

**October 19, 2021 MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF MANAGERS OF JUVENILE DETENTION**

PRESENT:	Kevin Madden, Chair	Joanne Phillips
	Marie N. Williams, Vice-Chair	Elaine Schaefer
	Chris Eiserman	Monica Taylor
	Candice L. Linehan	Chekemma J. Fulmore Townsend
	Nathaniel Nichols	

Call to Order. Mr. Madden called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments on Agenda Items. There were no public comments on agenda items.

Approval of Minutes. Mr. Nichols motioned to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2021 meeting of the Board of Managers of Juvenile Detention, seconded by Mr. Eiserman. Motion carried unanimously.

Custody Report. Danielle DiMatteo, Director, Delaware County Juvenile Court & Probation Services reported there were eight (8) youth in custody as follows: three (3) in Bucks County, three (3) at the Aspire facility in Uniontown, PA, one (1) in Chester County, and one (1) in Abraxis in Morgantown, PA. One youth currently at Aspire was transferred by Montgomery County’s request for removal because of behavior. She responded to various Board member questions regarding the process for transferring youth between facilities.

Juvenile Services Report. Kiersten Fitzsimmons, Resource Supervisor for Delaware County Juvenile Probation, presented a general overview of the juvenile justice system and the continuum of services available for youth both inside and outside of detention.

There are three levels of prevention: (1) primary prevention- aim is to prevent delinquency before it occurs; (2) secondary prevention – aim is to reduce the impact of delinquency that has already occurred; (3) tertiary prevention – aim is to soften the impact of delinquency that has lasting effects.

The next step is diversion, which has multiple levels: (1) pre-adjudication – provides alternatives for youth who would otherwise face formal processing in the court system for summary offenses; (2) magisterial district court- provides alternatives to convictions for summary offenses; (3) Juvenile Court (Common Pleas Court) has different levels – pre-petition diversion could involve an informal adjustment of an allegation. A consent decree may be issued post-petition as a next level in diversion. This action would suspend formal proceedings and allow supervision in the youth’s home. Another diversion option is deferred adjudication that allows for the youth to be released from the Court’s jurisdiction in the event there’s a finding that the youth committed the alleged offense and if it’s determined that treatment, supervision, or rehabilitation is not needed.

After diversion there is adjudication that is like a conviction where the Court determines the youth needs treatment, supervision, or rehabilitation. Probation follows adjudication where programs and services are delivered in the community. Placement provides out-of-home supervision, including services provided at different types of facilities (e.g. group homes). Detention occurs when youth are temporarily detained or sheltered for a period in approved facilities.

Board discussion ensued about the referral process and recidivism rates. The County's share of the cost for 2020-2021 community-based programs was \$779,000 out of a total cost of \$3.9 million. The County was responsible for \$2.5 million of the total cost of \$5 million to provide detention-based programs.

Committee Reports.

Human Resource Committee: Ms. Schaefer reported that Human Resources was arranging second interviews with detention center director candidates. All Board members were invited to participate in the interviews.

Facilities and Contract Committee: Ms. Williams explained that members have toured the closed detention facility and are awaiting receipt of contracts for all Board members to review. Delaware County Executive Director Howard Lazarus reported contract discussions were in progress with Chester County regarding shared services to reserve space in their detention facility.

2022 Budget Preparation. Mr. Lazarus said an architect has been engaged to explore options for potentially converting part of the detention center for use as a central booking facility, noting both legal and physical requirements must be considered. Recruitment efforts are underway for a juvenile detention superintendent and a community justice and rehabilitation program manager to help integrate services across the County for those entering both the adult and juvenile justice systems.

Mr. Lazarus will submit a draft budget to County Council on Nov. 2nd that Council will review during November. The budget will be posted for public review on Nov. 22nd. Council will host a public meeting about the budget on Dec. 7th and will adopt it by Dec. 15, as required by the County Charter. Currently, \$1.5 million is being reserved for the juvenile detention center budget and \$500,000 for the juvenile kitchen budget, pending the re-development of programs. He noted an additional \$15 million is controlled by the Court-- \$10 million of that amount in the juvenile court system and \$5 million designated for maintenance of juveniles, which are largely reimbursed through federal and state funds. The budget consists of — operating budget, capital budget, grants, and American Rescue Plan Act funding. Mr. Lazarus requested that Board members provide input on goals and objectives that they want to accomplish with next year's budget.

Mr. Madden suggested that a temporary sub-committee of Board members be formed to efficiently provide consolidated Board input into the budget development process. Mr. Nichols, Ms. Schaefer, and Ms. Phillips and/or her designee from the Controller's office agreed to serve in said capacity.

Discussion of future presentations. Mr. Madden said that groups within and outside of County government should be invited to make presentations at future Board meetings. Ms. Williams encouraged Board members to email suggestions for future presentations.

New Business. Ms. Phillips reiterated a suggestion for gaining access to the closed detention center to retrieve documents for review and stressed the importance of retaining and preserving records. She additionally offered to have someone from her office join individuals for a limited amount of time to review documents currently housed at the center.

Public Comments. (All relevant items.)

Jeff Fleischer, CEO, Youth Advocate Programs (YAP), operates as a juvenile justice organization in 32 states in the U.S. including about 20 counties in Pennsylvania, and some other countries. He commented favorably on Delaware County having eight (8) youth in detention and 19 in placement for a county of its size. The County's contract means that YAP will bring \$550,000 into Delaware County to fund their program for the first year. YAP would work with stakeholders (e.g. Court, probation, etc.) to customize a program for Delaware County. YAP will offer intensive services and 24/7 access to staff to the current population of 27 youth with the ability to serve a total of 30 youth each year. Staff with "lived experience" will be hired from the community.

Mr. Mack highlighted youth services available through Chester Community Coalition. The organization provides trauma therapy to City of Chester and Delaware County families affected by gun violence and operate a violence intervention program within Crozer-Chester Hospital, working at the bedside and providing follow-up care.

Latasha Hall, a Springfield Township resident and the parent of a child who was placed in a facility. He suffered from mental illness, emotional disturbance, and drug and alcohol abuse at the time of his placement. Treatment was never provided and he was repeatedly sexually molested by a staff member over the course of six (6) months. She stressed the importance of management accountability and the need for rigorous hiring practices, including doing more thorough background checks before staff members are hired.

Corey Long, Executive Director, Making a Change Group, explained the City of Chester-based organization works with youth and families in offering a youth development program, mentoring, and case management. A violence prevention grant was recently received.

Dr. Ronald Williams, City of Chester resident and Program Manager, Chester Peace Initiative, explained the mediation group deals with gun violence in Chester, serving people aged 17 to 35, to prevent it from happening in the first place. They actively recruit and do mediation with high-risk individuals considered to be prone to violent behavior and try to interrupt the transmission of violence. Gun violence incidents in their target area of operation have dropped significantly from 12 homicides and 10 gun victim incidents in 2020 to five (5) homicides and two (2) gun victim incidents so far in 2021.

Board Member Comment. Members thanked Ms. DiMatteo, Ms. Fitzsimmons, and community members for making their presentations. There was an expression of interest in understanding the process Juvenile Probation follows for introducing new programs.

Adjourn. Ms. Linehan motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Fulmore Townsend. Motion carried unanimously.