



**Board of Juvenile Justice
Thursday, January 28, 2021
Decatur, GA
Board Meeting Minutes
(Audio/Zoom Conference)**

Opening Remarks

On Thursday, January 28, 2021. Chair Sandra Taylor called the meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice to order at 10:04 AM. The meeting was held as an audio/Zoom conference.

Chair Taylor began the meeting by expressing her condolences to Board Member Dick Yarbrough for the passing of his wife, Jane.

Chair Taylor announced the retirement of Judge Quintress Gilbert and thanked her for her service.

DJJ Staff Present: Commissioner Tyrone Oliver, Deputy Superintendent Zane Shelfer, DJJ Executive Team Members, and various DJJ Staff Members.

Invocation: Chaplain Danny Horne

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Secretary Adam Kennedy.

Roll Call: Members present were Chair Sandra Taylor, Vice-Chair Willie C. Bolton, Secretary Adam Kennedy, Danny Blackmon, Dick Yarbrough, Margaret D. Kaiser, Penny Penn, Dr. Thomas Coleman, Judge Lisa Colbert, Gary Yandura. and Fred Stephens. Judicial Advisory Member Judge Quintress Gilbert participated. Quorum was declared.

Agenda approval: Chair Taylor called for a motion to approve the January 28, 2021 agenda. The motion was made by Secretary Kennedy, seconded by Board Member Blackmon, and approved unanimously.

Minutes approval: Chair Taylor called for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2020 board meeting. The motion was made by Board Member Coleman, seconded by Vice-Chair Bolton, and approved unanimously.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Oliver announced the retirement of DJJ Staff members Adam Barnett and Herman Archie. He read their proclamations and thanked them for their dedicated service. Commissioner Oliver also congratulated Judge Gilbert and thanked her for her dedicated service and guidance to the board.

Employee Engagement Survey

The Commissioner also spoke about the implementation of the agency-wide Employee Engagement Survey that was conducted from September 14, 2020 to October 14, 2020. The objective of the survey was to gather feedback to help DJJ's leadership better understand and improve employee morale, turnover rate, and the overall agency culture.

Chief of Staff Mark Mitchell stated that a total of 1878 employees responded to the survey. In addition to the 21 questions, employees were also able to type in comments. Chief Mitchell and the Commissioner are working on strategies to improve the organization through the input of DJJ employees. The strategies include the following: conducting focus groups, creating leadership sessions in partnership with The Home Depot, and producing a follow-up video to let the DJJ staff know that they are being heard.

Chief Mitchell stated that DJJ will also be partnering with the John C. Maxwell Leadership Center and the UGA Carl Vinson Institute to provide leadership training for selected DJJ employees.

Stress, Wellness and Environment

Chief Mitchell stated that DJJ is also working on a Peer Support Counseling Team. Resilience training, "Transforming U," and a care resource center are also in the works.

Communication & Transparency

Chief Mitchell stated there will be a divisional leadership meeting every other month, quarterly department-wide leadership meetings for the agency's supervisors beginning in February 2021, and quarterly townhall meetings beginning in March 2021 for DJJ employees.

The agency will also be working on a follow-up survey for DJJ staff.

Questions/Comments (Survey)

Board Member Stephens suggested an update on the employment engagement project every 90 days.

Board Member Colbert wanted to know the type of feedback that will be given to DJJ staff members who participated in the survey. Vice-Chair Bolton suggested mandatory viewing of the staff input video.

DJJ Culture Wheel and Inverted Pyramid

Chief Mitchell introduced the “DJJ Culture Wheel” and the “Inverted Pyramid” that resulted from DJJ’s partnership with The Home Depot.

Questions/Comments (DJJ’s Culture Wheel/Inverted Pyramid)

Vice-Chair Bolton commended the usage of the “Inverted Pyramid.”

Board Member Yarbrough asked the Commissioner what three things that he would want DJJ employees to convey about the agency.

Legislative Update

The Commissioner thanked Governmental Affairs Director Zachary Louis for his support and leadership representing DJJ. Commissioner Oliver also discussed a ten percent salary increase for juvenile correctional officers, counselors, housekeepers, and food services to counter the high turnover rate. If the increase is approved by the legislature, it will become effective April 1, 2021.

The budget proposal for FY’22 also include the ten percent salary increase and a bond package. The bond package will include the construction of a 56-bed housing units at Muscogee YDC and Augusta YDC. The bond package also includes the placement of body scanners in all facilities.

COVID-19 Update

The Commissioner provided COVID-19 updates regarding DJJ staff members and youth. DJJ received over 1500 COVID-19 rapid tests. The Commissioner thanked DJJ medical staff and Augusta University for keeping the agency and the youth safe.

This concluded the Commissioner’s Report.

Chair Taylor call for a motion to adjourn from the regular DJJ Board Meeting and reconvene as the DJJ School Board. A motion was made by Board Member Colbert to adjourn the Board of Juvenile Justice and reconvene as the Juvenile Justice Board of Education. The motion was seconded by Board Member Yarbrough and approved unanimously.

Board of Education

Deputy Superintendent Zane Shelfer shared information about the education data dashboard, including the percentage of the student body with special education needs. DJJ is currently in the process of setting up interviews to fill vacant positions.

2021-2022 School Calendar

Deputy Superintendent Shelfer presented the 2021-2022 school calendar and requested a vote to approve the calendar.

Chair Taylor call for a motion to approve the proposed 2021-2022 school calendar. A motion made by Vice-Chair Bolton, seconded by Board Member Yarbrough, and approved unanimously.

Graduation Ceremony

Deputy Superintendent Shelfer presented the December 2020 graduation rates and discussed parental engagement.

Cognia Accreditation

Deputy Superintendent Shelfer stated the Cognia Accreditation Team conducted interviews via virtual means in December 2020; and the final report will be ready by February 2021.

This concluded the Deputy Superintendent's report.

Chair Taylor called for motion to adjourn from the DJJ School Board and reconvene as the regular DJJ Board. A motion was made by Board Member Colbert to adjourn the Juvenile Justice Board of Education and to reconvene as the Board of Juvenile Justice. It was seconded by Secretary Kennedy and approved unanimously.

Comments: Chair Taylor thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Old Business: No old business.

New Business: No new business.

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned. The next scheduled meeting will be February 25, 2021 at 10:00 AM via audio/Zoom conference. The motion was made by Secretary Kennedy and seconded by Board Member Colbert and approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Sandra H. Taylor, Chair
Board of Juvenile Justice

Tyrone Oliver, Commissioner
Department of Juvenile Justice

Adam Kennedy, Secretary
Board of Juvenile Justice