

**Board of Juvenile Justice  
Thursday, December 13, 2007  
11:00 a.m.**

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

**Opening Remarks**

J. Daniel Shuman, Chair

Mr. Shuman called to order the December 13, 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; Lucille Bowen; Nathan Cain; Dr. Thomas Coleman; JoAnn Ra'Chel Fowler; James Frazier; Steve Hayes; Steve Herndon; Amy Howell; Joe Lee; Doris Maddrey; Jeff Minor; Diana Newell; Dr. Tom O'Rourke; Rob Rosenbloom; Dr. Michelle Staples-Horne; Jimmy Taylor; Lena Wilson

**Others:** Mrs. Eva Lou Shuman; Danette Gore; Taylor Menefee

After introductions, Chairman Shuman asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the invocation given by Rob Rosenbloom.

**Roll Call**

After the invocation Chairman Shuman asked for the roll to be called. Lena Wilson conducted the roll call of attendance.

**Board Members Present:** Larry Barnes; Bruce Garraway; Van Herrin; James Kelly; Elizabeth Lindsey; Perry McGuire; Judy Mecum; Daniel Menefee; Dr. Ed Risler; Pastor Dexter Rowland; J. Daniel Shuman; Stephen K. Simpson; Sandra Taylor

**Advisory Board Members Present:** Judge Quintress Gilbert; Judge Steve Teske

Noting the presence of a quorum of the Board, Chairman Shuman asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 25, 2007 meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice. Ms. Judy Mecum moved to approve the minutes from the October 25, 2007 meeting of

the Board of Juvenile Justice. Mr. Van Herrin seconded the motion and, hearing no questions or comments, the motion was carried.

### **Commissioner's Comments**

Albert Murray, Commissioner

Commissioner Murray greeted the Board, staff and visitors and stated that it's good to have them present for the final board meeting of 2007. He expressed his hope that after the board meeting everyone would be able to stay for our Central Office Holiday celebration. He added that lunch will be served and a very short program is planned. Commissioner Murray explained that he and members of his Executive Team will have to leave at some point for the First Lady's Children's Cabinet meeting planned for the afternoon, but they will share in the fellowship for as long as possible.

Continuing, Commissioner Murray welcomed the latest two new board members and recognized the fact that we now have a full board. He stated that this is the first time this has occurred since his appointment in January 2004.

The latest appointment by Governor Sonny Perdue is Stephen K. Simpson of Macon representing the (8th) Eighth Congressional District. Mr. Simpson is the president of Simpson-Jones Construction, LLC. He served in the United States Army for twenty years where he retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. He served as president of the Kiwanis Club of Macon, director of the Ronald McDonald House of Central Georgia and was the founding director of Crime Stoppers of Central Georgia. He is a trustee of the Georgia Military College Foundation and a graduate of Leadership Macon. Mr. Simpson earned a bachelor's degree from Georgia College and State University and master's degrees from both Mercer University and the University of Southern California. He and his wife, Susan, have two children. He expressed his pleasure, once again, to have Mr. Simpson join the Board.

Commissioner Murray noted that at the last Board meeting he informed the Board that Ms. Elaine P. Snow was the most recent appointee to the Board. Noting that she was not yet present, he stated that he would not highlight credentials as he had shared them previously. He stated that Mr. Simpson and Ms. Snow are excellent additions to our Board and he is grateful to have such committed members. He reiterated that this is the first time in his career that he has had the benefit of a Board; of all the leadership roles he has enjoyed to date, he has not had the support of a Board and it makes a difference to have a Board that is supportive and helps the agency to do the good things it has done and will do.

Commissioner Murray stated that he wants to publicly thank Governor Perdue and his Office of Executive Appointments for working hard this year to fill all of the Board vacancies. He stated that we are absent only one judicial advisory council member from

that three member council to the Board and he is hopeful that the Governor will move to fill that appointment soon.

Before continuing with his report, he stated that he would like to take a moment to express his sentiments regarding losing a loved one. He stated that anytime we lose a staff member through death, it is tough for everyone. We have had beloved co-workers pass away before, and it strikes close to home to many of us when this occurs in Central Office.

He informed the Board that we lost a staff member who passed away recently, Belinda Raybon. She was a long time DJJ employee who worked in OTIS, the Office of Technology and Information Services. She passed suddenly on November 27th and her loss is being felt by many who worked closely with her. She was well known in Central Office and her death has affected many central office employees. Her funeral was held on December 4th.

Belinda worked for DJJ since November 1, 1995. She started working as a clerk in the Central Office Mail room and then was promoted to Property & Supply Supervisor in May 1998. She was promoted to her current position as an AOC I in the Office of Technology and Information Services – Telecommunication Section in October 2001. She was well known department wide as the “go to person” for requesting telephone lines, pagers, and working with GTA to plan telephone installation for new offices. We will miss her very much and we will always remember her. He asked that a moment of silence be taken in her memory.

Commissioner Murray then began his report with Campus Operations.

### **Campus Operations**

The Division of Campus Operations has completed a new 2008 YDC Directors’ Meeting Schedule. The Directors’ Meetings are scheduled to accommodate at least one meeting at each Youth Development Campus per year. The meeting allows for Directors and key campus support staff to visit each facility to share, educate and demonstrate best practices within each of their respective facilities. The meetings are a key component in a seamless approach to the commitment of long term program services for youth. Campus Operations welcomes any board member who would like to attend the YDC Directors meetings. A copy of the scheduled meetings will be provided to anyone interested in attending. For the benefit of new board member Stephen Simpson, Commissioner Murray stated that ‘YDC’ meant Youth Development Campus and that we will catch him up on the use of acronyms as we have the opportunity.

Commissioner Murray stated that the Augusta YDC celebrated the opening of a new vocational building on November 8 with a ribbon cutting ceremony and graduation. The

ceremony was a huge success with many community leaders in attendance. He expressed his pleasure at being able to attend and participate.

Commissioner Murray stated that the new 1.3 million dollar vocational building will provide six class rooms and four laboratories. The facility will accommodate vocational programming, to include computer and horticulture classes. He informed the Board that the current plan is to use the old vocational building as a facility training building in order to reduce expense and time for mandated training of all area employees.

Commissioner Murray noted that the ceremony at the Augusta YDC was held in conjunction with a student graduation and that we also marked the 3rd anniversary of the re-opening of the facility. He reminded the board, and shared with the new members, that he closed this facility shortly after being appointed Commissioner. At that time, it was operated by a contractor. He explained that there were a number of issues that was thought to be best resolved by closing the facility and taking the time to reevaluate the programming and reopen at a later date. The facility reopened in November 2004 under state operation as it is now, with a special mental and behavioral health caseload for that system.

As a part of the Annual State Charitable Contributions Program, the Youth Development Campuses coordinated several events to raise money for charitable contributions with the Augusta YDC producing commendable and notable contributions of more than \$6,000.00. Commissioner Murray stated that he will have an agency update regarding the Charitable Contributions Program later in his report.

At the Macon YDC, thirty five young ladies voluntarily participated in an 8 week program called "Faith Matters" through Crosswalk Ministries. The purpose of the program is the use of arts (drama, dance and music) to give youth a voice to share how faith has mattered in their lives, while building self-esteem and teamwork. The program concluded on December 1, with performances by program participants for their special guests, other youth and staff on Campus. A reception immediately followed the program to celebrate the success of the young ladies' positive participation and performance.

The Office of Health Services hosted a 2 day statewide training session in Pine Mountain, Georgia for our facility medical staff last week. Training sessions included a review of health services' wildly important goals, customer service goals, AED (automated external defibrillator) rollout training, infection control, treatment of acne and other skin diseases, and several other topics. This was one of two training sessions we hold annually for DJJ's facility medical staff. Commissioner Murray stated that he was not able to attend but it is his understanding that the training session was well-attended and Dr. Michele Staples-Horne was there in her leadership role. This was a good opportunity for staff to come together to share and benefit from the training.

Commissioner Murray also stated that the Office of Health Services recognized several facilities that achieved the best pharmacy cost for 2007. For the RYDCs there was a tie between the Augusta RYDC and the Elbert Shaw RYDC in Dalton for the best cost; Bill Ireland YDC had the best cost award from among the YDCs.

The Office of Behavioral Health Services held a training event on December 5th and 6th at Calloway Gardens to introduce the New Substance Abuse Treatment program that will be utilized at all long-term YDC's. All YDC substance abuse treatment staff, Behavioral Health Regional Administrators and YDC Social Service Coordinators participated in the training session. Licensing and implementation of the program requires a series of intensive training sessions and follow-up fidelity reviews by the Seven Challenges organization to insure that the program is being appropriately delivered. OBHS will work closely with each facility to provide clinical supervision, coaching and support as staff return to the facilities to implement the program.

As a part of this roll-out and our commitment to ensuring that we link youth to appropriate follow-up services in the community, DJJ through OBHS has also developed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Addictive Diseases. DHR has endorsed the Seven Challenges treatment program with its community providers and has agreed to provide DJJ with a list of community providers that are utilizing the program so that youth from DJJ facilities can be linked to the same program for continued care and support as they leave our facilities. The two agencies will continue to partner to provide future trainings to expand and enhance the network of certified providers.

Two Department of Juvenile Justice employees received top honors at the annual Child Placement Conference at the end of October. At the conference in Augusta, Janice Shieh, (SHAY) the campus psychologist and clinical director at the Augusta YDC received the Friend of Children award recognizing her contributions and on the Operations side, Michael Marks, JPPS II from Fayette County was selected as Case Manager of the Year. He congratulated these two DJJ employees for their dedication and accomplishments. Commissioner Murray added that anytime a DJJ employee receives any type of special recognition he wants to ensure that the Board is made aware of it.

## **Division of Operations**

The Operations Division has hired a second Assistant Deputy Commissioner. Diana Newell was present to be introduced to the Board. Ms. Newell previously worked for over 20 years in the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services in various positions to include clinic director in detention centers and as an Assistant Director for statewide community programs. She also served in a similar role with the Louisiana DJJ. Her additional experience in other states as a consultant will serve DJJ and the Operations Division well. Commissioner Murray stated that we are definitely glad to have Ms.

Newell on board and working with Rob Rosenbloom, deputy commissioner of Operations and Jim Frazier, assistant deputy commissioner.

Commissioner Murray stated that several meetings and trainings have occurred in the Operations Division in the past month:

- Aaron Cohn RYDC hosted the annual Columbus Legislative Breakfast where Board Member Daniel Menefee was the keynote speaker. Other Board members in attendance were Judge Quintress Gilbert and Michael Baugh. He thanked each of them for their participation.
- The DeKalb RYDC hosted a delegation of criminal justice experts from the United Kingdom and provided a tour of the facility. Commissioner Murray was able to attend along with key staff, and was able to provide an overview of the juvenile justice system for the delegation. He stated that the visit went very well and the delegation was impressed by the center and our operations and had many questions in that regard. Some contrasts were brought out between our system in Georgia and that in the U.K. and the guests indicated they planned to pursue us for details of some of our programs and operations in order to possibly use that information in their system.
- Deputy Commissioner Rob Rosenbloom, Jim Frazier, Education Director Tom O'Rourke and Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Program Services, Steve Herndon attended the southern regional meeting in Williamsburg Virginia of the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators last month. Each was responsible for a presentation at the meeting and had a chance to interact with our counterparts in many of the southern states. This was a good experience for our staff and a very worthwhile trip. We continue to be asked to participate in conferences as presenters. This is an indicator that we are continuously recognized for the advancements we are making in DJJ.

The Operations Division has conducted meetings and training sessions in the following areas: Expeditors were updated on new processes and changes in the tracking of services offered as alternatives to detention and the Assessment and Classification Specialists had a two day training session on the new and improved Comprehensive Risk and Needs Assessment used by the Department. They will now in turn train all of our probation officers.

Commissioner Murray stated that although the final tally has not been taken, we have been doing our part in the State Charitable Contribution Campaign as was alluded to earlier with the mention of Augusta YDCs campaign. At his request, Deputy Commissioner Rosenbloom headed up the effort this year and reports that we have far exceeded last year's total contributions. Last year we collected \$46,000.00 as an agency. We are now at \$67,000.00 for this year and still counting. The final total will be available next week and everyone will be notified. He stated that once again DJJ staff has shown the giving spirit and we are proud of the effort to help others.

From the Office of Training:

- Commissioner Murray thanked Shirley Turner, director of the Office of Continuous Improvement, for serving as the BJCOT graduation speaker in November.
- There are 54 candidates for the upcoming BJCOT graduation on December 21, 2007 at 1:30 p.m. in the Georgia Public Safety Training Center Auditorium. Dallis Davis, Assistant Director of Investigations, will serve as the graduation speaker.
- The Office of Training sponsored a new two-day course entitled "Lieutenants and Captains Specialized Training" which has been very successful and has received positive feedback from attendees and Directors. The last course with the current agenda is being offered January 7-8, 2008 at the DJJ Training Academy.
- The Agency's Orientation DVD is complete and will be utilized in 2008 as a component of Pre-Service Training for new staff, In-Service Training for seasoned staff and Central Office Orientation Training for new staff to enhance the Agency knowledge of all staff. The DVD is approximately 45 minutes in length and highlights all of the Divisions and key functional areas of the Agency and includes a customer service message from Commissioner Murray. Distribution will be limited in 2008 until the initial scheduled training is completed. Copies will be distributed to Board Members and the Executive Team members no later than January 2008.
- The Office of Training in collaboration with the Field Operations Division sponsored a two-day Assessment Classification Specialist "Train-the-Trainer" Merged CRN Course last week in Forsyth, Georgia. Training participants included the Regional Administrators, District Directors, Assistant District Directors and Assessment Classification Specialists.
- The Central Office Customer Service Training and Harassment Trainings have been postponed until late February 2008.

Continuing with his report, Commissioner Murray provided the following updates:

### Budget

Commissioner Murray, along with members of the Executive Management Team, presented our Amended State Fiscal Year 08 and State Fiscal Year 09 Budget to Governor Perdue, his senior staff and the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) on November 20th. He noted that we submitted our budget on September 1, 2007, which is required of all state agencies. Deputy Commissioner Jeff Minor and his staff have been working closely with OPB, answering their questions and in general getting them the information they need to make good decisions and recommendations to the Governor.

He stated that DJJ's hearing with the Governor was our opportunity to put our best foot forward and make our best case for the resources that DJJ needs to effectively meet our mission, goals and objectives. The hearing went very well and we believe our issues and concerns were well stated, well understood, and well received by the Governor.

Commissioner Murray stated that we (DJJ) had difficult decisions to make, the Board had difficult decisions to make and now the Governor has difficult decisions to make about how to proceed with our budget. He indicated that Governor Perdue is now weighing all his options and has not made any decisions at this point in the process. The Governor's final budget recommendations are normally not released to agencies or to the public until immediately following his State of the State Address (likely to be in early January). Commissioner Murray stated that although we have a good feeling about his understanding and support, we will just have to wait until the Governor's decision is official.

#### MOA (Memorandum of Agreement)

Commissioner Murray stated that we continue our efforts to resume verification tours and work toward an end to the MOA. He added that although there is nothing new this month to report in that regard, we continue to correspond with USDOJ and we continue to be optimistic that we will have information to update the Board regarding the MOA, perhaps early next year.

Commissioner Murray noted that the Office of Public Affairs has distributed Board Orientation Manuals to new members and those members who were not able to be present at the last board meeting when the newly updated manual was presented. He reiterated that these manuals are being provided as a resource tool for members and as an extension of the information found in other DJJ publications and on our Web site.

He then acknowledged Steve Hayes, director of Public Affairs, who had additional information to share regarding the manual and its content.

Addressing the Board, Mr. Hayes stated that it is the plan of the Office of Public Affairs to provide the Board with information contained in the manual as updates occur and new information, if needed, in hard copy form to be inserted in the manual. He noted that an insert was omitted at the time the manual was first presented and that a hardcopy of that document has been provided for them include in the manual. He also noted that new pocket size DJJ contact cards have also been distributed to all.

Additionally, Mr. Hayes informed the Board that sheet to order a DJJ polo shirt with their names embroidered and identifying them as board members is being passed around for them to indicate their preference (color/size).

Judge Teske inquired if it were possible to order more than one shirt if they wanted one or more in a different color. Mr. Hayes and Commissioner Murray responded that his request could be accommodated.

In closing, Commissioner Murray then stated that for those board members who were not aware, Chairman Shuman's mother, Mrs. Billie Shuman, is seriously ill and she's in the hospital and has been for several days. He asked the board to please keep Daniel and Eva Lou Shuman and family in their thoughts and prayers.

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

Addressing Chairman Shuman, Mr. McGuire inquired if the board could be provided a copy of the Commissioner's Comments prior to the meeting as it would help to follow while the Commissioner is giving his report and help to take notes. Commissioner Murray responded stating that it should not be a problem and then sought affirmation from Steve Hayes. Mr. Hayes stated that it was the Commissioner's call to have the comments provided to the board. Mr. McGuire then stated that the comments contain a wealth of information and it is hard to keep up while being presented. Commissioner Murray stated that the comments would be provided to the board beginning with the next board meeting.

Mr. Kelly inquired if we could get someone from the 7 Challenges Program to make a brief presentation to the board as to the nature of their program and how it has been successful in other venues and also how that coordination is going to work between DJJ and DHR. Commissioner Murray responded that we will take a look at it and see if we can make that arrangement. He stated that he is not sure of their availability by the next board meeting but he will be in contact with staff to try to make it happen. Mr. Kelly then stated that if they cannot come then maybe, at a minimum, someone can provide them with a packet of information to see what it is all about and if they want us to rely on looking at their web site, that would be the bare minimum. He stated that it would be interesting to know, that it is very exciting development and he would like to learn more about it.

Mr. Menefee referenced the Victim Advocacy Program and inquired of its current status. Commissioner Murray stated that we have made progress and that it was covered at a meeting in Macon on the previous day. He then asked Rob Rosenbloom to respond to the inquiry as he would have more detailed information. Mr. Rosenbloom reiterated Commissioner Murray's comment that we are making progress. He stated that our Victims Advocate has been in contact with local jurisdictions and they are putting together resource manuals; they have put together a new flyer that just came out yesterday and would make it available to the board. They plan to distribute the flyer to court contacts in our offices and that's specifically for victims and it gives out all the information they might need. He stated that they have established an 800 number for

victims to be able to call to talk to our Victims Advocate to get services and direction to services. He added that we have also hired BARJ Coordinators (Balanced and Restorative Justice), one for each region and there is one left to hire. He stated that these coordinators will be working as a team, making sure we are delivering victim services in each region. He stated that we feel good about where we have gone up to this point, but we still have more work to do. Mr. Menefee then inquired if he still wants board involvement. Mr. Rosenbloom responded that from the last meeting they have not proceeded to establish a committee process of victim advocates from local areas. There are still some issues to be resolved before we can figure out how the board wants to be involved and they are waiting for direction for that.

Judge Teske noted that although Commissioner Murray did not make mention of legislation proposed by DJJ, he (Judge Teske) recognizes that Commissioner Murray is not in a position to talk about it at this time because it is pending before the Governor's Office whether to go forward on anything. He clarified that he is making this statement in his judicial advisory capacity. He stated that he is aware that DJJ has been talking with the Council of Juvenile Court Judges' (CJCJ) Executive Committee and they have responded and that it may not necessarily be to DJJ's liking. He stated that there is some disagreement within the Council as to how to proceed, but like any democracy the majority wins out. He wanted to take the opportunity going into the new year when the legislative session will begin before the board next meets and in his judicial advisory capacity and as president elect, he appreciates what Commissioner Murray and his staff has done in the past year and the way that DJJ has approached the legislative package and the deference given to the judges, even though at times it doesn't seem as if they have given deference back. He stated that DJJ can hang its head very high. Commissioner Murray responded, thanking Judge Teske for his comments and stating that we continue to look for common ground working with the judges.

Judge Teske then stated that he is meeting next week with Eric John, Executive Director of CJCJ, for purposes of developing his agenda going in as President next year. He stated that one of the things on his agenda is to develop and make systemic changes that would improve the system of communication from the Council to DJJ. He asked them to note that he emphasizes *from* the Council to DJJ and not the other way around. He stated that the way DJJ has conducted itself this past year has proven to him our intent to communicate wholly with the Council, which has been a significant improvement and he thinks it is now their turn to make some systemic changes and that is one of his goals as president. One of things missed this past year was the Council trying to articulate and develop criteria by which to approach legislative agendas. He stated that in the judiciary, they are not about legislative matters rather their role is to interpret and apply the law. He stated that one of the criteria that CJCJ is probably going to implement is to back away from offering any opinions regarding legislation that might involve fiscal matters because that is solely for the executive and legislative branches; yet, develop criteria around philosophical legislative matters that would improve juvenile justice. He reiterated his compliment to Commissioner Murray and staff for their conduct and felt

that the voting board members needed to know the professionalism exhibited this past year. Commissioner Murray thanked Judge Teske and stated that we would certainly welcome his leadership and as always will continue to work with the Council as a total group to the extent possible. Judge Teske added that he would be calling on Judge Gilbert as she has offered her services.

At this point Mr. McGuire stated that on the previous day he was in discussion with an attorney friend who is involved with an organization called Voices for Georgia's Children which is apparently an advocacy group. He stated that it is his understanding that they are partnering with the Appleseed Project on what they call a comprehensive rewrite of the juvenile justice code. He stated that he is new to the board and was not aware of it and wanted to make sure that they are involved and he asked the question if they are coordinating the rewrite with DJJ and his friend did not know the answer to the question. He suggested that they engage DJJ somehow. He then opened the question to staff to see if we have been engaged and find out the status, thus far. Commissioner Murray deferred to Amy Howell, Legal Services Director to respond.

Ms. Howell stated that the Appleseed/JUSTGeorgia Coalition came to the Department when they started their early efforts and met with the Commissioner and explained their plans and made clear their intent. As the actual code is released, members of the committee plan to come and meet with the department and other stakeholders to engage in discussions to have an understanding of our positions. No one has the opportunity at this point to provide input. It will be distributed to everyone at the same time. She added that within her office they plan to do their own analysis of all the provisions and their impact and then to engage in discussions with the JUSTGeorgia partnership and other stakeholders. She stated that what is not clear is what the results of those discussions will be but we will have our own analysis and position developed at that point about the code that will be released. Mr. McGuire wanted to clarify that there was not legislation proposed for the upcoming session to which Ms. Howell responded there was not.

Judge Gilbert interjected addressing Mr. McGuire, informing him that there is a liaison, whose name she could not recall at the time that she has been in contact with from the juvenile justice center that is active with Appleseed. She stated that she has been trying to access the Appleseed funding for persons in the Bibb Judicial Circuit, which is currently on hold for that area. She stated that it is a great program but because funds are limited, they had to put certain things on hold and she is waiting to hear from the Appleseed Project itself and the liaison to the project. She added that she echoes Judge Teske's sentiments in regards to this board.

Ms. Lindsey addressed Ms. Howell and inquired if the work done by the board a year and a half ago during major discussions, outside of this Department, with the juvenile code rewrite committee would be included in the rewrite. Ms. Howell responded that she wears two hats in regards to her involvement with the State Bar Young Lawyers Division as Treasurer. At that point, when the rewrite committee was convened, the Young

Lawyers enlisted the efforts of their reporter to assist the efforts of that Committee. She stated that the benefit of the Young Lawyers process is that she does not know what is in that product. The Reporters are exclusively working on the rewrite product at this state to prevent one particular interest group an input. She thinks that the research that they did at the time as part of that committee certainly wouldn't be meaningless, but she does know, only those three reporters know the content of the Young Lawyers model code. She added that she forgot to mention that the JUSTGeorgia group is convening town hall meetings and public meetings. She thinks they have concluded, however, there are a number of groups that have made an effort to seek public input and she believes DJJ staff attended those meetings. She noted that the Department is familiar with the leadership involved with JUSTGeorgia and Appleseed is one of the partners in that group. They did approach us early on to let us know their intentions and their commitment to communicating with the Department.

Chairman Shuman interjected that since the discussion was on this particular type issue, he received a letter from Congressman David Scott. The letter reads as follows: *“This letter is provided at the request of my constituents Mrs. AnJeanne James and Mrs. Pat Phillips as co-chairs of the South Fulton Partners Against JC Larmore group (sfPAL). Mrs. James and Mrs. Phillips who are founding members of the sfPAL organization have expressed firm opposition to the planned reopening of the JC Larmore facility as a juvenile detention center. As residents of the Valley Lakes Subdivision located adjacent to JC Larmore Mrs. James and Mrs. Phillips believes that reopening the facility will result in environmental injustice upon their community. These ladies have filed a formal complaint through my office with the Department of Justice to this effect. If permissible, Mrs. James and Mrs. Phillips would like to request to appear before the Board. Please take my constituents’ opposition to the proposed reopening of JC Larmore as a juvenile detention center into consideration during your December 13<sup>th</sup> board meeting.”* Mr. Shuman then asked Commissioner Murray if he would like to comment.

Commissioner Murray responded, stating that for those members who were on the Board at the time, this has to do with a facility that was formerly run by the Department of Corrections in south Fulton County. The DOC vacated this facility and it was made available to DJJ. The property has since been transferred to DJJ. Our plans are to open an 80 bed juvenile facility. There are members of the community that are not happy to see us come which is unfortunate. This is state property that we can retrofit to make into a middle to north Georgia youth development campus of which we do not have anywhere in Atlanta or north Georgia. This was presented to the board last year and funding has been approved and we're asking for a small amount of additional funding this year to cover the cost of inflation but we're on tract to occupy the original footprint of that facility. He clarified that we are not seeking to occupy what would be an extended facility that DOC had originally planned to pursue. At this point he asked Dr. Thomas Coleman to follow up on this.

Dr. Coleman called to attention the letter sent by Congressman Scott, noting that he was acting on behalf of his constituents and not expressing or taking a personal stance on the issue, but he would support his constituents. He stated that the group has contacted the Department of Justice asking them to withhold funds although we are not receiving funds from the justice department. He noted that the group consists of only about three people who do not want us there and he has met with them on a number of occasions and they have gone from saying they don't want us there to what they really want and that is to be able to do as they please with the facility and receive funding for it. He stated that we explained that we have a greater need for the facility; we need those beds. Dr. Risler inquired if the group has made a request to meet with the board other than this. He stated that it may be prudent to allow them to and he would not be in opposition to it and he would defer to the board's opinion. Chairman Shuman stated that he would like to have something from them and added that this is not something new, that we (DJJ) have had opposition against opening facilities throughout Georgia for years. Dr. Risler asked Mr. Shuman if he would respond to the letter to which Mr. Shuman responded that he is not sure, he has done what was asked of him and that was to present it to the board. Commissioner Murray interjected addressing Dr. Risler, stating that he is not certain if that was the Congressman's intent even though he could not speak for him. He stated that we have met with legislators, local leaders, and the Fulton County delegation and had all the meetings he thinks we should have. He added that the decision has already been made that we will occupy this facility.

Judge Teske responded to the comments made by Dr. Risler. He stated that because the request was made a response should be made, at least at a minimal level. He stated that it is not fair to bring the group before the board when we already know what we are going to do, that it is a matter of courtesy to treat them with respect. He also stated that we should respond to the Congressman so that he will have something to show to his constituents. Chairman Shuman suggested that a letter be sent to Congressman Scott stating that it was presented to the board but a decision has been made and we are moving forward.

Ms. Taylor stated that we should point out in the letter that the decision was not made without public input and they have had the opportunity to meet with staff members who previously reported their concerns to the board. Mr. Simpson added that to bring this group in would give them a sense of false hope.

Pastor Rowland inquired if they had expressed if their concerns were environmental in nature. Commissioner Murray acknowledged that they did use that term and we are not certain of their meaning. He stated that we don't see an environmental issue and that some trees were cut down that were replaced by DOC. He asked Dr. Coleman to respond. Dr. Coleman stated that their environmental concerns did not have anything to do with DJJ; it had to do with DOC. There was an agreement between DOC and this group and everyone met the terms of the agreement. When DJJ took over the property that part of the property was not part of what we did. He stated that they expressed

concerns about the environment but it had no connection and there is no legal or environment issue as it relates to DJJ. Pastor Rowland suggested that the letter include this information.

Concluding comments on this issue, Chairman Shuman asked for a motion to close the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice to convene the meeting of the DJJ Board of Education. Sandra Taylor made a motion to close the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice to convene the meeting of the DJJ Board of Education. Elizabeth Lindsey seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

### **Education Update**

Dr. Thomas O'Rourke, Associate Superintendent  
DJJ Office of Education

Dr. O'Rourke greeted everyone and thanked Commissioner Murray for attending the graduation ceremony at Augusta YDC. He noted that the ceremony for the Eastman YDC will be held on December 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am and extended an invitation to the Board to attend. He stated that to date, we have given over 600 GEDs and over 100 high school and special education diplomas.

Dr. O'Rourke stated that he met with Dr. Risler and the Education Committee prior to the Board meeting and shared with them a survey that they will be conducting. Basically, the survey will look at 100 youth who have been through our program that have gone back into the community, to determine if they are employed or if they are back in school. He stated that he believes we will get good data from the survey that will show the success of our education program, or if there are some areas that need to be addressed we will look at that as well. The study will be conducted by researchers at the University of Georgia (UGA).

Augusta YDC and Muscogee YDC have completed the review committee for the Southern Association for Colleges and Schools (SACS). These two sites were not in the original study for accreditation but they have been reviewed and are now accredited. For the benefit of new members, he informed them that all DJJ schools are SACS accredited. In addition, we are in compliance with the Correction Education Association (CEA) standards.

Continuing, he also noted the following:

- A three year technology plan is underway for programming software upgrade.
- In the area of education, each year we have to report to the state the number of youth in our special education program. The report has been completed and submitted. Close to 40% of our youth are in special education for which we received additional state funding which helps with technical assistance and related services.

- We are in the process of adopting textbooks. Each year, on a 7-year cycle, there is a different area of textbook adoption. We are now in the area of science.

Dr. O'Rourke completed his summary of the education program and opened the floor for questions and comments.

Larry Barnes inquired if DJJ facilities are evaluated individually. Dr. O'Rourke responded that we have a system-wide accreditation.

Sandra Taylor noted that she has heard a lot discussion about AYP (Annual Yearly Progress) and it seems that a lot of the public schools are having trouble because of special needs children. She inquired how this affects DJJ. Dr. O'Rourke responded that he finds this difficult to answer at this point. He stated that we have worked with AYP and in our short term facilities (RYDC) the kids come and go at such a rapid pace that we have not experienced any problems; we test kids we haven't taught and we teach kids we don't test. However, in the other facilities (YDC) we fall under the statewide testing program.

Mr. McGuire inquired if the state audits our programs or applications for special education funds. Dr. O'Rourke responded in the affirmative, stating that we meet all IDEA (Individual Disability Education Act) state and federal standards. He stated that of all the lawsuits out there, 99% of them are related to special education and we have good technical assistance and have not had a problem in the area of special education since he has been with DJJ.

Hearing no other questions or comments, Chairman Shuman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting of the DJJ Board of Education and reconvene the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice. Ed Risler made a motion to adjourn the meeting of the DJJ Board of Education to reconvene the meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice. The motion was seconded by Pastor Rowland and carried.

### **Chairman's Comments**

J. Daniel Shuman, Chairman

Chairman Shuman made the following announcements:

- The next scheduled meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice will be held on January 24, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. at the DJJ Central Office in Decatur. This is the fourth Thursday of the month as we get back on our regular schedule of meetings, held every fourth Thursday of each month with the exception of the November/December meetings which are traditionally combined as they were this year.
- As the Commissioner mentioned, we hope all board members are able to stay for awhile for the DJJ Central Office Christmas Luncheon and short program.

After these announcements, Chairman Shuman asked for a motion to adjourn. Daniel Menefee made a motion to adjourn the December 13, 2007 meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice. The motion was seconded by Van Herrin and, hearing no questions or comments, the meeting was adjourned.

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J. Daniel Shuman, Chair  
Board of Juvenile Justice

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Albert Murray  
Commissioner

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Daniel A. Menefee, Secretary  
Board of Juvenile Justice