

**Board of Juvenile Justice
Thursday, July 14, 2011
5:30 p.m.**

**Foundry Park Inn
295 E. Dougherty Street
Athens, Georgia 30601**

**Opening Remarks
Dr. Ed Risler, Chair**

Chairman Ed Risler called to order the July 14, 2011, meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and DJJ Board of Education. He noted the time as 5:30 p.m. Chairman Risler asked that all attendees stand and state their name and organization affiliation.

DJJ Staff Present: Commissioner Amy Howell; Rob Rosenbloom; Jeff Minor; Michael McNeely; Richard Harrison; Dr. Jack Catrett; Tina Piper; Diana Aspinwall; Scheree Moore; Cherecia Kline; Janssen Robinson; Latera Davis; Debbie Alexander; Sonya Love; Tracy Green; Stacey Hammond; Kenneth Vaughn

Others: Ashley Culberson (Attorney General's Office); Sheriff Ira Edwards; Senator Ginn; Judge Robin W. Shearer; Susan Risler

Chairman Risler asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance by a DJJ youth, followed by the invocation by Board Member Pastor Dexter Rowland.

Roll Call

Chairman Risler asked for the roll to be called by the Secretary of the Board. Sandra Taylor conducted the roll call of attendance.

Board Members Present: Larry Barnes; Michael Baugh; Elizabeth Lindsey; Perry McGuire; Daniel Menefee; Dr. Ed Risler; Pastor Dexter Rowland; Stephen Simpson; Elaine Snow; Sandra Taylor

Advisory Council Members Present: Judge Quintress Gilbert

Noting the presence of a quorum of the Board, Chairman Risler asked for a motion to approve the agenda for the July 14, 2011, Board of Juvenile Justice and Board of Education meeting.

Member Daniel Menefee moved to approve the agenda for the July 14, 2011, Board of Juvenile Justice and Board of Education meeting. Member Elaine Snow seconded the motion. Chairman Risler called for the vote and the motion was carried.

Chairman Risler asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 23, 2011, Board meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and the DJJ Board of Education and asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. Member Larry Barnes moved to approve the minutes. Member Sandra Taylor seconded the motion. Chairman Risler called for the vote, and the motion was carried.

Chairman Risler thanked Sheriff Ira Edwards, Senator Ginn and other guests for attending the Board meeting. He stated the Board dinner will follow the Board meeting

Commissioner's Report

Amy V. Howell, Commissioner

Commissioner Howell thanked the guests for attending the Board meeting. She stated she was pleased with the training that took place earlier in the day because it allowed the Board an opportunity to see the agency's strategic focus on youth transition. Commissioner Howell stated the agency has been searching for specific ways to partner with various groups and organizations as youth transition into the communities. Commissioner Howell said she enjoyed being outside of the agency headquarters and traveling the state speaking with staff and youth about their experiences, while listening to their concerns about the agency and the direction of the agency.

Commissioner Howell said that she intended to share with the Board more about the strategic plan later in the retreat. Commissioner Howell stated she and her executive team have really thought about where DJJ needs to be and how they can be an innovative and elite agency. She stated there is much that the agency does well, however there are always things the agency can improve upon.

Commissioner Howell said the Board is aware of the recent challenges faced at the Eastman YDC. She stated George Smith was the director of the Eastman YDC up until early July 2011 and assisted in the transition from his leadership to that of Rose Williams. Commissioner Howell said Rose Williams has over 30 years of experience with the Department of Corrections, where she ran and helped to start a number of female prisons and special operations prisons. Ms. Williams brings experience, along with a unique perspective and expertise that DJJ needs at the Eastman YDC. Commissioner Howell said they have a number of additional supports and plans in place to give that facility all the attention it needs. Commissioner Howell said her commitment to keeping staff and youth safe is stronger but also more targeted and urgent. She stated the Eastman YDC investigation is ongoing and she is solidly committed to ensuring that DJJ's facilities are safe, regardless of the challenges.

Commissioner Howell asked the Board to review the Commissioner's report in their handout to find out about more department initiatives. Commissioner Howell highlighted one item; the Office of Behavior Health Services was awarded a continuation Residential Substance Abuse Treatment grant from the Bureau of Justice Administration through the Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. The grant is in the amount of \$334,000 and will be utilized to provide

substance abuse services for up to 154 youth in YDCs. The funding will support a 25 bed unit at Sumter YDC and a new 52 bed unit at the Milan YDC.

Commissioner Howell said staff is working hard to help the department pinpoint grant opportunities. She stated they are focused on making sure the state's experiences with the budget do not stop the agency's efforts to be innovative. Commissioner Howell said she is excited that Rick Harrison and his team were able to identify this opportunity for additional funds to support the works of the agency. In addition, Dr. Michele Staples Horne and Latera Davis are working to identify other grant opportunities for the department.

Commissioner Howell announced that this was Rob Rosenbloom's last Board meeting. Commissioner Howell thanked him for his years of service and stated there will be a retirement celebration for Mr. Rosenbloom on August 4, 2011.

Commissioner Howell concluded her report and asked if there were any questions; there were none.

Chairman Risler called for the next agenda item and asked for a motion to close the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and open the DJJ Board of Education meeting.

Member Sandra Taylor called for a motion to close the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and open the DJJ Board of Education meeting. The motion was seconded by Member Dexter Rowland. The motion carried.

Education Update

Amy V. Howell, Superintendent
Department of Juvenile Justice

Commissioner Howell said she was glad the Board was able to attend the Board of Education Training. She stated the training was very helpful and afforded the Board an opportunity to review the programs the department uses to educate the youth, as well as the initiatives Education hopes to expand. Commissioner Howell also thanked the Dr. Catrett and his staff for their hard work in putting together the training.

Commissioner Howell concluded her report.

Hearing no further questions, Chairman Risler called for the next agenda item and asked for a motion from the Board to close the DJJ Board of Education meeting and resume the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice. Member Daniel Menefee made the motion. Member Stephen Simpson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Chairman Risler called for the next item on the agenda; Board Election.

Board Election

Larry Barnes, Board Member

Member Larry Barnes stated at the June Board meeting, a slate of officers were presented to the Board for nomination approval:

- Dr. Ed Risler - Chairman
- Daniel Menefee – Vice Chairman
- Sandra Taylor – Secretary

Chairman Risler asked for a motion to accept the slate of officers. A motion was made by Member Larry Barnes and seconded by Member Michael Baugh. The motion carried.

Chairman Risler called for the next item on the agenda; Advisory Council Presentation.

Advisory Council Presentation

Rob Rosenbloom, Deputy Commissioner

Debbie Alexander, Metro RYDC Director

Sonya Love, Program Coordinator/Acting Director DeKalb RYDC

Rob Rosenbloom stated the Advisory Council plays a very significant role at each facility. He stated DJJ is required by policy to have Advisory Councils. Mr. Rosenbloom said the Advisory Council gives DJJ an inside connection to the community. He stated DJJ provides a role in that community and provides jobs and services for many youth. Mr. Rosenbloom said it gives them an opportunity to interact with community leaders and others who are interested in youth who find themselves in the juvenile justice system.

Mr. Rosenbloom said the community members that come in to help are very interested in the youth that we serve. He stated they sometimes establish a relationship with the youth who may not have the ability to have family to come and visit, so they provide that support.

Mr. Rosenbloom stated Advisory Councils not only serve as a representation of community members, but also creates an opportunity to develop innovative ways to improve and develop quality services and programs at the local level.

Mr. Rosenbloom discussed the Advisory Council role:

- Serve as the linkage between the facility and the local community
- Promote public understanding and support of youth supervised within the facility
- Provide guidance regarding available community programs
- Advocate for DJJ's programs and budget requests
- Promote an effective citizen participation program at the facility

Mr. Rosenbloom discussed the Advisory Council membership:

- Citizen from the community
 - 8-12 community members
 - Balance of age, race and sex
 - Three year term
 - Recommendation by the facility director
 - Council voted and approved
 - Criminal history and investigation clearance

- Facility Representation
 - Director
 - One additional facility staff member

- The Orientation and Training consist of:
 - Facility director will arrange within 30 days of appointment
 - Focus on purpose, roles and expectations
 - Signed volunteer agreement
 - Signed visitor search consent

- Advisory Council Expectation
 - Sponsor a minimum of one project each year that directly benefits the youth
 - Meet at least quarterly
 - Submit meeting minutes to the facility director

Mr. Rosenbloom stated Sonya Love and Debbie Alexander will discuss some of the challenges they face as facility directors.

Debbie Alexander greeted the Board. Ms. Alexander reminded the Board that the Metro RYDC is the largest youth detention center in Georgia. The facility serves 150 males and 50 females. Ms. Alexander listed the Metro RYDC Advisory Council members:

- Two facility staff
 - Debbie Alexander , Director
 - Carrie T. Hamilton, Volunteer Resource Coordinator

- Citizens
 - James Yancey, Chairman
 - Tim Birt
 - Lisa Calhoun
 - Vanessa Cox
 - Joseph Hope
 - John Jordan
 - Kay Love
 - Mike Love
 - Devadas P. Lynton
 - Dr. Zakiyyah Raheem

Ms. Alexander said the Metro RYDC Advisory Council meets quarterly. As a group they support and sponsor the following programs, activities, and projects:

- Youth Explosion
- Youth Empowerment Zone
- The Vammys
- Metro Idol
- Spelling Bee
- October Fest
- Metro Annual Sanitation Day
- Holiday Stocking Stuffer

Ms. Alexander said Board Member Elizabeth Lindsey was on their Advisory Board and she was the first member who donated money to assist with the Vammys. She stated the Vammys is an annual program that recognizes volunteers for their service to Metro RYDC. The volunteers receive certificates and plaques for their hard work.

Ms. Alexander said they solicit membership from current members, volunteers who are facilitating other programs within the facility, and networking opportunities among the business community.

Ms. Alexander said the members of the Advisory Council at the Metro RYDC are very caring and love the youth that DJJ serves.

Ms. Alexander concluded her report.

Ms. Sonya Love greeted everyone. Ms. Love said after her first week as acting director at the DeKalb RYDC, she met with the Advisory Council president to discuss what the members recommended for her as the new director. Ms. Love said they had another meeting to discuss whether or not their initiatives gel with her vision for DeKalb RYDC moving forward. Ms. Love stated they came to an agreement about the DeKalb RYDC's direction, and within two weeks she met with the Advisory Board Council. Ms. Love said she has several program ideas and believes these programs will benefit the youth.

Ms. Love discussed the challenges she faces with the DeKalb RYDC Advisory Council as a new Director:

- Soliciting stable and productive board members
- Scheduling conflicts
- Reaching consensus on board initiatives
- Effectively communicating meeting reminders
- Relying solely on members to complete tasks
- Obtaining a sufficient number of members
- Having judges, attorneys, and other juvenile justice professionals undergo a background check

- Soliciting donations
- Volunteer burnout
- Getting to know the advisory council and understand their current programs, activities and projects
- Introducing new ideas to active councils
- Recognizing the strengths and limitations of the current council
- Transition of board members who choose not to work with the new administration
- Understanding their role

Ms. Love discussed the ways she moved beyond the challenges:

- Virtual meetings/teleconferencing/emails
- Increasing public relations by promoting council sponsored activities and its impact on the community
- Actively engaging department leadership with facility advisory councils
- Fostering innovative collaborative community based initiatives.
- Open dialogue

Ms. Love concluded her report.

Chairman's Comments

Chairman Edwin Risler
Board of Juvenile Justice

Chairman Risler announced the next DJJ Board Meeting will be at the Central Office on August 25, 2011, at 10:00 a.m.

Chairman Risler said the Board Dinner will start immediately after the Board meeting and there will be a presentation by Judge Robin W. Shearer, Juvenile Court Judge in Athens-Clark County.

Chairman Risler asked if there was any old business. Hearing none, he asked if there was any new business.

Chairman Risler asked for a motion to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice.

Member Elaine Snow made the motion, and Member Stephen Simpson made the second.

The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned.

Dr. Ed Risler, Chair
Board of Juvenile Justice

Amy V. Howell,
Commissioner

Sandra Taylor, Secretary
Board of Juvenile Justice