- Positive changes to note in light of pandemic: Zoom has made it possible to continue to do mediations. Though in person conversations can be more transformative, some victims and youth have been able to participate in mediations that might not have participated had the case been in person.
- Online services have made court more comfortable and accessible to some victims and families now that the barrier of travel has been removed.
- Staff at James Ranch and Juvenile Hall have been very responsive and helpful in setting up interviews and mediations.

Alternative schools department: Dane Caldwell-Holden and Mark Camilleri reported on the following:

- Dane updates that schools have been trying to understand why youth have been entering with 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade reading and math levels. Teachers are trying to look at entry tests, making sure students are taking the tests seriously to get an accurate gauge of students. Dane complemented Mark Camilleri in creating a successful incentive program for youth.
- Mark reported that students are tested every 45 days to check in on their progress and know how to better assist their individual learning. After introduction of incentive program/credit recovery and most recent testing, results show that all pods increased an average 2 reading grade levels and 1 math grade level. The youth is recharged to learn after introduction to incentive program
- Mark notes that he appreciates the JJC feedback after walking the Ranch on ways to better serve the youth there.
- Dane reports that looking forward another 45 days, he anticipates that testing scores will continue to go up.

Probation Department Juvenile Program: Mike Simms and Marc Utsey, Ashanti Hayes, Alex Villa, and Dolores Morales reported on the following:

- Mike reports that the Ranch has been experiencing a lot of positive changes. Many audits and inspections are currently taking place and they are utilizing the involvement of the Youth Advisory Committee for helpful feedback. Through tours, speaking to the community, and weekly meetings, the committee is able to see the fruit of their advocacy. In collaboration with Blue Ridge, a logo change has occurred through youth submissions. Blue Ridge Bull is the new logo designed by the youth.
- Marc reports that Juvenile Hall is doing everything they can to keep the youth safe and be able to provide the best services possible once the youth arrive at the Hall. Audits and inspections are ongoing at the Hall as they work on reestablishing a safety committee and continue to develop the secure track program.
- Ashanti reports that Juvenile Hall is focusing on safety, education and being able to provide youth with the best services possible once they arrive at the Hall. Audits and inspections are currently taking place at the Hall as well. The Hall is focused on re-establishing a safety committee, developing the secure track program, and reestablishing the oversight committee for PBI
- Alex thanked Eugene from COE, the collaboration remains strong. Alex was able to meet with Eugene to identify some Education Services individuals to support the transition planning effort. Alex met with Julles from Alcove to talk about work as education employment specialist. Together they were able to distribute educational materials to the Education Services unit to train the unit on services provided by Alcove.
- Sealing process recently expanded and went live at Juvenile Hall. Moving forward, all Divergent PEID and PIOS programs will now be recipients of letters for CBOs that require them to seal.

PIOS is set to go live early October. The County is currently calling disaster service workers called away from Education services and other divisions within probation.

- On race equity: The department has four committees devoted to race equity, Communications Committee, Data Committee, Policy Practice Committee, and Training Committee. The goal of these committees are to normalize, organize, and operationalize the race equity efforts of the department.
- Dolores thanks everyone for their participation and support in the Youth Advisory Podcast last week. Dolores reported that Juvenile Justice Systems Collaborative will be meeting in person beginning in October. Hybrid meeting options are being looked into, but moving forward, meetings will continue in person. Meeting information and updates will be sent out.
- Commissioner Rhoads asked Probation to share information about their podcast. Dolores answered that she will send out info to Commissioner Rhoads.
- Commissioner Pennypacker asked if Probation could share items that they may have implemented during COVID that they would like to keep going after the pandemic in a future meeting. Have there been any positive changes?

Department of Children and Family Service/Children's Receiving Center (DFCS): Damion Wright reported on the following:

- The department has been meeting with JJC about scattered sites and about service delivery and how the youth are being cared for.
- DFCS has begun to reduce the number of scattered sites based on the availability to place youth in other levels of care and working with families to keep youth in their family home.

Behavioral Health: Veronica Robles reported on the following:

- Allcove Centers are providing an Integrated Youth Center in collaboration with peer support through Alum Rock, Behavioral Health Services, VMC and Stanford to provide psychiatry and healthcare services, no insurance required. Services provided will serve youth ages 12-25 for mild-moderate needs. Sites are located in San Jose, and Palo Alto. More information can be found at alcove.org.
- Positive changes to note in light of pandemic: Continue to have CFT and MBT meetings with youth and partners are able to continue virtually. Lots of services have adapted to provide a hybrid virtual/in person model to move forward with treatment and services.
- Behavioral Health was able to support the youth at the Hall by creating care packages, books, writing letters to youth in collaboration with Behavioral Health clinicians and Starlight team at the Ranch.

Announcements/Correspondence: None.

Adjourn to Executive Session: Chair BurtonBurke adjourned to Executive Session at 1:37 p.m. The next meeting will take place on Zoom on October 5, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Anjelica Hayden