



JJDC Monthly Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2024

Location: Rustin Conference Center
2085 Rustin Ave., Riverside, CA 92507

In Attendance: Laurel Cook, Cynthia Magill, Brian Ortiz, Georgia Hussein, Joshua Angell, Pam Torres, Bruce Fordon, Amanda Wade, Fidel Chagolla, Michael Ortega, Michelle Wohl, Matt Thompson, Angela Wonzo, Allison Donahoe Beggs, Daniel Castaneda

Excused Absence: Chris Collopy, Michael Belknap, Patricia Watson, Paul Parker

Applicants: Daniel Marmolejo, Jay Franklin

1. Call to Order

- a. With a quorum present, Commissioner Laurel Cook called the meeting to order at 1:45 PM, stepping in as the acting chair due to the absence of Chair Christopher Collopy and Vice-Chair Paul Parker, who were unavailable due to medical reasons. Commissioner Cook noted her position as the secretary and immediate past president qualified her to assume the responsibility.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

- a. The Pledge of Allegiance, led by Commissioner Cook.

3. Roll Call / Welcome / Introductions

- a. Welcome:
 - i. Commissioner Cook welcomed all attendees, including members of the public and JJDC applicants. Each attendee introduced themselves and their affiliations.

4. Public Comment

- a. Commissioner Cook invited any public comments. There were no public comments made.

5. Motion to Approve Agenda

- a. Commissioner Wade moved to approve the agenda, which was seconded by commissioner Angell. The motion was passed unanimously.

6. Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes (June 13, 2024)

- a. Commissioner Wade motioned to accept the minutes for the monthly meeting held on June 13, 2024. Commissioner Angell seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

7. County Counsel Report

- a. Updates:
 - i. Bruce Fordon reported no new developments from the County Counsel's office.

8a. Riverside County Probation (Institutional Services) Assistant Division Director Matt Thompson (SWJ) and Chief Deputy Probation Officer Daniel Castaneda.

- a. Updates / Current Population:
 - i. Assistant Division Director Matt Thompson reported the redistribution of youth was undertaken to align them with their respective regions and address waitlist challenges. He acknowledged that this process led to initial adjustments as the youth settled into their new environments.
- b. **Daily Census and Incident Data:**
 - i. AD Thompson directed the commissioners' attention to the daily census report included in the meeting packets, detailing the current population breakdown across facilities.
 - ii. AD Thompson noted the uptick in incidents at the Riverside facility was due to the transition period and new population.
- c. **Vocational and Educational Opportunities:**
 - i. AD Thompson highlighted a welding program enabling youth to gain valuable skills and certifications. He also shared a success story of a female youth who obtained her forklift license, secured employment at Walgreens, and successfully transferred her job to her home region.
 - ii. Additional outings for youth, include pro-social and vocational activities, fostering real-world experience and personal growth.
- d. **Updates by Daniel Castaneda (CDPO, Institutional Services):** Daniel Castaneda expanded on AD Thompson's updates, covering the following topics:
 - i. **Community Engagement and Staff Celebrations:** CDPO Castaneda thanked Commissioner Cook for attending their recent Reconnect and Celebrate Probation (RCP) event, which drew nearly 400 attendees, including probation staff and retirees. He emphasized the importance of fostering community and staff morale through such gatherings.
 - ii. **Pro-Social Outings:** Youth participated in diverse outings, including trips to the Miramar Air Show, SeaWorld, Safari Wild Animal Park, and Homeboy Industries, among others. CDPO Castaneda underscored these events' value in providing educational and social enrichment for the youth.
 - iii. **SB81 Round Two - Construction Updates:** CDPO Castaneda shared updates on the planned vocational building construction, set to begin in early 2025.



The facility will include classrooms for automotive and welding training, recreation spaces, and other supportive resources.

- iv. **Renovation of Unit 6:** CDPO Castaneda outlined the renovations to Unit 6, which will transition to a less restrictive unit based on youth input. Additions include half-walls for privacy, new flooring, and fresh paint. The unit will accommodate juniors and seniors working or attending college in the community.
 - v. **Youth Pathways Program:** CDPO Castaneda highlighted the success of the Pathways to Success program, which supports youth transitioning into vocational and educational opportunities. The program currently accommodates 24 youth across two units in Indio and 18 in Riverside.
 - vi. **Incident Management and Staff Training:** CDPO Castaneda acknowledged increased incidents across facilities and attributed this to new staff and youth adjustments. He emphasized the role of the Staff Development Unit (SDU) in training staff and building their capacity to manage incidents effectively.
- e. **Discussion Points and Q&A:**
- i. **Welding Program Certification:**
 - o **Commissioner Amanda Wade:** Inquired about the certification process for the welding program and whether the instruction was provided by a private company.
 - o **CDPO Castaneda:** Clarified that the welding program is conducted off-site in Murrieta and certifications are offered. He mentioned plans to expand mobile welding services to Riverside.
 - ii. **Handling Increased Incidents:**
 - o **Commissioner Amanda Wade:** Asked about strategies to address increased incidents at the facilities.
 - o **CDPO Castaneda:** Responded that staff training is the cornerstone of their approach. He highlighted the onboarding of 45 new staff at YTEC and ongoing training to ensure consistency in handling incidents.
 - iii. **Homeboy Industries:**
 - o **Commissioner Brian Ortiz:** Asked if Homeboy Industries provided tattoo removal services.
 - o **CDPO Castaneda:** Explained that while other vendors handle tattoo removal in Riverside County, the Homeboy Industries outings focus on vocational training and rehabilitation programs.
 - iv. **Halloween Activities:**
 - o **Commissioner Laurel Cook:** Inquired about recent Halloween activities at Southwest Juvenile Hall.
 - o **CDPO Castaneda:** Detailed creative efforts by youth, noting that Unit 4 won the decorating contest and received Wingstop as a reward. Other units were rewarded with pizza for their participation.

8b. Riverside County Probation (Special Services Division)

- a. **Updates / Highlights:**
 - i. It was noted that no representative from the division was present to provide live updates. Commissioner Cook highlighted that relevant data from the division was included in the meeting packet for commissioners to review independently.

8. Behavioral Health:

- a. **Updates / Highlights:**
 - i. A representative from Behavioral Health was not in attendance.

10. Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) Deputy Director of Public Social Services, Allison Donahoe Beggs

- a. **Updates / Highlights:**
 - i. **Retirement Announcement:** Deputy Director Donahoe Beggs announced her upcoming retirement and introduced Deputy Director Michelle Wohl as her replacement. She expressed gratitude for the opportunity to work with the Commission and reflected on her time with DPSS, emphasizing the department's commitment to supporting families and youth.
 - ii. **Referral Data:** Deputy Director Donahoe Beggs shared data on hotline referrals for October 2024:
 - o **October 2024 Totals:** Hotline referrals increased to **3,836**, up from **3,603** in September.
 - o Immediate response cases (requiring action within 24 hours) fluctuated between 14-15%.
 - o Preventative services referrals, which are evaluated out if abuse or neglect is not present, if no such issues are identified, the preventative services team initiates the necessary outreach. DPSS's focus on connecting families with appropriate resources.
 - iii. **Placement Data:**
 - o Deputy Director Donahoe Beggs provided detailed statistics on children exiting placement: 120 children exited placement in October, with primary reasons including adoption, reunification, and guardianship.
 - o She emphasized the department's efforts to reduce out-of-county placements, noting a decrease from 871 in September to 859 in October. In-county placements were reported at 2,251.
 - iv. **Harmony Haven Updates:**
 - o Harmony Haven, a transitional shelter, currently houses 36 children, including one in a hotel placement (reduced from three the previous month).
 - o Facility upgrades include ADA improvements, road paving, additional cameras, fencing, and lighting.



- A two-week training program for Harmony Haven staff is set to launch in January 2025, focusing on motivation systems and behavioral stabilization strategies for the youth.
 - v. **Collaboration and Staffing:**
 - DPSS continues to strengthen partnerships with behavioral health services and probation for dual-status youth.
 - Staffing adjustments are ongoing due to budget considerations, with new workforce members being trained to ensure continuity of care and efficient case management.
 - vi. **Discussion Points and Q&A:**
 - **Services Expansion: Commissioner Amanda Wade:** Asked about the progress of an agreement with Beaumont for additional services.
 - **Deputy Director Donahoe Beggs:** Confirmed that monthly meetings are ongoing, with the goal of establishing on-site instructional services.
 - vii. **Licensing Requirements for Harmony Haven:**
 - **Commissioner Brian Ortiz:** Asked about licensing requirements for Harmony Haven.
 - **Deputy Director Donahoe Beggs:** Explained that Harmony Haven operates as a transitional shelter under state community care licensing, with stays intended to last no more than 30 days. Efforts to find placements beyond this period are closely monitored and reported to the state.
 - viii. **Medication Administration:**
 - **Commissioner Brian Ortiz:** Inquired about medication dispensing at Harmony Haven.
 - **Deputy Director Donahoe Beggs:** Confirmed that medication is administered under court order, managed by trained personnel, and securely stored on-site.
 - ix. **Age Range of Residents:**
 - **Commissioner Brian Ortiz:** Asked about the age range of children at Harmony Haven.
 - **Deputy Director Donahoe Beggs:** Clarified that children of all ages, including infants in sibling groups, may be housed there. Efforts are made to accommodate younger children separately from older youth when necessary.
 - x. **Holiday Support:**
 - **Deputy Director Beggs:** Highlighted the Harmony Haven wish list for holiday donations, including gift cards and specific items for the children. She offered to share the wish list details with commissioners.
 - xi. Commissioner Laurel Cook expressed gratitude to Deputy Director Beggs for her years of service and congratulated her on her retirement. Commissioners welcomed Michelle Wohl and looked forward to working with her in the future.
- 11. Correspondence Received / Discussion**
- a. **CDSS Memo: Naloxone Distribution:**
 - i. **Commissioner Cook:** Highlighted the receipt of a memo from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) on the Naloxone Distribution. She noted its importance for county facilities and the need for commissioners to be aware of it, especially before STRTP inspections.
 - ii. **Discussion Points and Q&A:**
 - **Commissioner Angell:** Asked whether the distributed Naloxone was exclusively in nasal spray form.
 - **Commissioner Wade:** Confirmed that the memo specified nasal spray as the distributed form.
 - The information was acknowledged as critical for facilities managing at-risk youth, given the ongoing opioid crisis and has been provided to the commissioner previously.
 - b. **Correspondence from Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission:**
 - i. **Commissioner Cook:** Introduced a letter from Santa Clara County outlining challenges in providing appropriate housing for high-needs youth, including issues stemming from the closure of group homes in 2017.
 - She explained that Santa Clara County's solution involved creating "Scattered Sites," which face staffing shortages, high turnover, safety concerns, and inadequate behavioral health services.
 - The letter also mentioned the lack of in-county Short-Term Residential Treatment Programs (STRTPs) for High Acuity Youth (HAY).
 - **Purpose of the Letter:** Commissioner Cook explained that Santa Clara County is seeking support from other commissions across the state to advocate for better housing solutions and services for vulnerable youth. The letter is part of a statewide call to action to influence legislative priorities.
 - **Background Context:** Cook elaborated that this type of correspondence is not uncommon, as commissions in other counties occasionally solicit feedback or support from peer commissions to strengthen advocacy efforts.
 - c. **Discussion Points and Q&A:**
 - i. **Call to Action (Santa Clara County):**
 - **Commissioner Cook:** Shared her view that while the issues raised by Santa Clara County are significant, the



JJDC lacks the formal connections to Sacramento needed to contribute meaningfully to statewide advocacy at this time.

- She cited past examples of similar calls to action, such as concerns about unaccompanied minors from border regions being housed in local facilities, which fell outside the commission's jurisdiction due to federal oversight.

ii. Shared Challenges Across Counties:

- **Commissioner Brian Ortiz:** Asked whether the concerns raised by Santa Clara County align with challenges faced in Riverside County.
- **Commissioner Cook:** Acknowledged some similarities, such as staffing challenges and the need for better behavioral health services but noted that Riverside County's approach to youth housing and services is structured differently.

iii. Response to Santa Clara Correspondence:

- **Commissioner Amanda Wade:** Asked if the Commission intended to formally respond to Santa Clara County's correspondence.
Commissioner Cook: Indicated that the correspondence was noted for information purposes only, and no immediate action or response was planned unless commissioners expressed a desire to engage further.
- **Commissioner Cook:** The CDSS memo on Naloxone distribution will be circulated to commissioners for future reference during inspections.
- Santa Clara County's correspondence will remain on file as information, with no formal response planned at this time.
- Commissioners were invited to revisit these topics in future meetings if additional concerns or developments arise.

12. Rotation of Meeting Locations:

- a. **Commissioner Cook** revisited the idea of rotating meeting locations across the county to improve accessibility and encourage broader participation. She noted that past meetings were held at various sites, including juvenile halls and DPSS offices.

i. Discussion Points:

- Rustin Conference Center was noted as a popular and convenient venue, but its availability requires advance reservations.
- Other venues, such as the DA building, were discussed, but challenges such as limited parking and accessibility were highlighted.
- **Commissioner Wade:** Expressed support for keeping the meetings at Rustin due to its central location and ease of access.
- A unanimous vote was taken to retain Rustin Conference Center as the meeting location for the foreseeable future.

13. New Business

- a. **Inspections and Scheduling:** **Commissioner Laurel Cook** outlined the upcoming inspection schedule for Juvenile facilities.

- i. Commissioners were reminded that newer members were welcome to attend inspections as observers the following Juvenile institutional inspections have been scheduled.

- YTEC: Scheduled for November 26, 2024, at 9:00 AM
- Southwest: Scheduled for December 9, 2024, at 9:00 AM.
- Indio: Scheduled for December 17, 2024, at 10:00 AM.
- Commissioner Brian Ortiz: Confirmed his intent to observe inspections at YTEC and Southwest.
- Question by Commissioner Ortiz: Asked about inspections for Short-Term Residential Treatment Programs (STRTPs).
- Commissioner Cook: Clarified that inspection for STRTPs are not mandatory and will be scheduled after completing required inspections of county and police departments holding youth.
- Commissioner Parker has completed inspections for Menifee, Temecula, and Hemet lockups and plans to inspect Blythe in January 2025. Lockups without youth (e.g., Norco, Desert Hot Springs, and Galleria) were excluded were excluded from the inspection list.
- Commissioner Cook mentioned that Chris cannot continue at this time as he needs to take a break for his health for a few additional months; he expects to return after the start of the year but does not wish to keep holding the chair position.

b. Election of Officers:

- a. **Commissioner Cook:** Addressed the need to elect officers, noting that elections had been delayed due to quorum issues and the absence of Chair Christopher Collopy.

- i. **Discussion on Procedures:** County Counsel reviewed the bylaws and confirmed that nominations could be submitted via email to Cynthia, advising to avoid group emails for privacy and compliance reasons.



- A motion was introduced by **Commissioner Hussein** to allow commissioners to email nominations to Cynthia, who would compile a slate of nominees for the next meeting. Nominations would also be accepted from the floor at that time. Motion Seconded by Commissioner Brian Ortiz. The motion passed unanimously.
- Commissioners agreed to finalize the election process at the next meeting, with an emphasis on adhering to Robert's Rules of Order.
- c. Interviews for Commissioner Applicants. To be carried out at the conclusion of the meeting.
- 14. Activities of the Commission**
 - a. **JJCC Activity:** Commissioner Cook provided an update on the activities of the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC).
 - i. **Data-Driven Initiatives:** JJCC is addressing service gaps through the development and dissemination of reports aimed at enhancing community-based programs.
 - ii. **Collaborative Efforts:** Focus remains on partnerships with county departments, with priority areas including education and mental health services for at-risk youth.
 - iii. **Action Plan:** The timeline for implementing recommendations will be discussed in future meetings.
 - iv. **Discussion Points and Q&A:**
 - Commissioner Wade: Asked about the timeline for implementing JJCC recommendations.
 - **Response:** Commissioner Cook confirmed the timeline would be revisited during upcoming meetings.
 - b. **Youth Court:** Commissioner Wade shared updates on RCOE's efforts to address truancy through youth court, with plans to collaborate with San Bernardino County.
 - i. **Truancy Intervention Through Youth Court:**
 - Commissioner Wade highlighted RCOE's active efforts to reduce truancy by utilizing the Youth Court program. This program focuses on peer-led restorative justice, where student jurors determine appropriate corrective actions for their peers struggling with school attendance.
 - Emphasis was placed on early intervention to prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice system.
 - ii. **Collaborative Efforts:** Focus remains on partnerships with county departments, with priority areas including education and mental health services for at-risk youth.
 - iii. **Collaboration with San Bernardino County:**
 - Discussions are underway to create a collaborative framework between Riverside and San Bernardino counties.
 - The goal of this partnership is to: Share effective strategies and tools for reducing truancy, develop cross-county training for facilitators and peer participants, create joint pilot programs to test innovative approaches to youth engagement.
 - c. **Committees (Diversion, Awards, Inspections):**
 - i. **Diversion Committee Update:** Commissioner Wade provided an update on the committee's work.
 - Initiated a list of **potential community-based partners (CBOs)** for diversion and prevention efforts.
 - Work on the list was paused as the **CBO Alliance**, under the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC), is creating a comprehensive list of CBOs.
 - The plan is to **merge the committee's list with the CBO Alliance's list** once finalized. This consolidated list will be distributed to **police departments, the Sheriff's Department, and school districts**.
 - ii. **Timeline:** In response to an inquiry from the commission, Commissioner Wade stated she spoke with the CBO Alliance in early October, and they indicated the list was nearly complete.
 - Commissioner Wade will follow up with Ramon from the CBO Alliance for an update on progress.
 - iii. The Diversion Committee will continue to coordinate with the CBO Alliance and provide updates on the list's status.
 - b. **Awards Committee Update**
 - i. **Awards Categories:** Currently there are **12 awards**, presented at the annual JJDCP Awards ceremony, including the **"Service Above Self" Award**, which aligns with the Sheriff's Department motto.
 - Commissioner Torres questioned if the "Service Above Self" Award should be continued or if it was a one-time award from last year.
 - Clarification needed: Should it always recognize a sheriff's deputy, or can it include others?
 - Commissioner Cook suggested consulting Chair Collopy, the award's creator, for historical context and intent.
 - ii. **Award Ceremony Logistics:**
 - **Date:** The awards ceremony is scheduled for **May 15, 2025**.
 - **Hosts/MC:** Last year's hosts were Paul and Amanda. The committee will finalize this year's MC and keynote speaker.
 - **Introductory Remarks:** Michelle Paradise has been tentatively selected.



iii. **Photography Adjustments:**

- Commissioner Angell proposed relocating the photo backdrop **inside the ceremony venue** to capture awardees' photos immediately after receiving their awards.
- This aims to keep attendees at the event and avoid separate outdoor photo sessions.

iv. **Nomination Process:**

- Commissioner Angell is refining the nomination forms and invited suggestions for improvements.
- Forms will be presented at the next meeting for review.
- The committee will establish a centralized email for awards submissions: **JJDC awards at Riverside County** to streamline communication.

v. **Additional Event Details:**

- **Music:** The committee plans to hire **Mark Vargas Enterprises**, pending chair approval.

vi. **Next Steps:** Updates on award categories and nomination forms will be provided at the next meeting.

- Commissioner Torres will consult Chair Collopy for clarification on the "Service Above Self" award.
- Commissioner Angell will finalize and share the nomination forms for review.
- The committee will finalize event logistics, including hosts, keynote speaker, and flow adjustments.

vii. The committee's updates were noted, and no further questions or comments were raised. The committee will continue preparations for the ceremony.

c. **Inspection Committee Update:**

- i. **Report Deferred:** Commissioner Cook informed the group that Commissioner Mike Belknap was absent and, therefore, unable to provide an update on the Inspection Committee.

15. **Commission Member Reports:**

- a. Commissioner Cook stated that aside from the updates provided during the Activities of the Commission, there were no additional Commission member reports.

16. **Adjournment:**

- a. The meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM. Motion: Commissioner Angell, Second: Commissioner Hussein.

17. **Post-Meeting Activity: Commissioner Applicant Interviews**

- **Daniel Marmolejo:** A returning applicant who resubmitted his application ahead of his pending retirement. Mr. Marmolejo brings 30 years of experience in law enforcement, district safety, security, and public education. He served in intergovernmental relations and safety, as well as human resources, safety, and risk management for the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (SBCSS). He oversaw safety plans for 33 districts and 10 county schools and acted as a secondary chief deputy director for the SBCSS Emergency Operations Center. Currently, he leads Active Response Prevention (ARP), focused on equipping individuals and organizations with crisis response and prevention skills.
- **Jay Franklin:** Brings over 25 years of experience working with high-risk youth locally and nationally. Currently serves as the County Safety Manager for RCOE and Director of Project 1 Youth Intervention, a nonprofit providing gang and drug awareness and community services. He has extensive collaboration experience with probation, schools, DPSS, behavioral health, and the district attorney's office. He also consults for the National Gang Center and the State of Georgia Commission Council on court-ordered programming.

Discussion Highlights:

- Both applicants' contributions and extensive experience in community safety, youth intervention, collaboration with probation departments, and leadership roles were discussed.
- Their commitment to community development and enhancing services for at-risk populations was emphasized.

Decision:

- The commission unanimously approved moving forward with both applicants' backgrounds for processing.

Next Meeting:

Date: December 12, 2024

Time: 1:30 pm

Location: Rustin Conference Center (Entrance 1) Room TBD

2085 Rustin Ave., Riverside, CA 92507