

Delaware County Juvenile Detention Board of Managers
20 September 2022
4:30 pm EST.

HYBRID: Delaware County Council Meeting Room and Virtual

Present:

Chris Eiserman	Deputy Controller Kelly Diaz
James E. Turner	Councilwoman Elaine Schaefer
Candice L. Linehan	Chekemma Fulmore Townsend
Chair/Councilman Kevin Madden	Vice Chair Marie N. Williams
Nathaniel Nichols	

Call Meeting to Order:

Pledge of Allegiance:

Public Comment of Agenda Items Only:

Approval of Minutes: 16 August 2022:

Reports

Juvenile Court and Probation Services

Kiersten Fitzsimmons, Resource Supervisor, provided Monthly Detained Youth Report -- Three (3) males currently at Morgantown including one (1) direct file case, two (2) females at Morgantown including one (1) direct file, and two (2) males at Bucks County with no direct files.

Juvenile Justice Services

David Irizarry, Superintendent, introduced Danielle Floyd, Director of Public Works who shared the following update:

After approval of contract with Spiezle Architectural Group, Inc. the first deliverable was to develop a program of requirements and determine space needs regarding Juvenile detention program in conjunction with state's requirements for secured detention housing. Public works and Juvenile Detention are to meet on the 21st of September to further discuss programming. Second, a conceptual diagram of costs was prepared to maximize two scenarios: Renovation of existing building and select renovation with construction of new addition at Lima facility. Third, Spiezle performed a walkthrough of Lima facility and has shared initial observations of Lima facility, possibilities as well as challenges, and presented them to the design subcommittee. The next step is to reach out to the Recorder of Deeds to obtain full

property descriptions of the Lima facility. Additionally, the county was to provide a consultant for the need of trauma informed care; Dana McKinney worked with the board on 10 August and her scope of services has been finalized with plans to accept her proposal. Lastly, Juvenile Detention staff and Architect are currently visiting other detention centers, with Chester and Bucks County already having been toured, and Montgomery and Lancaster Counties scheduled for next week. Spiezle also asked the board to consider scheduling and timing for the project.

Questions/Responses

Chair/Councilman Madden asked for a rough timeline of reopening the facility, and whether a staggered opening is possible.

Ms. Floyd responded that a feasibility study is expected to be completed in November 2022. The proposal on course of action will be presented to the board by early January/February 2022. Ms. Floyd estimated that the design period would last one-year, followed by a four-month procurement process as determined by the size, scope, and budget of the project, and a one-year construction period for a rough opening of 2025. This timeline can be contingent upon any Middletown approvals for land development.

In response to a question from Chair/Councilman Madden, Ms. Floyd confirmed that the projected timeline applied to the prioritized completion of the secure side of the facility.

Board Member Linehan asked about rebranding of facility signage; Superintendent Irizarry responded that the sub-committee recommended a request for proposal be sent out to the community to involve the community in the process.

Councilwoman Schaefer asked for clarification about using a portion of the Detention Center as the remaining renovations take place.

Ms. Floyd responded there will be a meeting scheduled for all departments involved to determine how opening a part of the center would look from an operational side. The meeting would convene at the site so everyone can get an idea of the building. This will help decide: What will it take? How long it will take? How much will it cost, etc.

Councilwoman Schaefer asked how the licensing process would work with this strategy?

Superintendent Irizarry responded that the process would be the same. The state would have to conduct a site visit to examine our programs, policies, and procedures.

Chair/Councilman Madden acknowledged that although this timeline is longer than anyone would like it to be, he would be concerned about opening a center before it can reflect JDBOM values. He would prefer looking at other facilities as an interim solution to reopening Lima prematurely.

Presentations/Guest(s)

Kathleen Magee- ADA, Juvenile Division

Questions/Comments

Judge Nichols: Does Ms. Magee know the status of ongoing Attorney General's Office investigation of allegations?

Ms. Magee responded she does not know but will investigate.

James Turner asked Ms. Magee to please take some time and share her background.

Ms. Magee responded, she is a lifelong resident of Delco and former student of Delaware Law School. She started in the DA's office in 2001 as an intern before becoming a lawyer in 2004.

Old Business

a. Youth Advocate Program Pilot

David Irizarry provided updates on Grant acceptance Youth Advocate Program (YAP). YAP intends to launch and accept referrals beginning on the 3rd of October 2022. Juvenile Detention, Children and Youth Services, and Juvenile Probation have been meeting with YAP weekly to plan launch and ensure best practices.

Questions/Comments

In response to a question from Councilwoman Schaefer, Superintendent Irizarry indicated that the program capacity allows for the referral of 32 youths per year.

Chair/Councilman Madden asked for clarification about cohesiveness with courts regarding the success of YAP's program.

Director DiMatteo responded that initially due to staffing 8-10 Youths can be serviced; JP is currently looking at current youth active in the system and looking at the following metrics to determine program triage: age, status in system, risk to reoffend, and community services already being rendered to them starting downward from high risk. Emphasizes YAP is not 24/7 and cannot provide emergency services. Additionally, the program is designed to serve kids who may be in foster care -- not in the criminal justice or delinquency system, but showing risks of getting into the system. Currently the target is Upper Darby District and Chester District.

Question/Comments

Vice Chair Williams asked if YAP limited to particular categories of offenses; whether 32 youths is the maximum service limit; how the program's capacity is determined?

Director DiMatteo responded the program accepts youths with a variety of offenses. YAP can be an alternate for replacement. Also, there may be Shelter youth participating.

Judge Nichols inquired as to what community engagement practices are being used in the execution of this project.

Mr. Irizarry responded that YAP itself is handling implementation of its program by adequate staffing. Director DiMatteo confirmed.

Councilwoman Schaefer inquired as to how judges will be involved in this program and who can provide program referrals.

Director DiMatteo responded that not all youths serviced may be before the court, so referrals could come from Probation during intake. If the case is already in court, it could be offered as a disposition alternative and court ordered by the judge. Defense, D.A.'s and the Commonwealth could also make program referrals.

Chair/Councilman Madden noted the need for patience as the program rolls out, additionally expressed his hope that expansion of the project is possible in the future.

Director DiMatteo responded that the long-term goal is that the program could eventually expand to service a wider area of need.

Board member Linehan asked whether an evaluation program is set up to review comparative data between the success of YAP and other program alternatives or if that data is being tracked.

Mr. Irizarry responded that while there isn't specific comparative data at this time (as those metrics are typically determined after three to five years) each case is measured by some baseline metrics that are individual- and performance-based.

Board member Linehan asked whether reports could distinguish between YAP and other programs to track efficacy on a more regular basis.

b. Juvenile Justice Service consultant RFP

Mr. Irizarry sought the board's approval to bring an outside organization to help develop a county-wide approach for servicing the needs of high-risk youth within the community. The initiative would provide a three-step outline of a strategy that aims to collect youth data (zip codes, criminal charges, personal outlook), provide analysis of evidence-based programs and strategies that have had success in jurisdictions like Delaware County, and lastly, develop a service delivery road map specific to the needs of Delaware county to reduce the occurrence of youth delinquency. Of 3,500 vendors to whom the application was sent, 29 vendors viewed the application and 27 downloaded the application. Two vendors submitted proposals. The proposals were reviewed by a panel consisting of reps from Juvenile Probation, the District Attorney's office, the Public Defender's office, Criminal Justice Community Justice, and Juvenile Detention and Rehabilitation. The two applicants were then scored by an internal system and subsequently, a unanimous decision for a provider was made based on a score of 90%. This provider is the Center for Children's Law and Policy.

Vice Chair Williams alerted the board, in the interest of full disclosure, that she is on the board of the Center for Children's Law and Policy but had no involvement in the proposal and, therefore, believes no conflict exists. She recused herself from voting on the matter.

The board unanimously approved this motion to move forward with bringing the RFP before County Council for their consideration.

New business

No new business

Public Comment

Andy Matthews - Morton, Pa was a formerly detained youth, struggled for years with alcoholism, depression, and mental health issues

Helene Kennedy- Upper Darby, Pa, speaking on behalf of Andy Matthews

Andre Simms- Sharon Hill, Pa Organizer for Youth Empowerment Project and works directly with students impacted by the Juvenile Justice System, starting at age 17, served 8 years in adult facilities including George Hill Correctional Facility

Pastor Harrison-inquiring as to Board's progress since last meeting. Would like to see the detention center open.

Board Member Comments

Nathaniel Nichols- Intends to visit juvenile detention board meetings in other counties.

James Turner- commented that board is open to hearing best practices from around the country and within the community

Elaine Schaefer-thanked David for his service to the County, recognizing the promise he brings to the county and the difficulty that he faces in rebuilding this department

Kelly Diaz-would like to hear more about the design plans and shares concerns about timeline of Youth Center progress

Adjourn

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