

**COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA**  
**JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes – August 5, 2025**  
**Via Zoom**

**Commissioners Present:** Marcie Bellicitti, Chair  
Vaishali “Shali” Sirkay, Vice Chair  
Howard Pomerantz, Secretary  
Stephen Betts  
Victoria Burton Burke  
Nora Manchester  
Penny Blake  
Karen Guldan  
Patrick Lopez-Aguado (*virtual*)  
Andrew Cain (*virtual*)  
Deryk Clark  
Kevin Rudich  
Michelle Wu

**Commissioners Absent:** Diana Traub  
Neha Parthasarathi

**Also Present:** Kara Garasky, Superior Court  
Honorable Sunil Kulkarni, Superior Court  
Honorable Jose Franco, Superior Court  
Honorable Vinita Bali, Superior Court  
Vone Kegarice, Probation Department  
Ashanti Hayes, Probation Department  
Ignacio Carriles, Probation Department  
Gladys Tran, Probation Department  
Mariel Caballero, Probation Department  
Melissa Garcia, Probation Department  
Trina Gauthier, Probation Department  
Etelvina Alvarez, Probation Department  
Victoria Contreras-Wolfe, Probation Department  
Daniel Cortez, Probation Department  
Jill Ugalde, Probation Department  
Liwei Wei, Probation Department  
Veronica Robles, BHSD  
Mayra Vargas, BHSD  
Marina Dragovic, BHSD  
Alex Adams, DAO  
Damon Silver, PDO  
Lana Kreidie, IDO  
Laura Garnet, DFCS  
Ruth Maurice, Victim Offender Mediation  
Dr. Shelley Aggarwal, Medical Services  
Roberto Lainez, Medical Services  
Karen Paulson, Medical Services

Jay Donoghue, Medical Services  
Vianni Garcia, FLY  
Eva Gonzalez, FLY  
Alexis Roman, YWFC  
Adreaonna Jansen, YWFC  
Ashley Dargert, Office of County Supervisor Otto Lee

**Call to Order & Introductions:** Chair Bellicitti called the meeting to order at 12:15pm.

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

**Swearing In:** None.

**Public Comments/Oral Petitions:** None.

**Approval of Minutes:** June 3, 2025 Minutes approved by all Commissioners present.

## **REPORTS**

**Presentation: ADOLESCENT HEALTH AND HARM REDUCTION (Dr. Shelley Aggarwal, Roberto Lainez, Jay Donoghue)**

- System impacted youth health
  - General health
    - Increased risk for injury and use of the emergency department
    - Less primary care utilization and access
    - Less insurance access
  - Increased mental health needs and diagnoses
  - Unaddressed preventative care needs (i.e. dental care, eye health, immunizations, etc.)
  - Reproductive Health
    - Increased risk for STIs, higher risk for teen pregnancy
- Guadalupe and Morgan Hill clinics:
  - Admission evaluations and comprehensive medical care
  - Dental care (onsite dental suite)
  - Optometry care (onsite optometry suite)
  - Referral to specialists
  - Multidisciplinary team models
  - Service goals: initiation of needed care, continuation of care, coordination of complex care, preventative care, and transitions of care to the community
- Looking at adolescence through biological, psychosocial, and cognitive changes
- Puberty is not the same as adolescence
- Adolescent development and peer influences
  - Peers and social learning
  - Peers and identity formation
  - Peers and risk-taking and health-promoting behaviors
- Peer Health educator
  - A group of trained youth leaders that work to promote healthy behaviors and lifestyles by informing their peers and raising awareness and knowledge about various health and wellness topics.

- Teens in community-based settings are more likely to make behavioral changes if they learn from a peer
  - School-based peer education programs have shown better health knowledge uptake, specifically for sexual health topics
  - Peer education improves leadership and public speaking skills
- Peer health education programs;
  - The Ranch - 3 programs with YAC
  - Juvenile Hall – one program with SYTF and LIFT youth
- Young people and opioids
  - Overdose deaths for people 14-18 years old increased 94% from 2019 to 2020
    - Increased 20% from 2020 to 2021
  - Overdose deaths 10-19 years old in 2021
    - 60% overdose deaths occurred at home
    - 67% of the time someone else was also home
    - 60% of the time the teen had no pulse by the time EMS arrived
    - Narcan given in <1:3 overdose deaths
- Narcan vending machine located in the Juvenile Facilities Court lobby
- Presented various types of Fentanyl messaging to youth
- Commissioner Sirkay asked: How is this work impacted by budget cuts?
  - Dr. Aggarwal: More vulnerable populations are going to be affected disproportionately, but we don't know any specifics yet.
- Commissioner Rudich asked: Do you do anything to connect youth and families with services once they are released?
  - Dr. Aggarwal: We are currently working on projects to provide more seamless transition of medical care.
- Laura Garnet asked: Are these programs grant funded?
  - Dr. Aggarwal: The art project was related to a grant, and peer health was briefly supported by a public health grant, but has since gone away.
  - Chief Garnet: Is there any chance of expanding this to other youth populations?
  - Dr. Aggarwal: We would love to bring it to other areas if the resources are available to do so.

**Chair's Report:** Chair Bellicitti reported on the following:

- JJC will conduct James Ranch, Juvenile Hall, SYTF, LEA, shelter facilities inspections this year.
- JJC legislative committee continues to monitor California legislation.
- JJC will be looking at two Grand Civil Jury reports that were released (one about the Ranch, one about high-needs youth).

**Presiding Judge:** Judge Franco reported on the following:

- DIY steering committee finalized and signed updated protocol.
- Meeting in Oct to update competency protocol.
  - The court only has two available competency evaluators.
- Continuing to work on record sealing protocols.
- Working on project to go paperless.
- Welcome Judge Bali-- new dependency judge.

Judge Kulkarni reported on the following:

- Working on 827 petition protocol for record requests.

**Dependency Court:** Judge Bali reported on the following:

- Dependency court is now averaging 50 new petitions per month.
  - 59 new petitions in July.

**Dependency Advocacy Center (DAC):** No one present to report.

**Legal Advocates for Children & Youth (LACY):** No one present to report.

**Victim Offender Mediation:** Ruth Maurice had nothing new to report.

**Alternative Schools Department:** No one present to report.

**Department of Family and Children's Service (DFCS):** Laura Garnet reported on the following:

- Transitional housing now has food made by staff in house.
- DFCS will report out on ISFC recruitment and transitional sites on 8/28.
- Looking at a property to purchase for a potential STRTP.
- Working on making Family Finding an ongoing task throughout the case.

**Probation Department:**

Ashanti Hayes reported on the following for the Ranch:

- Current population: 28
  - 4 SYTF
- Shift change for staff was on 8/4.
- Kitchen staff made a 4<sup>th</sup> of July meal for the youth.
- Youth have activities to do in the summer when they are not attending school.

Daniel Cortez reported on the following for Juvenile Hall:

- Current population: 60 (57 male, 3 female)
  - 19 SYTF
- Held Juvenile Hall Olympics in July.
- Unannounced visit from BSCC last month.

Etelvina Alvarez reported on the following for services:

- JPD supervisors held taco luncheon for staff.
- National Night Out 8/5.

**Behavioral Health:** Veronica Robles reported on the following:

- New program manager working out of class to support South County sites.

**Medical Services:** Dr. Shelley Aggarwal reported on the following:

- 9 youth in the facilities have tested positive for Covid in the past 2 weeks.
- Youth in the Covid unit have individual rooms.
- Covid vaccine is offered but not mandated in facilities.

**Law Enforcement Agencies:** No one present to report.

**District Attorney's Office:** Alex Adams had nothing new to report.

**Public Defender's Office:** Damon Silver had nothing new to report.

**Alternate Defender's Office:** No one present to report.

**Independent Defenders Office:** Lana Kreidie reported on the following:

- Ralph Robles was chosen to serve as a Commissioner in Santa Clara County.
- Will be adding a new attorney to the IDO panel.
- IDO panel attorneys attended a tour of the Ranch.

**Announcements/Correspondence:**

- None.

**Adjourn to Executive Session:** Chair Bellicitti adjourned to Executive Session at 1:13p.m. The next meeting will take place on September 2, 2025 via Zoom. Participants are also welcome to attend in person in the Independence Conference Room on the ground floor of 353 West Julian Street, San Jose.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara Garasky