

Minutes

Department of Juvenile Justice and DJJ Board of Education

Monday, September 24, 2001

10:00 a.m.

**2 Peachtree Street, NW
29th Floor, DHR Board Room
Atlanta, Georgia 30303**

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Steve Adams, Major General Peter Boylan, Emmett Bryant, Jr., Mary Linda Duncan, Susan F. Dunwody, David C. Evans, Lois Frank, William J. Shellem, Jr., John E. Wiggins, Mary E. Wilhite

Advisory Members Present: Judge Gregory Adams, Judge J. Lane Bearden

DJJ Staff Present: Thomas Coleman, Mary Esposito, Ronnie Lane, Gregory Maxey, Thomas O'Rourke, Tiffaney Pete, Gwen Skinner, Mike Sorrells, Jimmy Taylor, Jaci Vickers, Lena Wilson

Other: None.

Opening Remarks

Chairman Evans convened the September 24, 2001 meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice. He welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting. He stated that the first item on the agenda would be the Commissioner's message. He then presented the Commissioner to the group.

Commissioner's Comments

Orlando L. Martinez, Commissioner

Commissioner Martinez greeted the Board, DJJ staff, and visitors. He thanked them for adjusting their respective schedules to attend the earlier scheduled meeting.

Commissioner stated that he was devastated by the horror of this month and he was hopeful that, for those with ties to New York City and Washington, D.C., all of their families and friends were well.

Operations

Program Services

- ❖ The Departments of Juvenile Justice and Labor have established a joint committee on youth workforce development.
- ❖ The purpose is to work cooperatively to develop investment programs for DJJ youth which would:
 - Identify ways and means to aid youth in job readiness activities, job training activities, job placement services and work support services.
 - Explore, develop and implement ways that the Department of Labor can serve DJJ youth under the Workforce Investment Act and/or TOPPSTEP and through GoodWorks programs in the Department of Labor.
- ❖ The committee has met several times and has established 5 program development sites:
 - Athens/Clarke County
 - DeKalb County
 - Albany/Dougherty County
 - Richmond/Augusta YDC
 - Bibb/Macon YDC

The program development will be initiated at the DeKalb County site.

- ❖ Draft proposals have been submitted, based on local meetings held in the target sites between DJJ and DOL staff.
- ❖ At the next meeting, each of the 5 sites is expected to have a final program proposal that will support training, readiness or work opportunities for DJJ youth.

Community Corrections

- ❖ In association with Three Springs, Inc., an eight bed emergency shelter for males has been opened in Blue Ridge, Georgia. This is a beginning to developing local capacity in each district across the state.
- ❖ In conjunction with Broken Shackle, Inc., an eight bed Independent Living Program for males has been opened in Augusta, Ga.
- ❖ Commissioner attended the graduation celebration (August 21, 2001) for two youths at the Ogilvie Carrington Group Home in Fulton County. These two youth are the first two completing the pilot program established with Job Corps. They have joined the U.S. Armed Forces. Job Corps is very enthusiastic about taking more DJJ youth who are in residence at this independent living program.
- ❖ Gwen Skinner spoke at the first-ever statewide conference hosted by Georgia's Multi-Agency Team for Children (MATCH) held at the Savannah International Trade and Conference Center on August 23, 2001. She was one of a four-member panel, which included the Directors of DFCS, Mental Health and Special Education Services for Georgia.
- ❖ The renovation of Lorenzo Benn to establish an emergency shelter for males is in process. It has been delayed due to the requirement of water sprinklers. We are currently establishing compliance to this requirement. However, it should be operational in December.
- ❖ On August 28-29, joint training between the RYDC Directors and managers of Community Corrections was conducted. Using a collaborative approach, DJJ staff began the intensive planning process that will be the cornerstone of regionalization.
- ❖ The 8th Annual Community Corrections Training Conference is scheduled for October 18-19 in Athens. Brochures were disseminated to Board members and all are encouraged to attend.
- ❖ On November 28-30 at Lake Lanier, DJJ and the Casey Foundation are sponsoring a Conference on detention reform. Board members were sent initial correspondence on this and Commissioner Martinez is hopeful that all will attend. Correspondence with greater detail has recently been mailed.
- ❖ Community Corrections is implementing a new program, called Tracking Plus, to begin to provide alternatives to the traditional STP. This program will initially be located in ten sites (Fulton, DeKalb, Gwinnett, Clayton, Lowndes, Dougherty, Muscogee, Bibb, Richmond and Houston). The program will become operational between October 1 -15, 2001.

- ❖ At this time of the year, there is usually a rise in the detention population – from an August low to a November high, then dipping again in December. This isn't to imply that the current rise is acceptable, but rather that it isn't unexpected

Facilities

- ❖ On August 27-28, Commissioner Martinez and six staff members from the Facilities Division (Ronnie Lane, Mary Esposito, Robert Manville, Pat Donaldson, Ronnie Woodard, and Todd Weeks) visited three facilities operated by the Colorado Division of Youth Corrections. The three facilities were:

Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center - The Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center houses approximately 160 of Colorado's most serious and violent offenders. DJJ staff was very impressed with the overall operation of this facility, especially in the areas of vocational training and transition services. There appeared to be an impressive blending of programs, particularly between treatment and security services.

Like Lookout Mountain, we are establishing a strong positive vocational program in our YDCs, but we need to continue to work toward a seamless blend between all departments, especially between treatment and security.

Their ideas on behavior management were also very impressive, especially in the area of Positive Peer Culture. DJJ is exploring options on how to implement this type program within its facilities. It's obvious that proper implementation of this program would greatly enhance the quality of life for both students and staff.

Foote (Detention) Center - The operations of the Foote Center (Detention Center) also demonstrated a commitment toward providing treatment programs. The facility was unique in that the population was separated as to committed and non-committed youth. This was very impressive as youth who are accused of a delinquent act are housed and provided services in a different manner than youth committed to the state.

The facility encourages the residents to be active participants in the operation of the facility through the use of P.P.C. student advisory councils and allowing the youth to have a vote in areas such as rewards, decorations of living areas and rooms.

Ridgeview Youth Services Center - The Ridgeview Youth Services Center is a 500-bed, line of sight, secure facility constructed in a rural area outside of Denver. The facility was impressive not only in its design (line of

sight supervision) but also in its vision of secure services in a non-secure setting. The academic, vocational and recreational programs are also impressive. Both students and staff are expected to be in top physical condition.

❖ Serious Violent Offender Program

Over the last 6-9 months, DJJ staff has been working on a Serious Violent Offender Program at the Bill E. Ireland YDC. Gail Mumford, a consultant, worked with staff for 2 ½ days. During a meeting with YDC Directors and Central Office staff, Ms. Mumford gave a brief overview of Missouri's Serious Violent Offender Program and gave good feedback concerning the program we are putting together.

Personnel Changes

- ❖ Mary Esposito, former Director of Campus Operations, has accepted the position of Director of the Office of Special Projects. In that capacity, Mary will report directly to the Commissioner and will manage the agency's response to the MOA. That transfer is effective October 1st.
- ❖ Effective October 1, 2001, Tiffaney Pete, former statistical analyst in the Office of Quality Assurance, will assume the responsibilities of Coordinator of the GDAI.
- ❖ Wayne Peacock, former Director of the Eastman YDC will retire effective October 1st. Ronnie Woodard has assumed the Director's position at Eastman. Ronnie has many years with the Department of Juvenile Justice in both Community Corrections and Facilities. He was the Director of the Eastman RYDC for three years and holds a B.S. degree from Georgia Southern University.
- ❖ Effective October 1, 2001 Mitch Sowell will assume the position of Acting Director of Augusta YDC. Mitch comes to us with an extensive mental health background and is expected to make some changes with the psychiatric team.
- ❖ An Interview Board is being prepared to select a Director for the Macon YDC. Gwen Skinner will chair the Interview Board. There are currently five applicants with diverse backgrounds from which to make the selection.

- ❖ Art Sands, of the Commissioner's office, has resigned effective September 30th in order to pursue other opportunities in the private and higher education sectors.

Meetings

Commissioner Martinez participated in the following meetings this past month:

- ❖ Met with Adam Gelb of the Governor's Council on Fairness in Sentencing.
- ❖ Participated in the Georgia Correctional Association Meeting
- ❖ Through the Georgia Merit System, participated on the Georgia Diversity Council.

Conclusion

Commissioner concluded his remarks.

MOA Update

Orlando L. Martinez, Commissioner

Commissioner reported that of the 23 citations the Department received in the area of Education, 14 were removed due to compliance. He stated that, overall, the Department has done well during this reporting period.

In Mental Health, we were cited on 25 standards. At the time of this report, eight of these were removed due to compliance. In the last six months, 6 additional citations were found to be in compliance. The majority of the non-compliant standards in this category, and in Medical Services and Physical & Programmatic Capacity, are largely due to staffing deficits.

Improvements have been made in automation but there is some concern regarding tracking youth with mental health needs.

Commissioner stated that a more comprehensive definition of compliance is needed. He believes that if a standard has been in compliance for 12 months it should be permanently removed and not reinstated by the Monitor. He further stated that the Monitor's findings are in direct conflict with the findings of the GA Department of Education, and that the Monitor fails to recognize those findings.

In closing, Commissioner stated that the annual budget would be modified in an effort to meet the needs of the agency

Lois Frank wanted to know how the selection of a MOA monitor was made. Commissioner responded that a bidding process was conducted and a monitor selected. The selected monitor then contracts with other monitors to oversee the different areas under review. Ms. Frank also wanted to know the frequency of visits to sites. Commissioner responded that some visits are made as frequently as once a week.

Commissioner Martinez stated that the Department was not included in any negotiations regarding the MOA. The Monitor found that 600 positions were needed in order to fulfill the mandates of the MOA. The Commissioner's suggestion of 500 positions was considered to be inadequate for the protection of youth in the Department's care. The question was asked, "Are our kids unsafe?" Commissioner responded that they are as safe as they've ever been. He stated that because of more staffing, we are now better able to control the occurrences of fights, rapes, etc.

Major General Boylan asked, "Where does the Monitor come down on Community Corrections?" Commissioner responded that we are held responsible for things that are the responsibility of other agencies/departments. He further stated that we can now better defend our position, whereas before, we were reluctant to speak up. He stated that DHR should be involved in cases involving youth detained for substance abuse not associated with criminal activity.

Commissioner is anxiously awaiting the arrival of the new DHR Commissioner so that they can have discussions regarding the responsibilities of their respective agencies as they relate to youth. He stated that DJJ is being held responsible for services that should be provided by DHR, but if we had the flexibility and resources available, we could possibly handle some of these added responsibilities. He expects to have some funds available by July 1, 2002.

Responding to the question about the availability of day treatment programs in Community Corrections, Gwen Skinner responded that some services would be provided, but residential substance abuse programs exist at the Macon and Bill Ireland YDCs that are federally funded. She stated that the question still remains, "Who is ultimately responsible?"

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Evans presented the minutes from the August 23, 2001 to the Board for approval. Bill Shellem moved that the minutes be approved and John Wiggins seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as presented.

Issuance of Bonds

Gregory Maxey, Deputy Commissioner
Financial Management and Administrative Support

Each year, budget requests are made to the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB). Included in this request are funds for construction. These funding requests are usually received in the form of cash generated by the sale of bonds. Bonds are generally issued as 5-year or 20-year bonds.

Five-year Bonds

Five-year bonds are utilized for items with short life spans. Generator back-up systems and minor repairs are indicative of the uses for 5-year bonds. In June, the Board approved the sale of bonds in the amount of \$1.5 million dollars for these services.

Mr. Maxey stated that bond sales are linked to the annual budget and that 85% of those funds are spent within 3 years. The current request for \$1.3 million dollars, which includes \$75,000.00 for the Lorenzo Benn YDC, is the remaining balance of funds needed to receive these services.

Chairman Evans asked for a vote on the bond request. John Wiggins moved to approve the request. Susan Dunwody seconded the motion.

Twenty-year Bonds

These bonds are generally used for items with longer life spans and major construction and repairs. The request for these funds totals \$11.2 million dollars. The requested items are: 1) \$1.9 million for repairs and modernization; 2) \$3 million to replace cottages at Bill Ireland YDC; 3) \$1.5 million for roof repairs/replacement and the addition of space at the Macon YDC; 4) \$2.5 million for construction of the Muscogee County Center; and 5) \$2.3 million to enhance construction of four new RYDCs (Augusta, Crisp, Macon, and Rome).

Chairman Evans solicited a vote on this request. John Wiggins moved that the sale of bonds be approved and Emmett Bryant seconded the motion.

Bill Shellem asked would a request for funds for a certain item be 'locked in' to the intent of the request. Mr. Maxey responded that with the 5-year bonds, there is some flexibility, but the 20-year bonds are tied to the fund request.

City of Gainesville

The city of Gainesville is laying a sewer line that will encroach on our property, but will remain outside the perimeter fence. The 24" line will allow DJJ easier access to sewer services.

Bill Shellem made a motion to grant an easement to the City of Gainesville to lay the sewer line. John Wiggins seconded the motion.

Education Committee Update

Mary Linda Duncan, Committee Chair

Ms. Duncan stated that Dr. Thomas O'Rourke, Associate Superintendent of the Office of Education, keeps the Committee informed of education issues. She also stated that the Georgia Department of Education monitors the DJJ Office of Education, along with the Federal Monitor from the Department of Justice. Sometimes we receive conflicting evaluation reports.

Ms. Duncan reported that the Committee discussed problems with teacher staffing and salaries. She stated that teachers are state employees and do not have contracts with the Department of Education and that the DJJ Human Resource Office does not have a teacher recruiting function in place. Also, the Office of Education is working to obtain diplomas for students as opposed to GED certificates.

Board members wanted to know if teacher salaries could be made competitive. Ms. Duncan responded that the Committee is looking to find a way to accomplish this. Also, they wanted to know if there was a Regional Principal in place. Ms. Duncan stated that, yes, there was one in place and that teachers are being moved through the recruiting process as soon as possible. She believes that we will retain more teachers if they were able to get yearly contracts.

Chairman Evans adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice to the meeting of the DJJ Board of Education.

Education Update

Dr. Thomas O'Rourke
Associate Superintendent

Dr. O'Rourke reported that Sumter YDC was monitored last week and that it was the last of the sites to be reviewed. The results of the reviews indicate that all the YDCs and all RYDCs are in compliance. He stated that he asked that the Department be held to the same standards as other school systems in the state.

The GED test is administered and is under the control of the Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE). He is meeting with them today to obtain additional updated materials needed for the program.

Dr. O'Rourke stated that Sumter and Bill Ireland have included a Spanish Class to their curriculum. With the addition of a foreign language to the curriculum, students are able to get college diplomas.

There are several openings for Education Supervisors statewide. Dr. O'Rourke is looking to hire a retired Peach County school superintendent.

Chairman Evans stated that because we have more tools in place, we are able to retain more teachers.

Judge Gregory Adams wanted to know what percent of youth are obtaining a GED. Dr. O'Rourke responded that he doesn't have the figures but that several hundred did get a GED certificate. The goal is to get students diplomas. Obtaining a GED would be as a last resort. Judge Adams also wanted to know if the GED certificate was equivalent to a high school diploma. Dr. O'Rourke responded that he believes the GED is comparable to the 10th grade, but would find the answers to the specific questions raised.

Responding to the hiring of the retired school superintendent, Emmett Bryant wanted to know if retirees could work at 49% time if hired. Bill Shellem suggested that the positions and hours could be designated. Mr. O'Rourke stated that the suggestions were good ones and he would look at the possibilities.

Hearing no other questions or comments, the meeting of the DJJ Board of Education was adjourned and the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice was reconvened.

Adjournment

Chairman Evans advised the Board of the invitation to hold the October meeting of the Board in Gainesville, Georgia. Board members will be able to view the prototype facility being constructed. The Hall County legislative delegation extended this invitation.

Mr. Evans stated that as usual, the November and December meetings will be combined and is scheduled for December 6, 2001 in Macon, Georgia. He asked that everyone plan for a full day of activities, as Board training will take place on that day. Board members are invited to attend a dinner on the evening of December 5th, in their honor, at the home of the Vice Chair, Susan Dunwody.

Mr. Evans reiterated to the Board information about other activities/conferences scheduled in the coming weeks:

- October 2-3, 2001 – Educational Conference
- October 18-19, 2001 – Community Corrections Annual Training (Athens, Georgia)

- November 28-29, 2001 – Georgia Detention Alternatives Initiative (GDAI) Conference (Lake Lanier Island, Emerald Pointe). Will be held in conjunction with the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Asking for and hearing no questions or comments, the meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice was adjourned.

APPROVED:

David C. Evans, Chairman
Board of Juvenile Justice

Orlando L. Martinez
Commissioner & Superintendent
DJJ Board of Education

Emmett Bryant, Jr., Secretary
Board of Juvenile Justice