

SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR'S JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

June 16, 2023 at 10:30 am

Children's Law Center's Training Center
1114 Pickens Street, Columbia, SC 29201

Members Present: Chairman John Holler, Jay Elliott, Dionè Carroll, Antiwan Tate, Christopher Ross, Blake Taylor, Rev. Robert Reid, Jerry Allred, Amanda Whittle, Kathryn Moorehead

Staff Members Present: Jerode Oliver, Joi Brunson, Kayla Boston (recorder)

Guests: Jordan Thomas, Trevon Fordham, Stasia Bryant, Tanya Barton, Christine Wallace, Louise Johnson, Stephen Scoff, John Miller, Tara Pellerin, Zoë Lewis, Molly Bloom, Lauren Tinman, Margaret Bodman, Aleksandra Chauhan

- I. Welcome by the Chair:** Chairman John Holler welcomed everyone in attendance and called the meeting to order.
- II. Approval of Minutes:** Chairman Holler asked if everyone had a chance to review the minutes from the February 17, 2023 meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was properly seconded and carried unanimously.
- III. Agency Updates**
 - a. **OHSJP Update:** Mr. Jerode Oliver informed the Council that a new Compliance Monitor, Ms. Brittany Woods, has been hired and will start on Monday, June 19th. The OHSJP received 20 Title II Formula applications; 14 are new applications and six are continuations. Mr. Oliver read the Council an email from the OJJDP Administrator following her visit to the OHSJP office.
 - i. **Staff Update:** Covered in the agency update.
 - ii. **Grant Application Update:** Mr. Oliver explained that the grant applications will be reviewed by the Grants Committee and will be approved by the Council at the August meeting.
 - b. **DJJ Update:** Ms. Christine Wallace presented the update for the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). Ms. Wallace informed the Council that DJJ is still dealing with overcrowding. The facility is designed for 72 youth, and currently there are 122 youth in the facility. With the new budget, DJJ will be renovating their facility and hiring more correctional officers. The agency is working on their community initiatives to prevent reentry. They have developed a new reentry unit that will focus on the youth in the facilities and how to help them transition back into the community without penetrating deeper into the system. A transition home

for youth called The Pines will soon be transitioned into a day treatment center where the youth can get all of their needs at one place including transportation.

c. Other Agency Updates:

- i. Department of Children’s Advocacy:** Ms. Amanda Whittle presented an update for The Department of Children’s Advocacy. Ms. Whittle informed the Council that the agency’s Investigations Unit has seen an increase in critical incident notifications and has created a Critical Investigations Unit to respond only to these cases. Ms. Whittle informed the Council that the RFP for the new Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) has been released. The Department of Mental Health (DMH) shared their budget request with Ms. Whittle and there will possibly be money allocated for DMH for an intensive treatment unit at the new PRTF. Ms. Whittle is a member of the Master Plan Advisory Committee. The general assembly allocated money to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Robert Curr Director of DHHS, created an Advisory Committee to discuss a continuum of care for children and adults statewide to include resources, transportation and housing. Ms. Whittle is also a member of Enhancing Access to a System of Care which is a suicide prevention coalition that reaches out to people that have had experience with a crisis stabilization unit and discuss what it is like from their perspectives as people who work in the system.
- ii. DSS:** Ms. Zoë Lewis presented the update on behalf of Director Leach. Ms. Lewis informed the Council that the agency has been working with other agencies on how to collaboratively respond to the parent/child conflict issue with teens coming into care. Anderson, Greenville and Spartanburg each have a different plan for how they will approach the issue, such as creating a task force and a program where funds are used to support the teenagers.
- iii. DMH:** Ms. Louise Johnson presented the update for DMH. Ms. Johnson informed the Council that the agency will be hosting a prom for the youth.
- iv. SC Human Trafficking Taskforce:** Ms. Kathryn Moorehead presented the update. Ms. Moorehead informed the Council that the State Task Force held a backpack giveaway at the State House on Friday, July 7th along with a press conference with AG Wilson to announce the launch of our statewide prevention education initiative, TraffickProofSC. The Taskforce will be launching the initiative on September 1st in partnership with SCETV. There will be another nine backpack giveaways in partnership with regional HT task forces to help bring awareness about the availability of the high school curriculum; they will be working on a middle school curriculum after the first is launched.

IV. Committee Updates

- i. **Executive Committee:** The committee will have a brief meeting following the GJJAC meeting.
- ii. **Emerging Leaders:** Mr. Antiwan Tate presented the update. Mr. Tate informed the Council that he attended the Coalition for Juvenile Justice Conference. The committee plans to have interest meetings and workshops to recruit youth to be a part of their cause. The adult members are working on trust building and relationship building with their youth. The Youth Summit will take place in August and the committee would like to have representation of their youth at the summit and hope that they can receive some of the scholarships being offered.
- iii. **System Improvement:** Ms. Whittle informed the Council that the committee met with the OJJDP in May and shared with them the priorities that the committee recognizes, such as family engagement and community involvement.

Mr. Oliver informed the Council that we are now in the third year of the Three-Year Plan and there are revisions to the current plan. For the next Three-Year Plan, Mr. Oliver recommends that the System Improvement committee assesses any changes to the state priorities. The annual report to the Governor will be due in January 2024.

- iv. **Tribal:** Ms. Dionè Carroll informed the Council that the Indian Child Welfare Act remains constitutional. The Tribal Subcommittee is looking forward to the Catawba Indian Nation chairman appointing an outside person that will be useful to their cause. DJJ reached out to the committee to know what questions they should be asking upon entry of the youth.
- v. **Government Affairs:** Judge David Guyton is the Chair of the committee; however he was not able to attend the meeting so he sent his update via email. Judge Guyton would like the Council to know that Director Hendrick and Director Leach both presented at the Family Court Judges Conference in April. The number of continuances in DSS docketed cases appears to be going down or at least back to pre-Covid levels. The reasons for continuances are being collected statistically through the assistance of the Children's Law Center and provided to the Family Court Judges in monthly reports reflecting County, Circuit, and Region numbers.
- vi. **Grants Committee:** No update.

V. **Old Business:**

- a. **Tribute to John Dewese:** Chairman Holler asked for volunteers to assist with the tribute to John Dewese and let everyone know that he will follow up with the next steps soon.

- b. Mr. Oliver reminded the Council that South Carolina is out of compliance with DSO; 50% of Title II Formula funds must be allocated towards achieving compliance.

VI. New Business:

- a. Chairman Holler asked the Council to discuss whether or not they would like to have a Planning Retreat or a regular fourth quarter meeting. Chairman Holler entertained a motion to have a GJJAC Planning Retreat. The motion was properly seconded and carried unanimously.
- b. Chairman Holler asked if everyone had a chance to look at the GJJAC calendar and for any proposed changes. The Executive Committee meeting date may need to be changed due to it being scheduled on Veteran's Day.

VII. Subgrantee Introductions/Updates:

- a. **15th Judicial Circuit:** Project updates were provided by the 15th Circuit.
- b. **Children's Law Center:** Project updates were provided by the Children's Law Center.

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