



**Board of Juvenile Justice
Thursday, October 22, 2020
Decatur, GA
Board Meeting Minutes
(Audio/Teams Conference)**

Opening Remarks

On Thursday, October 22, 2020, Chair Sandra Taylor called the meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice to order at 10:02 AM. The meeting was held as an audio/Teams conference.

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

Guests present: John Kennebrew (The Showcase Group), Amy Radley (Attorney General's Office), and Danielle Robbins (Attorney General's Office).

Invocation: Chaplain Danny Horne gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance: Lead by Dr. Thomas Coleman.

Roll Call: Members present were Chair Sandra Taylor, Vice-Chair Willie C. Bolton, Secretary Adam Kennedy, Danny Blackmon, Dick Yarbrough, Angie M. Holt, Margaret D. Kaiser, Penny Penn, Dr. Thomas Coleman, Elaine Snow, Judge Lisa Colbert, and Chief Gary Yandura. Judicial Advisory Council Member Judge Quintress Gilbert participated. A quorum was declared.

Agenda approval: Chair Taylor called for a motion to approve the October 22, 2020 agenda. The motion was made by Board Member Blackmon, seconded by Board Member Kaiser, and approved unanimously.

Minutes approval: Chair Taylor called for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 24, 2020 board meeting. The motion was made by Board Member Holt, seconded by Board Member Blackmon, and approved unanimously.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Oliver welcomed new Board Member Gary Yandura. He gave an update on the budget. A meeting was held at the Governor's Office on October 21, 2020 in reference to a flat budget for fiscal year 2022. The Commissioner will have a meeting with the House of Representatives on October 23, 2020 to further discuss fiscal year 2022 budget. He also provided COVID-19 updates regarding DJJ staff members and youth. The Commissioner thanked the DJJ and AU staff for keeping the youth safe. He also discussed working towards in-person meetings at the beginning of year 2021 or when the board sees fit.

Office of Professional Development

BJCOT Training Program

Director of Professional Development and Standards Latera Davis discussed a proposal to change the Basic Juvenile Correctional Officer Training (BJCOT) Program. A proposal was submitted to Georgia Officer Standards and Training Council (P.O.S.T) to change BJCOT Program from a six-week to a five-week program. The strategic plan of the proposal is to keep all components of the curriculum the same, but a Pre-Service Training Program will be brought back as a prerequisite before the cadets can enter the five-week training program. Some of the components that were covered in the six-week program will be covered in Pre-Service Training Program by the Office of Professional Development (OPD) virtually. The purpose of bringing back the Pre-Service Program is to make sure the cadets are better prepared before attending the BJCOT class. Overall, the proposal has not been approved yet, and DJJ's OPD is on P.O.S.T council meeting's agenda scheduled for December 2020.

Leadership Training

Director Davis also discussed ways to further advance staff development. DJJ has partnered with The Home Depot to develop a successful leadership program.

Director Davis also mentioned partnering with Kennesaw State University and allowing managers to participate virtually. Finally, she discussed replacing the agency's electronic training system.

Office of Victim Services & Volunteer Services

Wellness Program

Director Davis discussed staff wellness, adding that several staff members of the Office of Victim Services and Volunteer Services and OPD have been trained in Peer Support training. House Bill 703 created this peer support program, and the agency is currently

certified to provide peer support. The purpose of peer support is to support staff whether they are going through a professional or personal issue and provide a healthy and safe environment for DJJ's staff members. She also discussed a project called "Transforming You," which is a part of the staff's health and wellness program. During the next fiscal year, the agency will present a wellness website for staff members to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Organizational Partnerships

Ms. Davis discussed DJJ's partnerships. DJJ raised over \$3500 during the Special Olympics "Cops on Donut Shops" event last month. Overall, DJJ has raised a total of \$6000 this year. DJJ has also partnered with the Girl Scouts of Atlanta and Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia. They provided training for 23 staff members, expanding the Girl Scouts program at Macon, Claxton, and Aaron Cohn RYDCs. Finally, Director Davis discussed how the Office of Victim Services and Volunteer Services team members participated in the first virtual Youth Protection Services seminar. The presentation included 20 organizations that all work towards preventing child abuse. DJJ will continue to have various partnerships.

This concluded the Commissioner's Report.

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

Board of Education

Deputy Superintendent Zane Shelfer shared information about the education enrollment data dashboard. DJJ is currently in the process of setting up interviews for vacant positions.

GED Program

Holly Cannon, Adult Education Program Specialist overseeing Pathway to Success, presented changes to the GED program. She has teamed up with the technical colleges to administer GED testing to the youth inside the facilities versus waiting to test at the technical colleges. Ms. Cannon is the Chief Examiner for DJJ. She will now be going to a facility when a youth is ready to test. The GED programs are currently available at the YDCs, RYDCs, and the Education Transition Centers (ETCs).

Connections Graduate Program (CGP)

Carrie Hamilton-Shavers, CGP Coordinator, discussed the partnership with the Showcase Group (Sustainability with Advocacy Groups [SWAG] initiative) as a mentorship program. Ms. Shavers stated that each participating graduate will be paired with a mentor so that when the graduate transitions from DJJ, he/she will be with his/her own personal mentor to help the youth become college, career, or life skills ready. It is a

five-month certificate program that offers many different modules. The youth will be vetted on their interest and release dates; and the program will be offered statewide in all of the YDCs where there is a CGP instructor. After completion of the modules and upon release, the youth will receive a SWAG bag with essential items to help them reset and return to their families as productive law-abiding citizens. The program is funded by a grant and the focus is on transition and re-entry.

Shavers introduced John Kennebrew, founder of the Showcase Group. Kennebrew discussed the mission of the Showcase Group. He also discussed the SWAG initiative partnership with CGP, which focuses on four pathways: Psycho-Social Well Being, Residential, Education, and Employment.

Cognia Accreditation

Deputy Superintendent Shelfer mentioned that the Cognia Accreditation meeting will be held virtually on Monday, December 14.

This concluded the Deputy Superintendent's report.

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

Comments: Chair Taylor welcomed and gave a brief introduction of Board Member Yandura. Board Member Yandura was sworn in on October 21, 2020.

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 December 10, 2020 at 10:00 AM, via audio/Teams conference. The motion was made by Board Member Yarbrough and seconded by Board Member Colbert and approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:59 AM.

Sandra H. Taylor, Chair
Board of Juvenile Justice

Tyrone Oliver, Commissioner
Department of Juvenile Justice

Adam Kennedy, Secretary
Board of Juvenile Justice