

SOLANO COUNTY
Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission
AGENDA

MEMBERS

Sept 6th, 2017

County Administration Center - 675 Texas Street
Conference Room 6003
Fairfield, CA 94533

3:00 p.m. Meeting

Cynthia Phillips,

Commissioner

Joanne Carli

Commissioner

Rhonda Green,

Interim Secretary

Andre Davis Sr.

Commissioner

Rosalind Reid,

Commissioner

Frances Nelson,

Commissioner

Louise McNeill

Commissioner

Julie Hilt

Commissioner

Paul Ligda

Commissioner

Damian Spieckerman

Commissioner

Arabella Compton

Commissioner

Rhonda Renfro

Commissioner

Lawrence Barnes

Commissioner

Anthony McCrary

Commissioner

PURPOSE STATEMENT – Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission

The mission of the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission (JJJPC) is to inquire into the administration of juvenile justice in Solano County. The overall objective is to reduce the recidivism rate of juvenile offenders in the local criminal justice system.

The Solano County JJJPC was established by the Solano County Board of Supervisors under authority of California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 233. Its predecessor organizations were the Juvenile Justice Commission, mandated by Section 225 of the W&I Code and the Delinquency Prevention Commission authorized by Section 233 of the W&I Code.

The duties and functions of the Commission are stated in Sections: 228, 229, 229.5, 230, 233, and 234 of the Welfare and Institutions Code

The JJJPC is granted access to all publicly administered institutions in Solano County authorized by the Juvenile Court Law. This includes annual inspections of probation administered institutions, jails, and other lockups detaining juveniles.

This agenda shall be made available upon request in alternative formats to persons with a disability, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 12132) and the Ralph M. Brown Act (Govt. Code, § 54954.2). Persons requesting a disability-related modification or accommodation should contact Tami Robinson, 475 Union Street, Fairfield CA 94533 (707-784-7564) during regular business hours, at least 24 hours prior to the time of the meeting.

If you wish to address any item listed on the agenda, please limit your comments to 3 minutes. You will be able to address the Commission under item III.

- | <u>ITEM</u> | <u>AGENCY/STAFF</u> |
|---|--|
| I. CALL TO ORDER (3:00 p.m.) | Chair/Co-Chair |
| II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR June 7th, 2017 | |
| III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA | |
| IV. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT
Pursuant to the Brown Act, each public agency must provide the public with an opportunity to speak on any matter within the subject matter of the jurisdiction of the agency and which is not on the agency's agenda for that meeting. Comments are limited to no more than 3 minutes per speaker. By law, no action may be taken on any item raised during the public comment period although informational answers to questions may be given and the matter may be referred to staff for placement on a future agenda. | |
| V. DISCUSSION CALENDAR | |
| 1. <u>Probation and Juvenile Detention Facility Updates</u> | Chief Hansen/Probation
Supt. Farrah/JDF |
| 2. <u>Resource Guide/Referral Update (No Action).</u>
Com. Compton or substitute. | |
| 3. <u>Inspection of Supervised Visitation Centers. (No Action).</u>
Com. Reid. | |
| VI ACTION ITEMS | |
| 1. <u>Voting in JJDPC Officers:</u>
Com. Green. | |
| VII. <u>New Business/Future Agenda</u> | Chair/Co-Chair |
| Commissioners may request future agenda items to be discussed, or items that may need action on future agendas. | |

The next tentatively scheduled meeting is **Oct 4th, 2017** from 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. at The County Admin Center, 675 Texas Street, Conference Room 6003.

SOLANO COUNTY
Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 7th, 2017

Commissioners Present:

Andre Davis
Arabella Compton
Cynthia Phillips
Damian Spieckerman
Frances Nelson
Joanne Carli
Lawrence Barnes
Louise McNeill
Paul Ligda
Rhonda Renfro
Rosalind Reid

Excused Absence:

Anthony McCrary
Rhonda Green

Unexcused Absence:

Julie Hilt

Non-Members Present:

Alice R, Guest
Dean Farrah, Superintendent JDF
Jill Sowards, Northern California Legal Services
Mrs. Chambers, Public
Nancy Wirt, Solano County Library
Noah Toliver, Guest

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (May 3rd, 2017): Com. Reid moved to approve minutes with noted corrections. Com. Ligda seconded. 11 in favor, 0 (zero) opposing and 0 (zero) abstained. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENA: Com. Ligda moved to approve the agenda. Com. Barnes seconded. 11 in favor, 0 (zero) opposing and 0 (zero) abstained. Motion carried.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Jill Sowards reported on Solano County's moratorium and reduction of certain juvenile administrative fees, which is currently being investigated by the County's Board of Supervisors (here on referred to as BoS.). She recommends the JJDPC recommend to the BoS that the moratorium be extended to apply to all fees. For further details, see Attachment A.
- K. Wirt reported the library's 3-month summer program started. States youth can read books for prizes, and states she hopes to extend the program to JDF. Said youth can obtain library cards upon release, and if stated that no address or I.D. is required to access digital information on library computers.

DISCUSSION CALENDAR:

1. Probation and Juvenile Detention Facility Updates:

- As of 6/07/17, the population at JDF stands at 48 (45 males/3 females). 16 in Challenge. Eight youth graduated from Challenge. New Foundation not reported on.
- Detention Training Tool training to begin next week.
- Three program staff selected, and "training for trainers" to begin at the beginning of the fiscal year.
- Met with JDF medical/mental health providers (California Forensic Medical Group (CFMG)). Agreed that youth detained for one day will be subject to a mental health assessment within 72 hours. CFMG will also conduct Cognitive Behavioral Counseling on the pods.
- New booking criteria list effective so far. Zero youth with misdemeanor offenses detained.
- Superintendent Farrah requested to discuss the topic of fees as reported by Jill Sowards. States that Probation Officers are conflicted in that families report an inability to pay, but officers note their ongoing acquisition of material items suggest otherwise and/or a greater ability to pay than reported. States Probation needs to access a best practice approach to address accountability. When questioned by Com. Reid about general fees and fees specific to detained youth, Superintendent Farrah reported he was not knowledgeable of all the fees imposed by the Courts and/or other agencies (i.e. Public Defender, etc), but stated the fees imposed on detained youth is done so by statute.

-Com. Spieckerman requested that the Commission review the information provided by Jill Sowards and be prepared to question Superintendent Farrah at the next meeting regarding the report's accuracy.

2. Time Allotments:

- Discussion regarding allotting report time discussed with Superintendent Farrah. He reported that it would be helpful to receive specific items commissioners would like him to report on regularly, and suggested information requested during the meeting could be reported on at subsequent meeting. Chair Phillips requested that standard stuff (i.e. JDF stats, etc.) and other like information be submitted in writing. Superintendent Farrah agreed to look into it.

3. Resource Guide/Referrals

- Com. Compton reiterated the goals and purpose of her resource guide.

4. Youth Commission:

- Com. Ligda reported that he met with Judge Daniels, and stated that Judge Daniels made it very clear that he wanted all individuals who are interested in a position on the Commission to apply. Com. Ligda reported that he distributed applications to those who expressed an interest, but had no information as to whether they were submitted for consideration. Com. Compton agreed to contact the applicants to follow-up with them.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Resource Guide:

- After discussions, Com. Reid moved that the resource guide continue as intended. Motion Com. Davis seconded. 11 in favor, 0 (zero) opposing and 0 (zero) abstained. Motion carried.

2. Written Report- Time Allotment:

- Vacated. See "Discussion Calendar."

3. Recess for July and August:

Recording of June 2017 meeting terminated prematurely. End of notes.

Attachment A

Submitted by Jill Sowards, Northern California Legal Services.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with the Commission on Solano County's moratorium and reduction of certain juvenile administrative fees, which is currently being investigated by the County's Board of supervisors.

Our office represents low-income families in Solano County. We urge the Commission to encourage the County to extend the moratorium to include all administrative fees and also stop current collection on existing fees.

I have provided the Commissioners with a recent report by the University of California, Berkeley. This report and the County's own reporting on its fee program supports three major findings that are related to the Commission's goal of reducing juvenile recidivism:

- (1) Fees are harmful to youth and families, fees may undermine the rehabilitative purpose of the juvenile system, and are costly because most families cannot afford to pay;
- (2) Solano is currently collecting fees that are not permitted under state law;
- (3) Solano collects a small percentage of what it charges and most of what the County expends on the program is for collection activity, not youth supported activity.

1. County is operating at a loss and fees may not reduce recidivism

The County is losing money assessing and collecting juvenile fees. In fiscal year 2014-15, it lost about \$150,000, after taking into consideration how much was collected in administrative fees and how much was spent on collection.

Reporting indicates that Solano is paying more to collect fees from mainly low-income families than for the rehabilitative programmatic work.

In addition, recent studies show that fees may *increase* recidivism and that eliminating juvenile fees could *reduce* the recidivism effects of those fees. This finding runs contrary to popular belief, and is intimately linked to the goals of the Commission. This may be because fees place a strain on family relationships and may force families choose between paying the fees or covering preventive medical care, paying for positive educational opportunities, buying food, paying rent, buying gas, or making car repairs in order to attend work or school.

Thus, not only is the County not generating revenue for the rehabilitative aspects of the program, the fees themselves may also undermine the goal of reducing recidivism.

2. Equity issues exist throughout the juvenile system

In addition, Racial equity concerns exist throughout the juvenile system, which mean that juvenile administrative fees disproportionately harm families of color. Because youth of color are detained at a higher rate, their families are liable for higher fee burdens.

3. The County is also charging fees that are not permitted under state law

California law does not authorize counties to charge families fees for their children's investigation reports, nor does it allow Counties to charge youth who are not found guilty of any crime. Solano County does both and neither practice is currently included in the moratorium.

4. The County's process contains numerous procedural issues

The County currently does not provide translated versions of its fee documents. Families with limited English proficiency do not always know what they are agreeing to, and report being confused about their obligations.

Families also report that they are not advised of the total amount in fees owed, only their weekly or monthly obligation and that they are not given proper notice about their right to a hearing to challenge the fee determination if they disagree.

5. Ability to pay – Solano County charges families that are unable to pay administrative fees

All counties must have an evaluation procedure for determining whether a family is able to pay administrative fees. Solano currently does not have a transparent evaluation procedure. Families report that when they indicate that they are unable to pay, they are still asked what they are willing to pay or if they can pay a reduced lump sum. Although it may be unintentional, County appears to reach agreements on an amount rather than an actual ability to pay, which sets families up to fail. As previously discussed, this can contribute to family instability.

For these reasons, we recommend that the Commission support a complete moratorium on juvenile administrative fees and on the collection of current debt to consider the impact of these fees on recidivism. We believe the Commission's investigation will support a recommendation to eliminate all fees and retroactively end the collection of outstanding debts.