



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE PROBATION COMMISSION
LOS ANGELES COUNTY PROBATION TRAINING CENTER**



WebEx On-line Session

Thursday, June 11, 2020

10:00 AM

Present: President Joe Gardner, Commissioner Levine 1st Vice President, Commissioner Swartz 2nd Vice President, Commissioner Meredith, Commissioner Herbon, Commissioner Seaver, Commissioner Shutan, Commissioner, Martinez-Sonoqui, Commissioner Yamashiro, Commissioner Butler, Thomas Faust, Sheila Mitchell, Felicia Cotton, Dalila Alcantara, Jennifer Kaufman, Scott Sanders, James Phelps, Hanumantha Damerla, Anna Garcia, and Jessica Ayala

Attachment: [Audio Transcript](#)

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Commission President Joe Gardner welcomed all and called the meeting to order.

1. Excused Absences: Commissioners Caster, Kaplan, and Mitchell
2. Roll Call

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3. The minutes for May 28, 2020 were tabled until the next meeting as Commissioner Herbon and Commissioner Gardner requested missing content of the extensive discussion regarding issues of Juvenile Hall staff that are out on a leave, FMLA

The Probation Commission will receive, exchange, distribute information, conduct discussion and take vote and action relevant to Item 3.

III. LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

4. Discussion with Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Dr. Jonathan E. Sherin regarding refining the approach to enhance safety within Probation Department facilities and improve the care of minors suffering from forms of mental illness.

Dr. Jonathan E. Sherin, Director of Department of Mental Health, had technical difficulties attending the virtual meeting. The Department will reach out to Dr. Sherin to reschedule and offer technical support.

IV. PROBATION DEPARTMENT**5. Update from Department leadership regarding current conditions in juvenile halls and camps.**

Commissioner Gardner acknowledge receipt of the documents provided by the Department regarding the Department's leadership on current conditions in juvenile halls and camps; the Commission requires time to review.

Commissioner Gardner asked specifically when the Commissioners would be able to continue the inspection process. The Department has plans on a soft opening on July 6, 2020 and she would confirm visitations and inspections.

Commission Gardner requested the Commission review the five documents received from the Department and encouraged questions from the other Commissioners.

The Commission inquired if the Department would continue to provide virtual calling after the pandemic. This option is better than a phone call and a form of visitation for those parents that were unable to go physically visit youth.

The Department will continue to offer virtual calls between youth and parents. The Department is also looking at using this system for the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) process" and expanding the increase of Wi-Fi capability to continue this process

6. Trailing agenda item to be addressed as information becomes known to the Probation Department.

- **Budgetary cuts by percentage**
 - **Where would cuts be made?**
 - **Freezing positions?**
 - **Freezing programs?**
 - **Delayed procurements?**
- **The impacts of transition of DJJ custodies to the supervision of LA County.**
 - a. **Public Safety Concerns (DJJ ages goes to age 25)**
 - b. **Custody management (Need to increase training from current BCSC Juvenile Core Course?)**
 - c. **Field Supervision (Similar to hoe PCRS/AB109 is done or like currently sone by Juvenile Field Services?)**
 - d. **Fiscal Impact (any state reimbursement? Cost to county? Revenue source?)**
 - e. **Facility needs (Upgrades for handling a higher risk population)**
 - f. **Anticipated numbers**
 - g. **Types of offenses (Usually very serious)**
 - h. **Mental Health issues**
 - i. **Alternatives to incarceration**
- **SB 889 (Proposed legislation changing minors to youth)**

- a. **Makes Juvenile prosecution and juvenile 19 and under**
 - b. **How to use facilities to keep 18+ separate from those 17 and under**
 - c. **Fiscal Impact due to adding 18 and 19-year-old the Juvenile System, (any state reimbursement? Cost to county? Revenue source?)**
- **Education planning for new youth - high school diplomas for those who haven't gotten already; college courses for others;**
 - **Community service providers that they are working with to provide services both within the facilities, and once youth are released:**
 - a. **Job training/placement;**
 - b. **Mental health support;**
 - c. **Drug and alcohol support;**
 - d. **General re-entry preparation.**
 - **Family counseling**

Chief Deputy Mitchell reported that she was now handling all Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) issues for the Department and that Deputy Director Faust would be able to answer any questions regarding trailing items

Ms. Mitchell provided an update regarding the impacts of the DJJ realignment to LA County:

- Legislators in Sacramento are required to pass the budget by June 15, 2020.
- The Finance Committee is still looking at needs to pass the budget.
- Los Angeles County has submitted the Department requirements for DJJ youth who will return to Los Angeles County.
- DJJ has stopped their intake as of March 2020, due to the COVID-19 and youth are now housed at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall.
- Realignment dates and the negotiations are still pending
- The state initial proposed counties received \$125,000 per youth vs \$300,000 that was previously allocated to the state.

Deputy Director Felicia Cotton provided information on the different ethnicities of youth and the types of offenses of youth that would receive from the DJJ. after the realignment.

The Commission requested information on new staffing numbers due to the decrease of youth in the camps and halls and inquired if the Department had identified a location to house the DJJ youth.

Ms. Mitchell reported that the County has not identified a facility nor would the county reopen a closed facility for the DJJ realignment. Staffing numbers were not yet considered until the Department decides on the classification is determined and more information is received.

The Commission inquired on current DJJ locations and if any in LA County.

Ms. Cotton indicated that there was none in LA County, as the one in Norwalk was closed several years ago and now was being redeveloped by the city. Commissioner Meredith commented that they looked at the Norwalk DJJ facility many years ago and that they determined that it would be too costly to repair.

V. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

7. **Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on items of interest within the subject matter of the Commission.**

You may submit written public comments by e-mail to **PROB.Commission@probation.lacounty.gov** or mail to:

**Attention: Probation Commission
9150 E. Imperial Hwy. – Room M55
Downey, CA 90242**

Send written public comment or documentation as soon as possible but no later than 5:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled meeting. Please include the Agenda item and meeting date in your correspondence. Correspondence received shall become part of the official record.

No public comments received

The Probation Commission will receive, exchange, distribute information, conduct discussion and take possible action relevant to Item 6 and 7.

VI. BUSINESS CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

8. **Continued discussion of recommendations for dedicated mental health center(s)**

Commissioner Gardner requested that the Commission review the Letter to the Board and Dr. Sherin regarding the Dedicated Mental Health Program.

Commissioner Levine requested a change on the letter or the heading to clarify that the program would be provided to all youth in the facilities. Commission Gardner welcomed any change suggestions, he asked that they are sent to him.

The votes were counted as follows:

- Ayes: Commissioners Martinez-Sonoqui, Yamashiro, Seaver, Levine, Gardner, Shutan, Herbon; and Butler
- Abstain: Commissioner Meredith

Commissioner Gardner will make the changes from Commissioner Levine and add the names based on the votes at the bottom of the letter.

9. **Continued discussion on case study of actions taken by the Probation Department after assault on staff within a facility.**

The Commission inquired about the process of staff assaults from the beginning of an incident to the information is sent to the DA's office.

Presiding Judge John Lawson will be invited to attend the next meeting to speak of the court process and how the court determines what to do with these youth and what is available to them.

Camps Incident process:

- Youth are removed to the HOPE Center to deescalate the situation
- Mental Health completes a rethinking report,
- An investigation is conducted by Probation,
- The facility conducts an MDT and determine the course of action
- DA is contacted for a filing recommendation.

Assaults on staff are taken very seriously; however, youth are given the opportunity to rehabilitate. Staff are contacted as they feel that serious action should be taken against the youth. The adult court considers these charges as misdemeanors and bail is easily paid for which is why youth should remain in the juvenile system to receive added time to their camp stay so that they youth is provided services to help with these aggressive behaviors.

Juvenile Hall incident process:

- An investigation is conducted
- The investigation is reviewed
- Staff will intervein and create separation
- Officers involved write a report
- Medical attention is given if needed
- Photos may be included and video, if available
- Partner agency staff, when assaulted, will go to the Police Department, and report the crime; however, the facility will also report it
- All reports and evidence will be gathered and submitted to the DA for filing
- Youth and the victims are separated
- MDTs are conducted in the HOPE Center in the Juvenile Halls.

The Commission inquired about services for youth in the case study and if the youth receive mental health intensive counseling for anger and aggressive behaviors. The Department indicated that youth receive these services after an incident after de-escalation introduction conducted by the mental health clinicians at the facilities.

The Commission inquired if Probation staff can call Mental Health and ask for an immediate evaluation of a youth so that youth could receive further treatment.

The Department conducts weekly IBMP interagency meetings to discuss those youth to revise the case plan and provide other services, DMH is always contacted. Youth are placed on different levels, and if needed, youth are sent to the nearest psychiatric mental health facility.

The Commission recommended the following:

- More presence from DMH during each incident
- Charging youth with a new case for the assault to stop this type of behavior
- Troubled youth be moved up to county jail, too many resources are being wasted with youth that do not want the services.
- Probation work with the Public Defender and District Attorney to prevent these incidents.
- Procedures need tweaking to fine tune the process

Jennifer Kaufman indicated that the information in the reports were detailed; however, she encouraged the Commission to speak to Judge Lawson to understand the court's process and would meet with Commissioner Herbon to discuss further.

Commissioner inquired if are youth given the information regarding consequences when arriving to Juvenile hall. The Department indicated that youth receive guidelines of the institution and they are read the guidelines and asked if they understand and then are asked to sign off on the guide during orientation.

The Probation Commission will receive, exchange, distribute information, conduct discussion and take possible action relevant to Item 5 through 9.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND UPDATES

NEW BUSINESS

The Commission requested an update on Camp Scott's move to the Dorothy Kirby Center and how room was made if there are several youth waiting to be moved to Kirby. Ms. Kaufman added that the girls from Camp Scott were moved to a vacant cottage due to low staffing ratios at Kirby.

The Commission inquired about the number of youth awaiting Kirby placement and raised concern that there were youth in Juvenile Hall that could benefit from Kirby placement. Ms. Kaufman stated that the youth in juvenile hall pending Kirby are monitored and are not moved due to pending court appearances/assessment.

The Probation Commission will receive, exchange, distribute information, conduct discussion and take possible action relevant to COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND UPDATES.

Discussion regarding proposed topics for next meeting, scheduled for June 25, 2020.

- 10. Update and discussion of the status of the Probation Department Reserve Program.**

Update to be provided at future meeting

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Meredith reported on graduation of a class of 43 DSOs and DPOs to the Department.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:31 P.M.