

**Board of Juvenile Justice
Thursday, April 26, 2007
11:00 a.m.**

**DJJ Central Office
3408 Covington Highway
2nd Floor – Board Room
Decatur, Georgia 30032**

Opening Remarks

J. Daniel Shuman, Chair

Mr. Shuman called to order the April 26, 2007 meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and DJJ Board of Education. He noted the time as 11:00 a.m. He asked that all attendees stand and state their name and organization affiliation.

DJJ Staff Present: Albert Murray, Commissioner; Spiro Amburn; Diane Bell; Jack Catrett; Dr. Thomas Coleman; Gordon Fisher; James Frazier; Ra'Chel Fowler; Steve Hayes; Jeff Minor; Rob Rosenbloom; Pamela Sloane; Jimmy Taylor; Lena Wilson

Others: Normer Adams, Georgia Association of Homes and Services for Children (GAHSC); Brooke Williams, Piedmont PA; April Morgan

After introductions, Mr. Shuman asked those present to please stand and join in the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the invocation. After the prayer, Mr. Shuman asked for the Roll to be called.

Roll Call

Lena Wilson then called the roll.

Board Members Present: Larry Barnes; Michael Baugh; Bruce Garraway; James Kelly; Elizabeth Lindsey; Judy Mecum; Daniel Menefee; Dr. Edwin A. Risler; Dexter Rowland; J. Daniel Shuman; Sandra H. Taylor

Advisory Board Members Present: Judge Quintress Gilbert; Judge Tom Rawlings

After Ms. Wilson announced the presence of a quorum of the Board, Mr. Shuman asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 22, 2007 meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and DJJ Board of Education. Daniel Menefee moved to approve the

minutes from the March 22, 2007 Board of Juvenile Justice and DJJ Board of Education. The motion was seconded by Judy Mecum and, hearing no questions or comments, the motion was carried.

Chairman Shuman then called for the Commissioner's Report.

Commissioner's Comments

Albert Murray, Commissioner

Commissioner Murray greeted everyone and welcomed them back to Central Office. He informed the Board that he received a call from Judge Teske the previous day asking to be excused from the meeting for personal reasons. He then introduced two members who were recently appointed to the Board.

- Reverend Dexter O. Rowland of Stone Mountain represents the 4th Congressional District. Reverend Rowland is pastor of the New Piney Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Decatur. He is a member of the board of directors at the South DeKalb YMCA and a member of the board of visitors of the Grady Health System. He earned a bachelor's degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology and master's degrees from Mercer University and Emory University.
- Mr. Bruce L. Garraway of Grayson represents the 7th Congressional District. Mr. Garraway is a high school history teacher at Killian Hill Christian School. He is a member of the Snellville City Council and has been appointed Mayor Pro Tempore. He is a member of the Georgia Municipal Association, the Gwinnett Municipal Association and the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce. He earned a bachelor's degree from Oklahoma Baptist College, a master's degree from Crown College, and he is a graduate of the Coverdell Leadership Institute.

Commissioner Murray, once again, welcomed them both and stated that their experience and qualities would be a welcome addition to the Board.

Commissioner Murray then reported the following:

Legislation

Commissioner Murray stated that the legislative session is one of our busiest times of the year and announced that the 2007 legislative session finally came to a close this past Friday. He stated that the budget process came down to the wire and DJJ was facing severe cuts to the budget, but the good news is that some of the cuts were restored at the last minute. This was due in no small part to personal visits and phone calls to legislators made by him, Board members and DJJ staff, and others advocating for DJJ. However,

we did sustain a significant amount of cuts in the 08 budget. Governor Perdue is calling a special session on the '07 amended budget. We will continue to work to restore these cuts and for next year as we move forward into the 2008 budget session. He noted that later on the agenda Jeff Minor will discuss in more detail where we are and what we perceive as being the impact on the budget issues.

Commissioner Murray stated that from the agency's legislative standpoint, even though we did not have the opportunity to introduce our full legislative packet, DJJ managed to have another successful session. House Bill 153 passed and has been sent to the Governor for signature. This bill contains one of our legislative proposals with regard to the commitment of deprived children. We were able to amend the language of HB153 to better clarify a section of the code to ensure that any youth who have issues relating to deprivation, must also have a delinquent act in order to be committed to DJJ. This will ensure that DJJ only receives the youth that we are statutorily obligated and equipped to serve.

Commissioner Murray then referenced the update and recap of the MOA he sent out at the first of the month. It covered the events to-date. He stated that there has been some development since he sent out the email. For the benefit of new members, he gave some background on the origin of the MOA in 1998. He stated that we are now back at the table with the U.S. Department of Justice, discussing a plan on how to resume facility inspections and the closeout tours. Last week USDOJ initiated a conference call that they conducted with the Governor's office, DJJ and the Attorney General's office. While no final decisions have been made, possibilities were discussed that could lead to those close out inspections taking place, and hopefully, to soon end the MOA. Commissioner Murray indicated that we are ready and will pass inspection when these occurrences take place; that we will be able to demonstrate substantial compliance.

Operations Division

During the month of April the Operations Division held several important meetings regarding several important functions within the division.

- First, the residential placement specialist and other staff met to finalize planning on the implementation of the new procedures for placing youth in residential treatment programs. The funding mechanism and treatment options are changing based on changes to the state's Medicaid plan which will impact a number of agencies. DHR and DJJ are affected by these changes to go into effect on July 1, 2007. The new procedures for DJJ have been designed and the training program for all community staff is currently being prepared to be delivered prior to July 1st. The new procedures relate to identification of youth with needs, how to make referrals and how to bill. The meeting was productive and there is a good plan in place to move forward.

- Since the last meeting the Dalton RYDC was renamed in honor of Elbert Shaw Jr. Mr. Shaw is a 30 year volunteer at the Dalton RYDC and a resolution was passed by the legislature to rename the center. Commissioner Murray was able to participate as a speaker at the renaming ceremony. Judge Quintress Gilbert was able to attend without much prior notice and represented the Board. Mr. Shaw's contributions to the department and the youth served cannot be adequately measured or described and it is a fitting tribute that this name change occurred. Commissioner stated that an invitation was extended to Mr. Shaw to visit Central Office as he would like for the Board to meet him, if that becomes possible.

Commissioner Murray informed the new members of the Board that DJJ is divided into divisions and resumed his report.

Campus Operations

Campus Operations is pleased to announce Keith Edmonds and Anthony Wynn as the newest staff members of team "Campus".

Mr. Keith Edmonds has worked in the private sector in Augusta and recently served as the Clinical Director of Bradford Health Services. He will officially start on May 1st at the Augusta Campus as the Assistant Director of Operations.

Mr. Anthony Wynn is the new Director at the McIntosh YDC operated by Youth Services International, Inc. Mr. Wynn is a native of Alabama and he has vast experience in several states operating large institutions that work with at-risk youth.

Campus Operations Program Coordinator Mary Fletcher, Assistant Margie Segaye, and the Office of Technology and Information Services have created a new paperless system for tracking internal investigation closure processes. This system is scheduled to be operational in May and will allow for staff to track the closure process electronically, thereby, using staff time and resources more efficiently.

Leadership Georgia visited Bill Ireland Youth Development Campus, on March 23rd with 165 representatives. Bill Ireland is located in Milledgeville, Georgia and is one of DJJ's larger facilities. Director Ronnie Richardson provided the group with a tour and an overview of the facility. Following the tour, there was a question and answer session and each representative was given a handout to provide a more detailed description of the facility's programs and operations. Leadership Georgia presented the campus with a framed print of the Old State Capitol in Milledgeville and donated many books, puzzles, and art supplies to be utilized by the students on the Honors and Merit Units. The event was coordinated through Heartbound Ministries.

Commissioner Murray informed the Board that Americus, Georgia is the birthplace of Habitat for Humanity, a nationally recognized program. He stated that New Horizon Habitat for Humanity and the Sumter YDC in Americus are in the early stages of developing a BARJ (Balanced and Restorative Justice) Collaborative. The partnership would allow youth from the Sumter YDC to be transported to a secured habitat site, supervised by Juvenile Correctional Officers, in order to construct cabinets for new homeowners. In addition to constructing cabinets, the youth would acquire hands on experience in the construction of a home. This collaborative partnership with New Horizon Habitat for Humanity would allow youth to give back to the community by helping a family to experience the dream of owning a home.

The next meeting of the DJJ Board is scheduled for May 24th at the Sumter YDC. In addition to the regular Board agenda items, tours will be available to the New Horizon Habitat Site and the Americus community for any Board member interested in this project. He expressed his hope that each member would be able to attend the meeting as it would provide an opportunity for them to see a facility in operation, the population and the programs in place. Before the meeting date, information concerning the tours of those sites will be sent to the Board.

Office of Behavioral Health

OBHS Director Rick Harrison will be representing DJJ on the Georgia Children's Behavioral Health Services Collaborative steering Committee. The Collaborative was created as a result of the Child and Adolescent State Infrastructure Grant and Substance Abuse Coordination Grant project headed by the Department of Human Resources. The focus of the Collaborative is to convene all child serving agencies together to review current behavioral health care services to youth in Georgia and plan for their future service needs. The Steering Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, April 17, at the Georgia Tech Conference center.

Office of Training

The next BJCOT Graduation is scheduled for Friday, April 27th at 1:30 p.m. at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth. Commissioner Murray informed the new members that we have graduation classes throughout the year that mainly involves juvenile correctional officers recently hired by the department and that have completed their pre-service training. Class # 120 includes: 5 students who have previous military experience, 28 have held positions working with youth before, 26 are married, 23 have children of their own, 18 have college degrees, and 3 are working on their college degrees. Eight members of this class have 'A' averages.

Commissioner Murray stated that, as always, Board members are invited and encouraged to attend our graduations. Additionally, Board participation is welcomed as

commencement speakers as their schedules allow. Fabienne Tate, Director of the Office of Training, has dates available for commencement speakers for the second half of the year, beginning in July.

May 16-18, Commissioner Murray will be participating in “Georgia on the Move” in Augusta. The event is inspired by Governor Perdue's challenge to State Agency heads to provide better customer service and access by moving state government outside of Atlanta for a few days. Commissioner Murray participated in this event held last fall in Savannah. It involves DOC, DJJ, Board of Pardons and Paroles, DHR, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, the Children and Youth Coordinating Council, and local public officials in a collaborative effort to take state government to the public and local officials. A Public Town Hall Forum is scheduled on May 16th and there will be a panel discussion in which Commissioner Murray will participate along with Commissioner Donald of DOC and Chairman Hunt of Pardons and Paroles. The date of that roundtable panel discussion will be May 17th. As yet, the time has not been confirmed. The overall dates for the event which is still in the planning stages are May 16-18 in Augusta. Board members are welcomed to attend and to perhaps tour our facilities while there. More details will be forwarded as are confirmed.

Individual confirmations regarding required school board training were provided to each Board member that is participating. Commissioner Murray thanked them for individually making plans to attend the training in Savannah, to be conducted by the Georgia School Boards Association. He informed them that if they have any questions, Steve Hayes or Lena Wilson is available for assistance. He added that there is a possibility that the June meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice will also be held in Savannah to coincide with the training. He stated that information will be provided on this as soon as possible.

Continuing, he noted that the Office of Public Affairs has undergone personnel changes. Dawn Miles previously an assistant in the office has left the agency. He introduced Ra’Chel Fowler, newly hired as a support services worker with the Office of Public Affairs. He stated that she’s been on the job nearly a month and is providing good support to the office. This was Ms. Fowler’s first opportunity to witness a Board meeting.

In closing, Commissioner Murray stated that we have confirmed plans for the May 24th Board meeting to take place at the Sumter YDC, as mentioned earlier. The June board meeting is scheduled for the 28th and will take place at the Fulton Multi-Service Center, if not moved to Savannah. In July, the meeting will return to Central Office; and, the August meeting is scheduled for the DJJ training center in Forsyth, giving members the chance to see the DJJ part of the training academy and that tours can be arranged to see the academy in its entirety.

Commissioner Murray stated that we like to move summer meetings around in order for everyone to become comfortable with DJJ facilities, offices and services, and to see how we conduct business. He added that we had initially planned to secure professional services for the July meeting for taking a group photograph of the Board for the DJJ web site, however due to some conflicting schedules we will have to revisit that plan. Arrangements can possibly be made for the photograph to be taken at the training center if the Board's August schedules allow. OPA will be contacting the Board regarding this option. He encouraged the Board's participation.

Commissioner Murray concluded his report and opened the floor for questions and comments.

Chairman Shuman noted that Board member Van Herrin was not present due to him helping to fight the forest fires in the Waycross area. Mr. Herrin is a volunteer fireman for the Waycross Fire Department.

Ms. Wilson referenced a handout distributed to the Board that included available dates for commencement speakers. She asked that they indicate any date they would be available to participate and to submit them to her as their earliest convenience.

Judge Rawlings commented on the Leadership Georgia class. He stated that he spoke with several members of that class and commended Ronnie Richardson on doing an excellent job presenting some of the dilemmas that DJJ faces, especially with the Bill Ireland kids, and some of the programs we have in place. He stated that they were very impressed and that it is a great way to spread the DJJ word. He asked that Mr. Richardson be given a pat on the back. Commissioner Murray stated that he would certainly do that, adding that he is pleased that Judge Rawlings was able to be a part of the activity.

Hearing no other questions or comments, the next agenda item was called.

Budget Update

Jeff Minor, Deputy Commissioner
Division of Fiscal and Administrative Services

Mr. Minor greeted everyone and stated that he wanted to talk about the budget and where we (DJJ) are in the process. He noted that the General Assembly had completed the FY2007 Legislative Session, that proved to be a long, and sometimes, frustrating process; made more so by unexpected cuts near the end. He explained that HB95 (the FY2008 General Appropriations Act) was passed and is pending approval by Governor Perdue. He then referenced one of the handouts distributed to the Board that contained a summary of the changes within HB95 as they related to the Department of Juvenile Justice. The

'08 bill was written by the Senate and includes pay raises that are split between programs, which make it difficult to see the total impact.

Mr. Minor then addressed the second handout that more clearly highlights the changes. He noted that the DJJ budget is fairly large, one of the top ten agencies in the state that started with a \$319 million dollar budget, of which \$297 million dollars are state funds. The '08 budget added \$24 million dollars in new funds to the budget. Without counting the payroll related increases, our increase was only 1.66%.

He continued his presentation highlighting budget enhancements (this included an increase in the Consumer Price Index for vendors), reductions (including cost cuts in telecommunications, secure beds and secure placements), and realignments. Also included were increases for the Children and Youth Coordinating Council (CYCC) and bond projects.

Elizabeth Lindsey inquired about the impact of the reductions on the MOA verification tours in regard to bed capacity. She asked if it would cause us to be over 120% capacity and put us in a position to face a lawsuit. Mr. Minor responded that this is a challenge we face and the facts have been presented to the Governor, the House and the Senate. The system is at, near or sometimes above capacity and the population will continue to grow, as evidenced by the population projection. Instead of building more facilities, particularly RYDCs, several years ago, with the blessings of the Governor, the House and the Senate, DJJ embarked on the effort to invest more in community-based programs, to reduce caseloads, invest in multi-systemic therapy and tracking and other alternatives to detention. He stated that to deal with the population growth, this effort need to be continued.

Commissioner Murray added that what could happen is that we could get out of the MOA then have USDOJ return to Georgia because we could not sustain where we were. He stated that this is a scenario we would not like to happen; our desire is to get out of federal oversight and stay out.

Dr. Risler inquired, for clarification, if the budget, as presented to them, the final submission before the Governor signs it. He also inquired if we will have future cuts on enhancements. Mr. Minor responded that the Governor and the Office of Planning and Budget have been looking at the budget very carefully but he is not certain what the Governor intends, but he does not believe that there will be additional cuts from enhancements. He added that we do have options. There is a fiscal affairs process toward the end of the fiscal year that can be used to request a change in monies from the current year funding and the FY2008 funds, from one program to another to deal with problems and issues if mistakes were made and will be handled as an amendment.

Mr. Minor concluded his overview and opened the floor for questions and comments.

Judge Rawlings asked about the FY2007 supplemental budget. He wanted to know if there were problems with it. Mr. Minor responded that everything has been zeroed out but the situation could change if there is a veto. He stated that we cannot afford to close down beds now, then reopen them in July and that the situation with Savannah River Challenge is a big issue for DJJ. He added that there are alternate plans in place to deal with some of the issues through the remainder of the fiscal year.

Sandra Taylor inquired if the juvenile court council collects numbers of actual complaints filed and if we present the numbers to the Legislature. Mr. Minor responded that our population projections are inclusive of arrests, census increases, complaint filings; they are very thorough and comprehensive and have been consistent over the last few years.

Michael Baugh inquired if there was way to get cuts we will take in FY2008 to be addressed in the special session of the FY2007 supplemental budget. Mr. Minor responded that it was doubtful but, if they elect to have a supplemental budget in FY2008, we could possibly revisit the issues.

Ms. Taylor wanted to know if the judges could advocate for the budget as she believes they have the ear of the legislators. She stated that she believes they would not be pleased with the budget cuts. Mr. Minor stated this could have a system-wide impact and that he believes the judges, as a group, is an advocate for us in that area.

Mr. Minor concluded his presentation.

Chairman Shuman called for a motion to close the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and convene the meeting of the DJJ Board of Education. Sandra Taylor moved to close the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and convene the meeting of the DJJ Board of Education. The motion was seconded by Daniel Menefee and carried.

Education Update

Jack Catrett, Director of Special Education Services
DJJ Office of Education

After greeting the Board, Mr. Catrett informed them that the Office of Education is currently involved in the state mandated testing windows for the Georgia CRCT (Criterion-Referenced Competency Test). This test measures Kindergarten through 8th graders' abilities in math, language arts and reading. The 5th and 8th grade CRCT is called a 'gatekeeper' test, and students will need to pass this test before going to the next grade.

The second part of the testing is called 'End of Course Test' for high school students, covering math, science, social studies, and English. These tests count as 15% of students' grades. He stated that so far students have done well on these tests and teachers are not aware of any student that has lost credit because of the tests. He added that the results of these tests should be available toward the end of spring or early summer, and as soon as the results of the tests come in, they will be presented to the Board.

Mr. Catrett noted that April is the month in which our long term facilities have Career Fair Week. Representatives from business, schools, and the military come to the YDCs to talk with students about careers/career paths. School principals report that students were very involved and think they got enough information to help them to decide on a career/career path.

The curriculum department is in the process of choosing new math books for 5th to 8th grade. Curriculum committees are in place to review the books to ensure that the curriculum is updated to meet the new curriculum in the new math books.

The last day of the semester is May 24th and summer school starts on May 31st.

Mr. Catrett stated that we are in the process of preparing to meet the needs for highly qualified teachers next fall. No Child Left Behind dictates that our long term facilities meet all the qualifications for highly qualified teachers. At the start of the school year we met all of the qualifications with the exception of a vacant staff position.

All of our schools received SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) accreditation. We are again in the process of completing the two steps required to receive accreditation. The school improvement plans will be reviewed to evaluate progress toward the goals established and, based on that progress, new goals will be developed for the next school year. New plans will be in place at the beginning of the school year. We are currently in full accreditation with SACS.

As has been reported, 40% of our students are served in our special education programs. Of those students, many of them receive related services such as speech and language, psychological, hearing impaired, and orthopedic services.

In cooperation with the Department of Education, the Office of Exceptional Students goes into some of our schools to conduct what is called a 'technical audit' of some of our special education classes. A number of special education files are pulled to be reviewed by this group then reviewed by our staff to ensure that we are in agreement.

Mr. Catrett concluded his report then asked if there were questions or comments.

Judge Gilbert inquired about the number of students taking the CRCT. Mr. Catrett responded that there were between 400-450 students taking the test.

Larry Barnes stated that quality teachers are hard to find right now. He inquired about our turnover rate for teachers/faculty. Mr. Catrett responded that a study was conducted with Georgia State a few years ago that looked at how our teachers felt about their jobs compared to teachers in other systems. The study revealed that our teachers had a higher rate of satisfaction, based in large part on the curriculum, discipline and security provided by the JCOs, and the number of days (230 compared to 190 for other systems) worked. In essence, our turnover rate is slightly lower, even though we have a little difficulty finding math and science teachers, which is universal. Also, our system has a teacher certification program where we work with Atlantic Armstrong State University to train regular teachers in special education. Most of our teachers in the 3-4 teacher RYDCs are dual certified (content and special education) which gives us flexibility in meeting the highly qualified teacher standards.

Commissioner Murray stated that if the members could make the meeting next month at the Sumter YDC, he would like for them to visit the school program to get a first hand look at how the program is organized so that they can draw some comparison between that program and a typical school program. He added that Mr. Catrett is correct in that, generally speaking, our teachers feel safe; we have security in the halls and throughout the classroom. He stated that it is a different type of environment that we think is conducive to the type of kids we have in DJJ.

At this point, Chairman Shuman called for a motion to close the meeting of the DJJ Board of Education and reconvene the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice. Michael Baugh moved to close the meeting of the DJJ Board of Education and reconvene the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice. The motion was seconded by Elizabeth Lindsey and carried.

Chair's Comments

J. Daniel Shuman, Board Chair

Chairman Shuman reported that the next meeting is scheduled for May 24, 2007 at the Sumter YDC. He asked that directions to the facility be sent to the Board.

In June School Board Training will be held in Savannah. He emphasized to the new members that they are a state school board and has to have the training. He added that we are looking at the possibility of having the June meeting in Savannah in conjunction with the training. He stated that the Board will be informed of a decision on this.

The July meeting is scheduled for the 26th at Central Office and the August meeting is scheduled for the 23rd at GPSTC (Georgia Public Safety Training Center) in Forsyth, Georgia. He stated that he believes they would enjoy visiting the center.

Commissioner Murray stated that we have received a request for business cards from some of the members. He stated that this is a reasonable request and that we have decided to have cards printed for all members. He asked Steve Hayes to comment on the procedure.

Mr. Hayes noted that an email was previously sent out to get input from the Board on the business cards. He stated that we will mock up a card that will basically be patterned after regular DJJ business cards, and send it out for their approval. He added that the Office of Public Affairs, other than the Commissioner's Office, is the main point of contact for the Board. He asked that they feel free to contact OPA at any time for any reason for assistance. He also informed them that we have available hard copies of our Strategic Plan for FY 2008-2010, as well as the last Annual Report for FY 2005. He informed them that they are also available on the web site and that the Board section of the web site will be updated with new photographs to include individual and group photos.

Commissioner Murray added that the new newsletter would be available soon. Mr. Hayes stated that even though all of the names of the new members will be in the newsletter, there was not adequate time to include all the photos and bios but they will be included in the summer newsletter.

Chairman Shuman informed the Board that the Executive Committee will be reporting next month a nominating committee to elect new board officers.

He stated that the information they have of contact persons at Central Office is outdated and would like to have an updated list of key persons provided to the Board. Commissioner Murray agreed, stating that the list will be provided to them. Dr. Risler noted that in years past, a contact card was made and given to Board members that included numbers of the Executive Team and Office Directors.

Judy Mecum inquired about the Financial Disclosure Statement. She wanted to know if that was up to each individual to submit it to the Ethics Committee or would they need to wait until they receive a notice about it. Ms. Taylor stated that she believes it is due by July 1st and can be done electronically. She added that it is effective December 1st but needs to be filed by July 1st and that any information on the process would be helpful.

Commissioner Murray stated that we will get the required information.

Mr. Hayes stated that he is familiar with the process and will provide the information to the Board. He stated that he believes it is incumbent on Board members to file those reports; however, OPA will assist in getting the proper information to them.

Hearing no other questions or comments, Chairman Shuman asked for a motion to adjourn.

Daniel Menefee moved to adjourn the April 26, 2007 meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice. The motion was seconded by Judy Mecum and carried.

The meeting was adjourned.

J. Daniel Shuman, Chair
Board of Juvenile Justice

Albert Murray
Commissioner

Dr. Ed Risler, Secretary
Board of Juvenile Justice