

**Board of Juvenile Justice  
Thursday, February 23, 2012  
10:00 a.m.**

**Department of Juvenile Justice  
3408 Covington Highway  
Decatur, Georgia 30032-1513**

**Opening Remarks**  
Ed Risler, Chairman

Board Chairman Ed Risler called to order the February 23, 2012 meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and DJJ Board of Education. Chairman Risler asked guests to state their name and organization affiliation.

**DJJ Staff Present:** Commissioner L. Gale Buckner; Assistant Commissioner Jeff Minor; Deputy Commissioner Carl Brown; Deputy Commissioner Shawanda Reynolds-Cobb; Deputy Commissioner Rick Harrison; Deputy Commissioner Michael McNeely; Dr. Audrey Armistad, Acting Associate School Superintendent; Sarah Draper, Director of Investigations; Carol Jackson, Legislative Liaison; Debbie Alexander, Assistant Deputy Commissioner; Ed Cook, Director of Engineering; Charlotte Curran, Education; Cami Stokes, Rusty Rogers and Nancy Kauffman, Laurens CSO; Tashania Zimmerman, Henry CSO; Jim Shuler, Director of Public Affairs; Tracy Masters, General Counsel; Janssen Robinson; Nathan Cain; Diane Avery.

**Others:** Ashley Culberson, Attorney General's Office; Scott Sheriden, Nelson, Mullins; Emily Ackee, Youth Villages; Ladarius Boston.

Chairman Risler asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance led by a DJJ youth, followed by the invocation by Board Member Jim Kelly.

**Roll Call**

Roll call was conducted by Secretary Sandra Taylor. Board members present were: Sandra Taylor, Larry F. Barnes, Michael L. Baugh, James P. Kelly, Elizabeth Lindsey, Daniel Menefee, Ed Risler, Dexter O. Rowland, Stephen K. Simpson and Judge Stephen Teske. Secretary Taylor noted a quorum was present.

Chairman Risler asked for approval of the agenda for the February 23, 2012 Board of Juvenile Justice and Board of Education meetings.

Board Member Menefee moved to approve the agenda for the meeting.

Board Member Baugh seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Chairman Risler called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Board's previous meeting on January 26, 2012.

Secretary Taylor moved to approve the minutes.

Vice Chairman Menefee seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Chairman Risler introduced Commissioner L. Gale Buckner for the Commissioner's Report.

### **Commissioner's Report**

Commissioner Buckner expressed her appreciation to the Board for reaching out to her with ideas and suggestions for continuing to strengthen DJJ.

Commissioner Buckner wants to be open in the information that is presented to be Board in order for the members to gain a fair assessment of what is actually going on within the agency. Commissioner Buckner asks that the Board provide her with feedback as to subject matter and length of presentations the Board would like to see during the monthly meetings. Commissioner Buckner would like to ensure the Board is knowledgeable of the operations of each of the agency's four divisions.

First Lady Sandra Deal will be visiting the Chatsworth and Dalton area DJJ facilities February 29. Commissioner Buckner will brief the Board during the March meeting on the First Lady's visit.

Chairman Risler advised the Executive Committee would meet to determine the best method for information being presented to the Board.

### **Legislative Update**

Legislative update was presented by Ms. Carol Jackson, Legislative Liaison.

Contraband/housekeeping bill passed out of Senate, currently in the House. The bill is expected to pass without a problem.

Interstate Compact – Will not be introduced.

Juvenile Code Rewrite – Appears to be no harm to DJJ. Funding appears to be a problem.

Urging Resolution – Urges Congress to reconsider amending law passed in 1934 so as to be able to jam cell phones in facilities.

Ms. Jackson thanked Board Member Jim Kelly for the time he spent with her sharing his knowledge on Re-Entry and Faith Based Programs.

Transfer of Property Resolution presented by Ed Cook, Director of Engineering.

Board passage of this Resolution would turn Bleckley RYDC over to the State Properties Commission as a surplus property.

Chairman Risler stated he would entertain a motion to approve this Resolution.

Board Members Barnes made the motion to approve the Resolution.

Board Member Menefee seconded the motion and the motion carried.

### **Youth Services**

Deputy Commissioner Carl Brown introduced Assistant Deputy Commissioner Debbie Alexander. On February 15<sup>th</sup> DJJ held its first official agency swearing-in ceremony. Ms. Alexander has the distinction of being the first person sworn-in, pursuant to the agency's official swearing-in ceremony.

Youth Services Division will be realigning in conjunction with judicial circuits which will make for better collaboration between DJJ and the courts. In this realignment two districts will be eliminated, but with no job loss for the district employees. The realignment is expected to be in place by March 16<sup>th</sup>, but no later than April 1.

### **Investigations**

Investigations Director Sarah Draper provides Intelligence update specific to Muscogee facility. Youth assault over contraband cell phones. Investigations led to discovery that inmates were texting to others inside and outside the facility, as well as posting to Facebook. It was further discovered that the majority of activity was between the hours of midnight and 4:00 am.

Chairman Risler called for a motion to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and open the DJJ Board of Education meeting.

Board Member Menefee made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and open the DJJ Board of Education meeting.

Board Member Lindsey seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

### **Education Update**

Chairman Risler called on Superintendent Buckner who introduced Acting Associate School Superintendent Dr. Audrey Armistead for the Education Update.

A letter has been received from the Governor's Office of Work Force Development stating that the Work Ready Test can no longer be given to anyone incarcerated.

Thirteen youth at Augusta YDC recently participated in the Mock Trial Competition held in Augusta.

Ms. Charlotte Curran provided an update on the Electronic Student Folder and Electronic Grade Book. Anticipated implementation date is end of the semester.

Deputy Director Rick Harrison recognized Ms. Martha Patton on the occasion of her retirement.

Chairman Risler asked for a motion to adjourn the School Board meeting and reconvene the regular meeting.

Board Member Taylor made a motion to adjourn the DJJ Board of Education meeting and reconvene the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice.

Board Member Menefee seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

### **Regular Session**

Chairman Risler announced the Board was back in regular session.

### **Chairman's Comments**

Chairman Risler welcomed Dr. Armistad.

Chairman Risler expressed condolences on behalf of the Board to Assistant Commissioner Jeff Minor. Secretary Taylor advised the Board will individually make donations to a scholarship fund designated by the Minor family in memory of Jarred Chambers.

Chairman Risler commended the transparency Commissioner Buckner has brought to the Board and acknowledged that she would openly discuss any agency issues with Board members.

In keeping with Commissioner Buckner's encouraging Board members to interact with staff, the Board will plan to hold its August meeting in Savannah in conjunction with Georgia Juvenile Services Association. School Board training will be conducted during same time.

Chairman Risler acknowledged Deputy Commissioner Rick Harrison's efforts while serving in dual roles until the appointment of Dr. Armistad.

The next Board Meeting will be at 10:00 am, March 22, 2012, at the DJJ central office.

Members should expect an e-mail setting a date and time for the Education Committee to meet.

Call for Old Business – None

Call for New Business – None

Chairman Risler called for a Motion to Adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice.

Vice Chairman Menefee made the motion and received a second by Board Member Rowland.

The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.

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Dr. Ed Risler, Chairman  
Board of Juvenile Justice

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L. Gale Buckner  
Commissioner

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Sandra Taylor, Secretary  
Board of Juvenile Justice