

Connecticut Juvenile Training School
Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes, 1/22/14

Present: Debra Bond, CJTS Clinical Director, Francis Carino, Supervising Assistant State's Attorney; James Connolly, Esq., Supervisory Assistant Public Defender; John DiPilla, CJTS Assistant Superintendent; Lisa Hofferth, CJTS Quality Assurance Manager; Christine Rapillo, Director of Juvenile Delinquency Defense and Child Protection, Public Defender's Office; William Rosenbeck, CJTS Superintendent

Establishing a Quorum

Attorney Connolly acknowledged that we have a quorum.

Minutes

The December 2013 meeting minutes were accepted as written.

Membership

- We anticipate Christine Widden and Karl Alston will join today's meeting.
- Ann Smith expressed her interest to Atty. Rapillo but is unable to join today's meeting.
- Abby Anderson is interested but was unable to attend today due to a conflict. Ms. Andersons is co-chair of Keep the Promise Children's Committee.
- Judge Conway declined the invitation and stated she felt uncomfortable and cited legislation behind her reason. She is, however, interested in being connected to this board and we will extend an open invitation to her as a member of the public. We will add her to the mailing list of the minutes and if she sees something of interest she can attend. We can always invite her when topic is related to census issues. Mr. Rosenbeck will check with the Commissioner to see if we should be posting these minutes on the website. Atty. Connolly stated that at the last Student Council meeting he introduced himself as an Advisory Board member and the boys never heard of the board. It was suggested that these minutes be shared with the student council members where they can talk about the process and encourage their involvement. We will ask that the Advisory Board be a standing agenda item at the Student Council meetings.
- Sam Gray is interested in participating in any capacity, but because of the contract issue he is prevented from being a voting member. Melissa Pellitier of Journey House is in the same situation. We presented this dilemma to our Legal Department and are awaiting a response. This will continue to be a struggle as most potential members have a contract with the state. This too affects our current board

member, Robert Francis, however, as he has been involved with the board for many years, he will most likely be grandfathered in.

- Senator Bartolomeo, although interested, she just doesn't have time to commit at this time. Interested in being approached in the future and we will keep her as a potential member after the election.
- Christine Widden will be a good asset to this board.
- Atty. Connolly did not reach out to Lenard Barbieri as he may be repetitious at this point, but if the board wants him to, he will reach out to him. The board agreed to hold off on Mr. Barbieri at this time.
- Mr. Rosenbeck stated that Commissioner Katz will appoint Kristy Ramsey, the newly hired Assistant Superintendent for girls program to the board.
- We will not pursue Elaine DeCharme at this time but will try to find another clinical person. Dr. Bond will call the former president of APA to try and get a referral.
- Martha Stone is on hold for now.
- Atty. Rapillo will check with Cathy Foley-Geib for a recommendation for someone from Raise the Age workgroup.

Vote on Prospective New Members

The following prospective new members were unanimously voted on and accepted to be full members of the Advisory Board:

- ✓ Karl Alston
- ✓ Abby Anderson
- ✓ Christine Widden
- ✓ Ann Smith

2013 Legislative Report

The report was sent to members for review. We use the same format and update the data which is in the appendices. This year we are reporting on the types of admissions which is a new category. The Clinical Section is the same outline and Dr. Bond just shifted the table to identify the highest diagnosis at top. Next year on page 8, will put participation right under the type of program being offered. The education section is extensive. DBT is mentioned on page 17 with the programming offered through clinical and rehab departments. Recidivism is on page 24 and Length of Stay is broken down by how they come in. While comparing this year's data to last year we had more commitments while the rest is very close. The age is evening out and a lot of returns are for parole violations and not new offences which can be misleading. We will try to break it down even more. There is an outline that spells out what is required in this report. As we are using the definition of recidivism based on the statutes we are not currently collecting re-arrest data. The definition needs to be clear and Ms. Hofferth will expand on this in the report. There is a lot of misleading information and we need

to really get on top of that. Mr. Rosenbeck spoke with Tom DeMatteo who said that the MOU is the most challenging in the definition of recidivism. Atty. Connolly is currently looking at clients that were rearrested in the adult system and the information is available and it needs to happen with these kids to see if they are fairing better now. Mr. Rosenbeck will follow up with Judicial to get access to this system.

The board also needs to come up with recommendations. This is the boards report to the commissioner and she then submits it to the legislature. Once the report is finalized, Atty. Connolly will stop by to sign it and we will deliver it to the Commissioner.

New Member Welcome and Introduction

As new members join the meeting we will do introductions, ask them for their background and what they think they can bring to the Advisory Board based on their experience. We will provide them with an update on the girl's program and facility concerns.

Mr. Karl Alston joined the meeting. The group introduced themselves and Mr. Alston gave a brief overview of his background. Currently, he is the Deputy Director of Juvenile Residential Services with CSSD. He worked in the system for 29 years and started as a juvenile detention officer in Bridgeport and was promoted through the ranks. He was instrumental in the Emily J. Settlement Agreement. Understands that work in a 24/7 operation never stops and you always want to continue to make changes based on evidence based practice with the primary goal of keeping kids safe. In the end we have the same kids as they go from detention to CJTS. While the kids are incarcerated we have to take that opportunity to get the best out of them, make it a positive experience and make them more equipped for life. The highest census in detention is around 100 and currently they are at 40 which is low.

By-Laws

The group agreed to wait on making any changes to the by-laws until all new members are on board. Meanwhile, Atty. Connolly sent the current by-laws to prospective members for their review. Atty. Connolly suggests increasing the frequency of these meetings to monthly or at least ten per year. The agenda will determine the frequency of these meetings. The Commissioner has not yet confirmed the ex-officio members, but we are confident that Kristy Ramsey will be appointed. The Commissioner has expressed her desire to attend as many of these meetings as her schedule will permit. The 3:00 p.m. meeting time seems to work well for most members.

Ex-Resident Board Member/Student Council Attendee

Atty. Connolly knows a former resident, who participated in Student Council, is mature and articulate and expressed an interest in the board. He would need transportation to the meetings and we would need to work that out with Parole. It was suggested that we see how well he does in the community before we ask him to commit to the board as we are seeing kids coming back on a rapid basis. Having a former resident on the board will change how we talk about topics in this meeting. Atty. Connolly feels it is critical to have their input but practically speaking we may not have them here on a regular basis. Atty. Connolly will follow up with his parole officer about this. Also, do we have regular input from Student Council or invite them to this meeting on a regular basis. Atty. Connolly will propose this at the next Student Council meeting if they could come and present on specific issues. Mr. Rosenbeck acknowledged that we were able to make some changes because of the Student Council and their input is helpful. Atty. Connolly will approach the former resident and potentially other kids and talk to Tracy Cotterrell. If we invite residents to the meeting, we will need to change the location to Building 3.

Follow up on Old Business

Grievance Process

The grievance process has been discussed at Student Council and some residents stated they are not treated fairly, respectfully and are not confident in the process. This was discussed in this meeting as well and it was acknowledged that we have a new Ombudsman, Gene Marchand. Grievance boxes are located in every unit. The Ombudsman is on grounds once a week to collect the grievances. He then puts the issues in writing to the appropriate department head for a response. What came out of the discussions is that some of the kids didn't know how the grievance was resolved and some felt the issues weren't handled appropriately. It became obvious they did not see the grievance process to be effective. Need to educate the kids that they don't necessarily need to file a grievance but to channel their concerns such as housekeeping to those department as many complaints are not grievable. Gene Marchand will attend the next Student Council meeting to address their questions. If a complaint is regarding a staff member then Human Resources gets involved. The issue often is the kids are not informed of the disposition. Last year we investigated and resolved 200 grievances. Mr. Alston stated that CSSD has a contracted employee, not a state employee, to address their grievances. This is an independent contractor for which CSSD pays for. It was suggested that Mr. Marchand connect with the Independent Contractor to learn how he handles the grievances. The Independent Contractor also does Quality of Life surveys with the kids, which he then summarizes and sends a report to the Superintendent. The kids are also asked if they see their probation officers during the survey. Ms. Hofferth asked for a copy of the survey.

Girls Program

As of today we offered all our positions, six are transfers and fifteen new hires. We are able to back fill all the transfer positions. Kristy Ramsey hired into the Assistant Superintendent position and Lindsey O'Sullivan into the 2nd shift Assistant Unit Leader position. Dr. Bond did all her hiring as did Rehab. The school is running a little behind but until all appropriate staff are hired our Department Heads, S. Ikenson and D. Warren will teach. Karen Cassidy and Mark Hagelston were hired as full time clinicians. Gail DeMarco hired as the supervising psychologist. The staff will participate in training during the month of February. The Commissioner responded in the paper to Martha's Stone's editorial which spells out why she and the department feel we should move forward on the girls unit. We are hoping for an opening of the unit at end of February. Attorney Rapillo asked for a tour of the unit. New commitments will continue to go to Journey House. A concern is if a judge orders a girl into Journey House and they have no beds what will happen.

Census

Our census is at 142. Communication went out to parole administrators and Central Office with hopes of moving up some discharge dates.

Other

Mr. Alston asked for a copy of the Legislative Report.

Next Meeting

All agreed on 2/24/14 at 3:00 p.m. for the next meeting.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Irene Yanaros