

# Minutes

**Board of Juvenile Justice  
Thursday, June 27, 2002**

**DHR Board Room, 29<sup>th</sup> Floor  
2 Peachtree Street, N.W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303**

## Roll Call

**Board Members Present:** Steve Adams; Major General Peter Boylan; Emmett Bryant, Jr.; Susan F. Dunwody; David C. Evans; Lois Frank; Edwin A. Risler Ph.D.; John E. Wiggins; Mary Wilhite

**Advisory Board Members Present:** The Honorable Judge Gregory Adams

**DJJ Staff Present:** Thomas L. Coleman Ed.D.; Mary Esposito; Robert Hayes; Chad Hoffecker; Ronnie Lane; Orlando L. Martinez; Greg Maxey; Camille Murray; Tom O'Rourke Ed.D.; Gwendolyn Skinner; Radford Talley; Jimmy Taylor; Royce Turner; Jaci Vickers

**Other:** Mark Cicero, Attorney, Georgia Department of Law; Judy Fitzgerald, National Mental Health Association of Georgia; Bill Joy, Senior Assistant Attorney General Department of Law; Eric Robinson, Senate Research Office

## Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order by Chairman David Evans. He welcomed all in attendance to the June 2002 Board meeting.

Mr. Evans acknowledged Bill Joy and his special guest. Bill Joy introduced Mark Cicero, attorney, who was recently hired to work with the Department of Juvenile Justice. Chairman Evans welcomed Mark Cicero to the meeting and to the Department.

Mr. Evans called for a motion to approve the May 23, 2002 minutes. The motion was made by John Wiggins, seconded by Emmett Bryant, Jr., and unanimously approved.

**Commissioner's Comments**  
**Orlando L. Martinez, Commissioner**

**Introduction**

Commissioner Martinez began by greeting and thanking everyone for attending the June 27, 2002 meeting. He then gave an overview of the agency's operations during the previous month.

***Augusta YDC***

- Commissioner Martinez indicated that the Augusta Youth Development Campus was recently awarded a Workforce Investment Act Grant of \$138,845.00 from the Georgia Department of Labor.

The program, he stated, will provide the students with GED and literacy preparation, work experience, job readiness and employee placement within the facility or in the local community. Commissioner Martinez explained that a collaborative effort between the Augusta YDC, Augusta Technical College, and the Georgia Department of Labor will give the students life skills and lower the chance of recidivism.

The grant money will be used to support a program of youth transition. GED graduates, he stated, will be able to attend Augusta Technical College. Students will be paid for their work in the areas of computer repair, certified construction, masonry, horticulture and computer application.

Commissioner Martinez stated that the experiences learned at the facility will allow the students practical application of the skills they learned.

Ryan Rainey, Attorney for the Department of Justice, met with the agency about the Augusta YDC. Discussed in the meeting were the positive characteristics of the Augusta YDC like the education and mental health programs. Also discussed, Commissioner stated, were the areas in need of improvement such as management issues and facility issues.

- A GED graduation ceremony was held on May 28<sup>th</sup> at the Eastman YDC. Commissioner reported that there were 21 residents honored for completing their GED requirements. A large number of family members attended the ceremony and reception.

## ***Community Corrections***

- Commissioner Martinez relayed that the training on graduated sanctions, designed by the agency, has been completed for all Community Corrections staff. It will be implemented along with the new assessment and classification system on July 1, 2002.

He explained that there will be an increase in security from a supervisory point of view which could potentially reduce the number of revocations but will definitely insure consistency in decision making. It has the potential for impacting the use of state operated beds.

- Commissioner Martinez stated that the GJSA held its annual training conference June 5 – 7. Albert Murray, Commissioner of the Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority spoke on Partnerships: A Prelude to System Change. Commissioner indicated that the Kansas child welfare system is rapidly becoming one of the most progressive among U.S. agencies. Kansas, Commissioner Martinez stated, is a model for juvenile justice agencies to look at.
- Commissioner Martinez reported that Robert Manville and Gwendolyn Skinner met with Judge Gilbert and Judge Matthews in Bibb County on June 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss the development of a juvenile intake center. John Stettler, a consultant, he reported, is working with Community Corrections on this project. Commissioner Martinez commended Judge Gilbert for her advances in solving issues surrounding intake.
- Commissioner Martinez stated that he along with Chad Hoffecker and Gwendolyn Skinner met with representatives from the Council of Juvenile Court Judges to discuss short-term program plus commitment orders.

Commissioner Martinez explained that Judge Gregory Adams put together a group to focus on these issues. The dialogue, he stated, shared between the Department of Juvenile Justice and the judges, proved to be very good and informative.

- Regional Plans have been submitted and are in the final revision stage. At the next Board meeting, a synopsis of the plans will be provided. Commissioner Martinez apologized for not having the plans available but explained that the staff has been working extremely hard on this very data driven project.

## ***Program Services***

- Commissioner reported that on May 24, 2002, Metro RYDC hosted its first annual health fair. The health fair, he stated, was held on the outside courtyard of the facility. The health fair was coordinated by, Communicable Disease

Specialist, Murielle Scott, hired by the agency thru the CDC/HRSA Corrections Demonstrations Project. Commissioner indicated that the agency needs to become more involved in children's health issues.

### ***Human Resources***

- Commissioner updated the Board on the development of the video-based testing instrument. The initiative was designed for the testing of JCO's and discussed in one of the previous meetings. Candidates, he reported, have been interviewed, both staff and local talent, to pose as JCO's and students in the production.

Filming, he reported, occurred at the Metro RYDC from July 19<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> and was preceded by three rehearsal days. Once completed, the test will be used by the agency for JCO selection and will be made available to county and municipal governments serving juvenile offender populations.

Scripts have been developed to test characteristics such as empathy and generosity. Commissioner stated that by better screening the JCO's the agency is improving its services to the kids.

Georgia, he reported, will be the first state to have video-based testing. Other states, in particular Colorado, are looking at mimicking the program. The video will be available for use in Spring 2003 and is being coordinated by Ergometrics, Inc.

### ***Financial Services***

- Commissioner Martinez reported that on last Wednesday, ground was broken for the agency's new complex. The agency, he stated, is excited about the move to Avondale Estates and the state of the art facility located in DeKalb County. Commissioner Martinez apologized for the short notice on the event, but thanked Judge Gregory Adams for his attendance at the ceremony. Completion of the facility, he stated, is expected around June or July of 2003.
- An RFP for the operation of the McIntosh YDC short term program for males was sent out. The agency will be downsizing the current facility from 168 beds to 60-80 beds. Additional changes to the facility, he stated, would be the removal of the perimeter security fence which will allow the agency to receive Medicaid and Title IV-E funding for the students. The bidders conference will be held on July 8<sup>th</sup> and responses are due by July 22.

He stated that there was an earlier indication that the agency might lose the facility, but fortunately that was not the case.

## ***Meetings***

Commissioner reported his participation in the following major meetings since the May 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting:

- Met with Dr. Jim Austin and Ryan Rainey to discuss the status of the MOA
- Attended the retirement luncheon for Ronnie Butler, Regional Administrator on Tuesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, at the Country Club in Eastman, Georgia.
- Met with the Governor's Safe Action Group for Children. The idea behind this group is to identify where the child caring systems break down so that a seamless system can be developed.
- On June 20<sup>th</sup>, Commissioners Jim Martin and Orlando Martinez received letters stating that Georgia was going to be 1 out of 3 sites to be funded by The McArthur Foundation. These agencies will be an example to other agencies delivering mental health issues. The other states will be Connecticut and Arizona.

Commissioner Martinez concluded his comments and opened the floor for questions.

## ***Other***

Major General Boylan questioned the type of criteria that will be used for the McIntosh RFP. Commissioner Martinez answered that the agency is looking for compliance with the agency's expectations. Greg Maxey added that this facility started as a boot camp model and it is the agency's priority to have continuous improvement and effectiveness out of this facility.

Judge Adams expressed concerns about the removal of the security fence at the facility. He felt it may raise issues of public safety. Commissioner Martinez iterated that the plans for the facility were to have a staff and program secure campus.

Judge Adams also stated that he felt taking the fence down would defeat the purpose of having a secure facility because the youth would have the ability to walk away from the facility. Commissioner Martinez implied that a security fence changes the atmosphere of the facility. The agency has made the decision, he stated, to meet the needs of 90% of youth through program and staff security instead of the 10% that might attempt to run away.

Commissioner relayed that there is no prevention method to keep youth from running. The facility, he stated, will still have locked doors and inside security. With a well managed program, Commissioner Martinez stated, escapes will be minimal. Susan Dunwody added that several of the previous facilities have not had security fences.

Lois Frank expressed concern on the removal of the fence for the gain of Medicaid funding. Commissioner Martinez answered that the removal of the security fence was not because of the money. The recidivism rate, he explained, is at 63% which means that the previous methods have not been effective for the agency. The agency is attempting a change that he felt to be in the best interest of the youth and in the best interest for this program.

Lois Frank questioned the work ethics of the providers pertaining to the facilities. Commissioner Martinez expressed that the providers have kept their end of the bargain but stated that there was poor implementation on the agency's part.

Lois Frank inquired about the decrease in population and where the remaining youth would be sent. Commissioner Martinez explained that the remaining youth would be sent to mental health and community programs. Chairman Evans added that the youth would be dispersed across the state.

### **Bond Issuance**

#### **Greg Maxey, Deputy Commissioner Division of Financial Management & Administrative Support**

Greg Maxey expressed the need for an approval to issue bonds, a large balance of them for minor repairs. In October or November a separate request will be made for the balance of the special projects. For today, he stated, the agency is requesting approval for three million dollars for five projects.

The three million dollars is spread throughout each project as follows:

- One hundred and thirty thousand dollars for the construction of a mental health unit at the Augusta YDC
- Two hundred and fifty thousand dollars will go toward the Savannah RYDC for the construction of classrooms, records storage, and intake areas.
- One hundred and twenty thousand dollars will go toward the expansion and upgrading of educational and recreational areas at Paulding RYDC
- One million five hundred thousand dollars in construction projects at various RYDC's and YDC's
- One million dollars in repairs that exceed local funding capability required at various RYDC's and YDC's

Chairman Evans called for a motion to approve the bond issuance. The motion was made by Susan Dunwody, seconded by Emmett Bryant, and unanimously approved.

**Suicide Prevention in Juvenile Facilities**

**Frank Berry, Director  
Office of Behavioral Health Services**

Frank Berry began by stating that any suicide is detrimental to the juvenile justice system. Therefore, he stated, a task force was developed. With the assistance of Lindsay Hayes, Assistant Director of the National Center on Institutions; Gail Wasserman, Columbia University; and Judy Fitzgerald, National Mental Health Association of Georgia, new prevention methods will be implemented.

Frank Berry relayed that suicides are a nationwide problem but expressed difficulties in comparing Georgia's suicides with that of other states. The main reason, he stated, was that different agencies record their suicides differently.

For instance, if a child is successful at committing suicide, the actual place of death might be at the hospital, in the ambulance, etc. Most juvenile justice agencies do not record those deaths as facility suicides, stated Berry.

Over the last 10 years, the agency has suffered 7 suicides. Frank Berry reported that the agency's suicide policies have received positive reviews by the Department of Justice. When a suicide is committed, he stated, three sets of reports are filed - the GBI report, the Quality Assurance report, and the Death Review Committee report. The reports are in place to review the situations surrounding the suicide.

The Task Force recommendations are as follows:

1. Look at training - review all training related to suicide prevention policies and procedures. The JCO's know the youth the best but they are not intensely trained on suicide and the signs to look for.
2. Look at the feasibility of concentrating youth on special management status for management and engineering concerns. Communication between the JCO's and mental health staff could be improved. By improving the ratio of staff to youth, the agency can better provide services and safety.
3. Create a specialty unit for close observation within a facility.
4. Reorganize facilities into smaller units.
5. Increase physical recreation and creative recreation. When a youth has too much time on their hands, the loneliness may lead to depression.

6. Share information across disciplines. Mental health kids are looked over at times due to a lack of understanding. By sharing information between staff, each employee gains knowledge on each student.
7. Develop interdisciplinary term concepts. All levels of staff will now be involved in the treatment of a child.
8. Train JCO's on behavioral health topics and indicators. All levels of staff will be trained on the treatment of a child.
9. Reconsider the use of room confinement due to higher rates of attempts and suicides when on room confinement. The agency is realizing that room confinement is not the best way to handle each youth. Therefore it is looking at different ways to provide consequences to youth.
10. Look at step down from different levels of observation. With #2 being special observation and #3 being close observation, the agency will allow a stricter policy method to take a youth off of close observation. One person should not be able to determine if a youth should be moved from level #3 to level #1.

Frank Berry relayed that the plan would be to train Masters level clinicians on suicide indicators and a consult by phone would be done before moving a #3 youth back to the general population.

On August 16<sup>th</sup>, Berry reported, the Bill Ireland YDC will undergo a suicide prevention needs assessment.

Judge Adams commended Frank Berry and the agency for its efforts towards suicide prevention and questioned how many Masters level clinicians each facility would have. Mr. Berry indicated that each facility with 60 beds or less has 1 Masters level clinician and any facility with more than 60 beds has 2 Masters level clinicians. He also reported that some of the more populated facilities have as many as 6 psychologists.

Frank Berry expressed his appreciation towards the Carter Center for meeting with the agency on suicide issues. He stated that youth in restricted living situations are 4 times more likely to commit suicide than a youth in regular population.

Lois Frank inquired if the agency had a work out facility for the youth. Frank Berry commented that the agency focuses more on physical activities rather than work out facilities. Commissioner Martinez added that physical education is important. Youth, he stated, get points for good sportsmanship and physical education is also effective because it is time consuming.

Chairman Evans thanked Frank Berry for his presentation.

The regular meeting was adjourned.

Board Minutes – June 27, 2002

Atlanta, GA

**Board of Education  
Thursday, June 27, 2002**

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**Roll Call**

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**Other:** Mark Cicero, Attorney, Georgia Department of Law; Judy Fitzgerald, National Mental Health Association of Georgia; Bill Joy, Senior Assistant Attorney General Department of Law; Eric Robinson, Senate Research Office

**Opening Remarks**

Chairman Evans called the meeting of the DJJ Board of Education to order.

**Education Update**

Dr. Tom O'Rourke discussed vocational education and how fortunate the agency is to have quality leadership in that area. He introduced three of the leaders in the area of education. Radford Talley, Director of Vocational Education in Monroe and Forsyth Counties; Bob Hayes; and Dr. Royce Turner Vice President of DTAE.

For FY 02 vocational accomplishments have been plentiful, stated Dr. O'Rourke. He reported that 437 students completed one full year in a program of their choice, 99

students completed and passed the GED test during the same period, and 35 students completed one year, passed the GED test and were released from the YDC.

At the Augusta YDC, he reported, three students successfully passed the first of two Computing Technology Industry Association exams. The Eastman YDC greenhouse and mobile classroom were purchased and will be in place by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Dr. O'Rourke also recognized two Bill Ireland students for earning over \$3000.00, along with certificates, from Central Georgia Technical College. He was pleased to announce that these youth are now more employable and have a future to look forward to. Dr. O'Rourke also reported that renovations, as well as, student record keeping, equipment, and contracts between DJJ and DTAE are on schedule.

Major General Boylan questioned if the agency was tracking the youth who earned the special training from the agency when they leave the facility to determine if they use their new found knowledge in a job setting. Dr. Thomas Coleman added the agency has been looking to include vocational and technical training at the YDCs. The agency has a wrap-around service in which the youth are followed and tracked. He relayed that once a youth is released, the agency assists the youth in finding employment. Also, Dr. Coleman stated, the Department of Labor, works with the agency to employ the youth.

Major General Boylan inquired if there were statistics on the wrap-around services. Commissioner Martinez replied that the agency is working on the wrap-around services and stated that as soon as statistics are available they will be provided to the Board.

### **Adjournment**

Chairman Evans reported that he would like not to hold a July Board meeting and to reconvene on the next scheduled meeting of August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The August Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>. The meeting, he reported, will be held in Gainesville, in tandem with the opening of the new prototype RYDC.

He reported that the Community Corrections Annual Training Conference is scheduled for October 3 – 4 in Macon. The September meeting will coincide with this conference.

The October meeting will be held October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Lastly, Chairman Evans reported that the November and December meetings will be combined and scheduled for the first week in December.

Chairman Evans again gave a special welcome to Mark Cicero and adjourned the June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**APPROVED:**

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David C. Evans, Chairman  
Board of Juvenile Justice

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Orlando L. Martinez  
Commissioner & Superintendent  
DJJ Board of Education

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Emmett Bryant, Jr., Secretary  
Board of Juvenile Justice