

**DELAWARE COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION BOARD OF MANAGERS
MONDAY, MAY 15TH 2023 4:30 P.M.
HYBRID: DELAWARE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING ROOM AND VIRTUAL**

Members:

Kevin Madden, Chair/Council Member	Judge Nathaniel Nichols
Elaine Schaefer, Council Member	Chekemma Fulmore Townsend
Dr. Monica Taylor, Council Chair	Reverend James E. Turner

Call Meeting to Order: The meeting commenced at 4:32pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment (Agenda Items Only): As per last month's Board of Managers Meeting, Juvenile Detention Board of Manager Meetings will begin at 5:30pm starting June 2023.

Approval of Minutes: The meeting minutes for April 18th, 2023, were approved.

Reports:

Monthly Youth Detained Report, Juvenile Court, and Probation Services: The monthly youth detained report was not provided.

Superintendent for Juvenile Justice Services Report: David Irizarry presented statistics for juvenile detention admissions in 2022, reporting the following:

- The average weekly census for 2022 was roughly seven (7) youth.
- The highest weekly census in 2022 was twelve (12) detained youth (October 6th, 2022).
- 53% of the weekly census has been juvenile direct files.
- The highest amount of juvenile direct file youth detained at once was five (5).

Mr. Irizarry reminded attendees that juvenile direct files (JDF) are minors whose alleged offenses would qualify in adult systems.

Mr. Irizarry presented a slide on Delaware County's JDFs from 2016 to 2021. The slides depicted the following:

- Delaware County averages 23.2 JDF youth annually. Historically these youth were placed in adult prisons, and no as of December 21st, 2021, must be placed in detention until given an interest of justice hearing due to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act.
- Delaware County historically has 23 JDF youth annually, in 2022 there were 9 placed in detention (61% decrease).

Mr. Irizarry then presented 2022's reported need for secure resources, focusing on the number of turn-away incidents, including:

- In 2022 there were 23 weekly reports in which JPO reported incidents where youth scored for detention but secure beds were unavailable at the time.

- 45 incidents were reported from March 4th to December 1st.
- The most incidents reported in one week was seven (7) in June.
- The highest weekly need for secured beds was eleven (11).
- The weekly need ranged between six (6) to eleven (11) beds.
- 49% of the submitted weekly census reports included incidents where detention resources were recommended but unavailable at the time.

Mr. Irizarry stated approximately 50% of reports included a need for additional spacing. By estimation, June 2022 would have had the highest amount of youth in and or considered for local detention (17).

Councilwoman Schaefer asked whether June's turn-away number (16) all needed beds or if any were appropriate for diversion.

Mr. Irizarry responded the number represented youths who scored for detention. Mr. Irizarry additionally stated that more data surrounding the outcome of the turn-away cases (i.e., did these youths show up for court dates) would be most beneficial to measure the impact of the turn-away.

Councilman Madden asked whether the total number (17) reflected any youths who may have been counted twice in the census.

Mr. Irizarry responded that while he treats the data as 17 individual youths the report did not specify whether there were recurring youths in that number. The data report only provided incidents.

Councilman Madden asked for further insight into whether there was any repetition or major incident because June was such a big outlier.

Mr. Irizarry responded that he would seek further insight into why the number was so high but did not have that information available.

Councilman Madden asked whether it was possible to obtain information regarding the number of youths included in the 17 without disclosing their names.

Mr. Irizarry responded that he would look into obtaining that information.

Reverend Turner commented that an incident in the Sharon Hill and Darby areas around June 3rd may have contributed to the heightened number.

Board Member Townsend asked whether anything would bar access to information on how many individuals were involved in the reported incidents.

Mr. Irizarry responded that more detailed insight from the census had to be gathered from Juvenile Probation.

Board Member Townsend asked whether the number of unique IDs could be included in the report to gain further insight on potentially reoccurring youths without compromising confidentiality.

Mr. Irizarry responded that he will request to include unique ID information in the report.

Mr. Irizarry presented Delaware County's juvenile detention admission by gender from 2022 and included the following:

- The average weekly census was 66% male and 34% female.
- The most males detained at once was ten (10).
- The most females detained at once was four (4).

Mr. Irizarry stated there has been a 14% increase in females detained; females previously accounted for 20%.

Mr. Irizarry then provided a summary of the YTD census data with the following information:

- The highest weekly census is twelve (12) youths.
- The highest reported need in a week is eleven (11) beds and in a month is seventeen (17) beds.
- The most male youth in a week was ten (10).
- The most female youth in a week was four (4).
- The most JDF youth in a week was six (6).

Mr. Irizarry stated as of 2023, the highest total census reported eight (8) youths and the highest JDF youth reported was six (6).

Councilman Madden asked Mr. Irizarry to reexamine the numbers reported in the census since 6 or 7 months have passed. Councilman Madden noted the continued downward trend in youth detention and another analysis of the figures may help determine the need for beds in a new detention center. Councilman Madden further stated this will not be decided at this time and encouraged conversation among the Board of Managers and the public.

Reverend Turner asked whether the data reflects the age of the offender, particularly young offenders. Reverend Turner also asked whether transgender/gender nonconforming individuals are included in the data and how they will be properly housed.

Councilman Madden responded that younger male offenders in similar facilities have been housed with female offenders.

Mr. Irizarry responded that while gathering information from similar facilities, namely Bucks County, he learned younger males are typically housed with females. This was in response to reports of older males harassing younger males and females taking a more nurturing role to younger males housed with them. Mr. Irizarry additionally stated that housing plans included LGBTQ policies and two observation rooms to serve those who may have infectious diseases or be a harm to themselves or others.

Councilman Madden clarified that current relationships with other counties will not disappear upon the opening of a new Delaware County facility. Relationships with neighboring counties may be utilized if additional space is needed.

Judge Nichols commented that youth end up in detention for many reasons and those reasons should reflect their needs within the facility. Judge Nichols asked to see more data regarding the nature and frequency of the offenses bringing juveniles into detention.

Councilwoman Schaefer voiced her concerns about overbuilding the facility because the numbers in the census are inflated and the building plans exceed the highest number of detained youths. Councilwoman Schaefer also voiced concern that building more beds encourages the county to detain youth who may not need to be detained otherwise. Councilwoman Schaefer asked for more clarity regarding the census figures.

Councilman Madden stated that the county would save approximately \$1/2 million reducing the build from 3 pods of 8 beds to 3 pods of 6 beds. Councilman Madden noted additions could be made to support more beds if the number of detained youths increased. Councilman Madden commented that he supports three pods of six beds but encouraged open discussion.

Councilwoman Schaefer asked for data regarding whether turn-away cases became problematic. Mr. Irizarry agreed that further data regarding turn-away number outcomes is important and pertinent to further decision making.

Councilwoman Schaefer asked whether commonalities among the unsuccessful turn-away cases that could be examined.

Reverend Turner asked to see the input from Judges and the District Attorney's office for resources and insight into what the numbers in the census truly indicate.

Councilwoman Schaefer asked for further data reflecting anecdotal accounts from probation regarding turn-away cases.

Councilman Madden, referencing Reverend Turner's previous comment, responded that the District Attorney's office was aware the Board was reviewing these numbers.

Mr. Irizarry stated that he recently met with the District Attorney's office regarding a report with recently published numbers on juvenile detention in southeastern Pennsylvania. The report indicated lower numbers of detained juveniles in the region. Mr. Irizarry asked for their input regarding whether the facility should contain 18 or 24 beds. The feedback Mr. Irizarry received from the DA's office was in favor of both a 24 and 18 bed facility, but neither was specified as a preference. Mr. Irizarry commented that the DA's office supports the Board's efforts and is appreciative of their preventative measures.

Councilman Madden stated that approval for demolition of the existing facility was on the agenda for the upcoming county council meeting on Wednesday, May 17, 2023.

Old Business: No old business.

New Business: Judge Nichols asked to see what the numbers say in terms of pre-adjudicated youth, adjudicated youth, and number and nature of offenses bringing juveniles into detention. Judge Nichols also expressed interest in obtaining other demographics including school district, school record, home life, and JPO officers requesting detention.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Board Member Comment: Councilwoman Schaefer commented that data reports were received shortly before the board meeting; however, they had not been reviewed in detail yet. Councilwoman Schaefer stated that some numbers in the report seemed alarmingly high and that she would like to review how those numbers can be lowered.

Reverend Turner agreed with Councilwoman Schaefer and implored further involvement with school districts and the community to help prevent youth from entering the juvenile justice space.

Councilman Madden agreed and stated that while gathering this data will not necessarily be the determining factor on whether facility will have 18 or 24 beds, it will be beneficial to other Board operations.

Councilman Madden reminded that beginning in June the Juvenile Detention Board of Managers Meetings will begin at 5:30pm.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 5:18pm.

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