

Juvenile Justice Commission
Teleconference & GoToMeeting Participation Only
Pursuant to Governor's Executive Order N-29-20
Thursday, July 23, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Members Present

Steve MacFarland, Chairman
Betty Cunningham
Susan Duncan
Troy Foster
Kaitlynn Hancock
Jennifer Richards
Yvonne Tate
Joseph Hanna
Cindy Vogt
Barbara Van Dyke

Others Present

Chelsey Chappelle, Probation
Carla Stevens, Probation
Jackie Durant, Hope City
Twyla Carpenter, Probation
Tracie Neal, Probation
James Goodwine, Probation
Alyssa Lowery, Probation
Megan Wilding, Probation
Judge Kennedy, Superior Court
Nikolai Orloff
Erin Bertain, Probation

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 p.m. A quorum was present by roll call.

2. Introductions

3. Minutes

Steve MacFarland moved to approve the meeting minutes for January 23, 2020; Seconded by Jennifer Richards; Motion passed. 9 Ayes, 0 Noes; By roll call.

4. Introduction of New Deputy Probation Officers

Alyssa Lowery and Megan Wilding were introduced to the Commission. Each gave a brief overview of their education, work, and career history.

Note: Betty Cunningham joined the meeting.

5. Probation Reports

a. Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility (JRF)

Carla Stevens reported, during the beginning of COVID, the JRF population was reduced as much as possible. She explained youth pending DJJ, long-term commitment orders, youth pending transfer hearings, and placement were not released during this process. She said, in addition, they limited bookings on youth generally focusing on those who had committed serious or violent offenses and/or 707(b) offenses. Carla stated they closed the facility to nonessential employees and all other interactions were transferred to a virtual platform. With these safety measures in place, the JRF was able to reduce the overall facility population. She reported they began noticing a noticeable depression in the youth in June, so they began opening some of the direct contact but did so with safety precautions. Due to the lower population numbers, the JRF has had the ability to implement the safety precautions to allow for the slow reintegration of programs and services. Carla said parents now have the ability to conduct visits via Skype or face-to-face. She said there are additional restrictions to visiting including wearing masks, social distancing, and disinfecting. Carla stated procedures are changed as needed with changes from the Governor or the Public Health Officer as well as lessons learned. She reported everyone in the facility has remained healthy.

Carla discussed the process for new bookings to assure the health and safety of the youth being booked and the JRF youth and staff.

Carla said the youth transitioned to distance learning via Chromebooks and the transition was smooth, but the lack of direct interaction with the teachers has had a negative effect. She hopes face-to-face class will resume in July. She stated Northern Valley Catholic Social Services will start back in the facility next week to facilitate Girls Council, Boys Circle, and Towards No Drugs.

Carla reported that staff wear masks in the JRF except when working directly with the residents; for safety purposes the use of masks when working with the youth is optional. Masks are worn by staff when conducting activities where they are interacting others who do not work inside the facility. She stated they also practice social distancing whenever possible.

Tracie Neal discussed the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) Title 15 Regulations and the process for requesting emergency suspensions.

Tracie said Probation has procedures in place for how to navigate COVID-19 testing on site for both youth and staff. She said staff have been amazing and have reported any concerns about potential COVID-19 exposure. She said youth have been keeping busy during COVID-19 with activities including working in the garden and preparing meals for individuals in Project Roomkey. Tracie reported Carla has been working to create cohorts of staffing to limit COVID-19 exposure within the facility.

Carla reported a lower population of 18 youth with a desire to keep the population under 20 during COVID-19. She said they currently have three out-of-county youth and five placement youth. She stated one youth was placed at DJJ; one youth is pending DJJ; and one youth who was tried as an adult, turned 18, chose to transfer to the Shasta County Jail. She reported three youth currently in the JRF have already graduated high school and there were two graduations which were held on the pod. Carla stated they were fully staffed for a couple of months but recently there have been some resignations. She said one of the Juvenile Detention Officers (JDO) was promoted to supervisor and there will be eight more promotions due to the addition of a JDO III classification. Carla reported the sports athletic program is up and running with basketball and volleyball. She said the youth and staff made cornhole games as well. Carla stated the Fine Arts Therapy through Hope City will be starting soon. She reported a contract with Victor Community Support Services is also on the horizon for additional therapeutic services in the JRF. She reported that a full-time mental health clinician position was also added for this fiscal year and the position should be filled shortly. She said they are still working to build a de-escalation room using Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (JAG) funding, which also funds the sports program and fine arts therapy.

Steve MacFarland asked for an update on the River's Edge Academy. Tracie explained the 700 pod will be transformed into a rehabilitative treatment program with camp components to serve 10-15 youth and will mirror a Short Term Residential Treatment Program (STRTP). She reminded the group that it has often been a struggle to place Probation youth in STRTPs. She said the program will be focused on treatment with a camp aspect which will include work in the community on the weekends. She said a logo will be developed, the youth will wear polos and chinos, and the program will be less institutionalized. She said currently there are 29 youth in out of home placements and the goal will be to bring about half of the youth to this program. She said the goal is to start the program on January 1, 2021. She stated, in some cases, Probation will use the academy as a step-down program for youth transitioning back from STRTPs. Chelsey Chappelle said she believes there will be a huge benefit to keeping the youth within Shasta County. James Goodwine echoed the sentiments and said when youth are placed out of county, parent engagement is more optional and harder to enforce but this program should improve family engagement efforts.

b. Juvenile Supervision

Tracie Neal reported when the Governor issued the COVID-19 orders in March, the Juvenile Division lobby was closed. She said Probation contacts were conducted mostly by phone and home visits were done with the officers staying outside the residence. She stated Probation worked very hard to continue to provide supervision and support during these times. Tracie said the Juvenile lobby has recently opened, but office visits and drug tests are limited. She shared this has been challenging because youth depend on officers for support and services with Community Based Organizations (CBO's) have decreased significantly. Tracie said in addition, the Juvenile Division has worked hard to keep youth out of the JRF and in the community and stabilized. She said they've also worked hard to get youth with placement orders into STRTPs when possible, although some have returned. Tracie reminded the group of the transition in January to a new Division Director and Supervisor.

James Goodwine reported providers that would normally come into the Juvenile Office to provide services, especially for Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) and Aggression Replacement Therapy (ART), transitioned to an online format. James shared engaging the youth virtually has been challenging especially for newer youth who don't have an existing relationship with the provider. He said the youth are getting tired of doing therapy on screen and not in person. James reported leadership in the Juvenile Division has focused on revising policies and procedures and improving processes.

Tracie reported the arrest reports for youth have been significantly down with only a handful on a monthly basis. She said the prior week was the highest week in recent months with a total of nine.

Chelsey said Probation is still working with Children and Family Services on crossover youth. She also said the Juvenile Prevention Officer at Gateway Unified School District has been very successful and negotiations are currently in process to have a part time officer at Foothill High School.

Tracie stated youth in out-of-county STRTPs are being seen via GoTo Meetings. She clarified that officers are not traveling out of the area to visit youth in placement but are still have interactions with the youth.

6. Judge's Comments

Judge Kennedy reported the courts reduced hearings to only in custody hearings from March to May due to COVID-19. He said the other hearings have mostly returned to normal with social distancing and wearing of masks. He said generally juvenile matters are not open to the public and are small by nature. He stated finding placements for youth was much more difficult during COVID-19. Judge Kennedy said they continue to have youth who are difficult to place including those with mental health issues. He stated he's noticed an increase of youth with sex offenses. He said he will need to schedule the inspection of the JRF soon and suggested Thursday, July 30th at 10:00 a.m.

7. Schedule the Inspection of Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility

Steve MacFarland said the JJC inspection needs to be scheduled for October with three commissioners. Steve indicated the inspection should be scheduled for two different days with two groups (one to do facility inspection and the other to do staff/youth interviews). Twyla will send out an email to solicit interest and available dates for the commission members.

8. Discussion Items

Yvonne Tate asked about how the JRF is being sanitized. Carla reported that sanitizing wipes and spray are provided along with hand sanitizer. She said there is a spray machine for the showers. She reported sanitizing takes place multiple times each day.

9. Action Items

- a. Consider reappointment of Commission member Cindy Ross Vogt
Steve MacFarland moved to reappoint Cindy Ross Vogt; Yuvonne Tate seconded; Roll call vote – Barbara Van Dyke and Susan Duncan were unable to vote due to technical difficulties. 7 Ayes, 0 Noes; Motion passed.
- b. Consider appointment of New Juvenile Commission member Nikolai Orloff. Steve MacFarland moved to appoint Nikolai Orloff; Cindy Vogt seconded; Roll call vote; 9 Ayes, 0 Noes; Motion passed.
- c. Judge Kennedy swore both commission members in.

10. Commission Member Comments

11. Other business

Steve MacFarland stated the next quarterly meeting is scheduled at **3:00 p.m., on Thursday, October 22, at the Remi Vista Conference Room, located at 2701 Park Marina Drive, 3rd Floor, in Redding.**

Meeting adjourned at 4:34.

Respectfully submitted,

Twyla Carpenter

APPROVED:

Steve MacFarland, Chairman