

SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR'S JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

December 9, 2024, at 10:30 am

*Bill Rogers Community Connections Center
4900 Broad River Road, Columbia, SC 29212*

Members Present: Chairman John Holler, Blake Taylor, Christopher Ross, Cornelius Huff, David Guyton, Eden Hendrick, Jerry Allred, Rachel Burns, Robert Reid, Sara Goldsby

Staff Members Present: Jerode Oliver, Traci Dove, Brittany Cain, Mariah Riddick, Jess Leneave (recorder)

Guests: Chase Bailey (Children's Law Center), Courtney Thomas (ACLU), LaDara Depugh (*proxy for Amanda Whittle*), Donte Esposito (11th Solicitor),

- I. Welcome by the Chair:** Chairman John Holler welcomed everyone in attendance and called the meeting to order. Reverend Robert Reid led in prayer and Chairman John Holler asked that everyone introduce themselves.
- II. Approval of Minutes:** Chairman Holler asked if everyone had a chance to review the minutes from August 2, 2024. A motion was made to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was properly seconded and carried unanimously.
- III. Agency Updates**
 - a. OHSJP Update:** Jerode Oliver introduced Mariah Riddick as the new Administrative Assistant for the Office of Highway Safety and Justice Programs. Recently, council members, Oscar Douglas, Antiwan Tate, and Jerode Oliver attended the Coalition for Juvenile Justice Annual Conference in Washington D.C. The OHSJP is still awaiting federal approval of the FFY 2024 Title II Formula Grant and PREA grant award. The Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Compliance Monitoring Department is expected to visit sometime in 2025. Brittany Cain will be visiting facilities throughout the state with the Compliance Monitor.

Brittany Cain has been collaborating with Aveene Coleman from the SC Department of Education on addressing Status Offenders in schools and developing truancy training for educational leaders, school officials, and social workers. There is an opening for the Racial & Ethnic Disparity (R/ED) and Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO) subcommittee chair if council members are interested. Shalee Forney with from the Coalition of Juvenile Justice in Washington D.C. contacted Brittany Caine to encourage GJJAC members or administrative personnel in SC to sign the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2024.

Robert Reid proposed that the legislative committee meet with legislators in January 2025, to discuss the progress and initiatives of the Department of Juvenile Justice. Eden Hendrick seconded the motion.

- b. **SCDJJ:** The previous legislative session allocated funds to the SCDJJ for a master plan to update facilities. Key goals included constructing a new detention facility and consolidating all facilities and resources into one location for greater efficiency. Additionally, modernizing the buildings with updated technologies aims to reduce the staffing needs for SCDJJ facilities. Renovations and remodeling efforts are still underway at the Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) and the Midlands Evaluation Center (MEC). Modernization efforts proposed by SCDJJ are expected to save money and improve overall system efficiency.

Legislative initiatives will include collaboration with the Children's Committee to address key legislative priorities. One statute is to increase the detention fees counties are required to pay DJJ which is currently \$50 per day, as the actual cost ranges between \$450-\$500. Additionally, Director Hendrick plans to collaborate with the committee to draft a bill aimed at eliminating status offenders.

Overcrowding at the Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) continues to be a concern. The JDC initially housed 144 individuals the day after Thanksgiving but that number has since decreased to 106. Out of these, 45 detainees were from Richland County. Additionally, the facility has noticed a rise in Department of Social Services (DSS) youth being detained as status offenders and court petitions being issued for youth who are not being placed appropriately. In response, a task force has been established and has conducted several meetings with judges to collaborate on finding solutions.

Lastly, Eden shared plans to participate in the first American Correctional Association (ACA) Juvenile Conference to further the goals and initiatives for SCDJJ.

c. **Other Agency Updates:** None

- IV. **Old Business:** Chairman Holler addressed membership issues within the council. The executive committee has identified individuals who can no longer continue serving on the council due to excessive absences, and they plan to ask the Governor to appoint new members. Jerode Oliver emphasized the importance of having representatives for specific roles on the council. He will distribute a list of vacancies along with the requirements for each position. Chairman Holler also stressed the importance of including youth voices on the council and encouraging their participation. Jerode suggested offering a virtual option for youth to attend meetings, along with the \$50 stipend, and mileage reimbursement that are already in place.
- V. **New Business:** None
- VI. **Subcommittee Reports:** There is a need to fill the R/ED/DSO Subcommittee Chair position. This role involves working closely with Brittney Cain and Jerode Oliver. A deadline will be set to identify a volunteer for the position.
- VII. **Proposed Meeting Dates for FY2025:** The proposed meeting dates for FY 2025 were reviewed by the executive committee. The following dates were suggested and unanimously approved:

- February 28, 2025 (1st Quarter)
- May 16, 2025 (2nd Quarter)
- August 8, 2025 (3rd Quarter)
- November 7, 2025 (4th Quarter, one-day retreat)

Chairman Holler called for a vote on the proposed meeting dates. A motion was made to approve the dates for next year's meetings. The motion was properly seconded and carried unanimously.

VIII. Meeting Adjourn: With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned.