

Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council
MINUTES

January 18, 2023

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

3:00 p.m. –4:30 p.m.

HOA Multipurpose Room

Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council Committee Present:

Mark Varela, Probation Agency; Judge Covarrubias, Juvenile Justice Court; Vianey Lopez, Board of Supervisors; Todd Inglis, Sheriff; Betty Ham, City Impact; Erik Nasarenko, District Attorney; Valerie Salazar, JJDC; Chrissy Ortega, CEO; Rigoberto Vargas, Public Health; Stephanie Rodriguez, VCOE; Melissa Livingston, Human Services Agency; Michael Rodriguez, Public Defender; Cheryl Fox, Behavioral Health.

Absent

Jeff Gorell, Board of Supervisors

Discussion/Conclusions	Recommendations/Actions	Responsible
<p>1) Welcome/Announcements</p> <p>Chief Varela called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. He introduced James Fryhoff, newly elected Sheriff. Sheriff Fryhoff introduced himself and some of his team, including his designee for this meeting, Todd Inglis.</p> <p>Chief Varela gave a brief history of the JJCC. The JJCC is made up of 15 members, including county and community representatives. It is chaired by the Chief Probation Officer and the Juvenile Court Presiding Judge. The JJCC has overseen state funding (currently over \$3M annually) since 2000.</p> <p>Committee members introduced themselves to the group.</p> <p>Todd Inglis (for James Fryhoff), Sheriff Erik Nasarenko, District Attorney Supervisor Vianey Lopez, 5th District Betty Alvarez Ham, City Impact Mark Varela, Probation Judge Covarrubias – Juvenile Court Valerie Salazar - JJDC Chrissy Ortega (for Dr. Sevet Johnson), CEO Rigoberto Vargas, Public Health Stephanie Rodriguez (for Dr. Cesar Morales), VCOE Melissa Livingston, Human Services Agency Michael Rodriguez (for Claudia Bautista), Public Defender Cheryl Fox (for Scott Gilman), Behavioral Health</p>		
<p>2) Approval of the JJCC Meeting Minutes Dated September 21, 2022</p> <p>Motion to approve minutes as submitted. Moved by Erik Nasarenko and seconded by Rigoberto Vargas. 11 in favor; 0 opposed; 2 abstentions (Cheryl Fox and Supervisor Lopez.) Motion carried.</p>		
<p>3) Public Comments – None received/heard.</p>		
<p>4) Update on Office of DEI – Youth Equity Positions</p> <p>Mark Varela noted that at the last JJCC meeting, the group discussed creating juvenile detention alternatives in the community. Over the last 20 years, a lot has been done to establish community-based alternatives and programs, with the goal of preventing youth from entering the juvenile justice system. Those efforts have included 3 evening reporting centers, a truancy program, treatment in the community, and ROPP. As a result, we have seen a decrease in the number of referrals to juvenile court and</p>		

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<p>juvenile hall.</p> <p>To increase the preventative work being done, this group elected to fund two fixed term positions within the CEO's office, a Youth Equity Manager and a Youth Equity Coordinator. These positions would work under Phin and her team to identify equity issues and resolve them early on utilizing partnerships with the community to further slow the trend of youth entering the juvenile justice system. The Board of Supervisors approved these positions in December.</p> <p>Phin gave an update on recruitment efforts for these positions. She put the job description together for the manager position, with assistance from the Burns Institute. The job was posted in December, and we received 50 applications. HR is currently reviewing the applications. Oral exams will be scheduled in February, and a panel interview will be scheduled after that. Hoping to hire someone in March. The Youth Equity Coordinator position should be posted sometime next week, and hopefully it will be filled by April.</p> <p>Phin gave an overview of what these positions will do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene and expand the YES collaborative. • Have conversations with the community as well as internal partners to talk about solutions. • Produce data reports • Put together a youth equity summit. • Learn about the work that different organizations are already doing. <p>Phin noted that the County is embarking on a data project that will be looking at many indicators (education, healthcare, wellness, safety, etc.)</p> <p>Phin thanked the group for their support.</p>		
<p>5) JJCPA Budget Update</p> <p>Mark Howe provided a budget update. It is projected that we will spend \$3.6M (vs. the \$4.3M budget that was approved), which is a \$700k variance.</p> <p>Of the \$1M project budget, it's projected only \$500k will be spent. There was also \$150k budgeted for an evening reporting center in Ventura that did not end up happening. There was also a shortfall in the restorative justice program. The JJCC subcommittee has been meeting and figuring out ways to increase services/projects to meet their budget of \$1M. The following projects were selected:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) DEI positions – \$300k. Positions have not been filled so there will be a variance. 2) 4th public health nurse - \$160k (will only be using half). 3) Youth advocates increase – \$130k (currently drafting RFP). 4) Expanding MFT therapy – (currently drafting RFP). 		

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<p>Mark Howe gave an update on Fiscal Year 2024 budget. It looks like we will be getting more funds (a lot coming from growth monies). However, we may see a dip in Fiscal Year 2025. Based on the projection of receiving an additional \$500k next fiscal year, our trust balance will be \$8.8M. The plan is to roll the 4 projects started this year into the budget, and then create another \$1M project budget for next year for further enhancements.</p> <p>Mark Varela suggested pulling data to see about starting an evening reporting center in south Oxnard. Mark explained that the goal of the evening reporting centers is to provide structured youth development activities from 3-9pm, provided by a community-based organization.</p> <p>Mark introduced Chris Modica, Division Manager, who now chairs the JJCC subcommittee.</p> <p>Mark will have the Juvenile Justice Plan sent out to members of the JJCC.</p>		
<p>6) Gap Funding for JAG Grant</p> <p>Betty Ham discussed the history of the Transformation Works program. This program has been funded by the state since 2008. The program receives referrals from law enforcement and probation. Youth get paired with a mentor who meets with them 2-3 times a week. The program began in Oxnard and Fillmore, and now serves other areas in the county including Port Hueneme, Santa Paula and unincorporated areas.</p> <p>Betty stated that 5 years ago, there was a six-month funding gap, which the JJCC helped cover.</p> <p>Currently, the program is facing a 2-month funding gap (\$57k). The program is funded for 3 years, starting July 1st. The need is for the months of April and May. Betty requested that the JJCC consider funding the program for 2 months to provide continuity of the program and to avoid losing any staff. Betty provided the JJCC with a detailed budget.</p> <p>Discussion ensued. Michael Rodriguez asked what kind of academic support was provided. Betty answered that if a student is falling behind in school, they will be assigned a mentor. The program provides tutoring, after school programs, classes and individual therapy. The mentors will also work with the school psychologist if needed.</p> <p>Judge Covarrubias noted that community organizations are 'credible messengers' and expressed that it's good to rely on community partners because they understand the needs of the community.</p> <p>Mark Varela asked if the program has expanded. Betty answered that it has expanded to Port Hueneme, Ventura, Fillmore, Santa Paula and unincorporated areas. Still, most referrals happen to be in Oxnard.</p>		

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<p>Chrissy asked how many youth will be impacted if funding is lost. Betty answered that 100 youth would be impacted, and she may have to lay off some staff.</p> <p>Erik moved to provide gap funding to City Impact not to exceed \$57,828. Discussion regarding how billing would work. Rigoberto Vargas seconded the motion. 11 in favor, no opposition, 2 abstentions (Todd Inglis and Betty Ham). Motion carried.</p> <p><i>Michael Rodriguez left at 4pm.</i></p>	<p>Erik moved to provide gap funding to City Impact not to exceed \$57,828. Discussion regarding how billing would work. Rigoberto Vargas seconded the motion. 11 in favor, no opposition, 2 abstentions (Todd Inglis and Betty Ham). Motion carried.</p>	
<p>7) Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council Program Review and Development Subcommittee Update</p> <p>Chris Modica reported that the JJCC subcommittee was tasked with evaluating the ASR report, a comprehensive program report which identified things going well, challenges and recommendations for JJCPA funded programs. Chris noted that many of the challenges noted in the report had to do with family engagement and outreach, some of which were COVID related. Most programs have gone back to being in person. The committee has one program left to review and after that will discuss what programs to fund. Chris noted that the subcommittee is looking at strategies to improve recruitment of therapists. The group is going to combine RFPs for the juvenile field (\$500k) and the JF (\$1.3M). The hope is that a nearly \$2M contract would be more attractive.</p> <p>Chris noted that they are looking at outsourcing Moral Reconciliation Therapy. They are currently facilitated by Probation officers.</p> <p>Chris reported that Probation is piloting a program in the juvenile division that will allow probation officers to distribute naloxone kits to youth, families and friends who meet criteria. The larger plan if the pilot is successful, is to train DPOs at the Juvenile Facilities and in the adult field division as well, so overdose kits can be distributed from those locations. There were 5 overdoses at a high school recently, which highlighted the need to have something in place for youth. Probation received training and overdose kits from Ashley Nettles, from Behavioral Health. Valeria asked if fentanyl testers were included in the kits. Chris answered they are not; however, that is something to look into.</p> <p>Discussion regarding naloxone at local high schools. Stefanie Rodriguez noted that the high schools have 10</p>		

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<p>overdose kits. There is training on where the kits are kept and how to use them. Discussion ensued regarding recent overdoses. Supervisor Lopez asked if the overdose kits are tracked. Chris confirmed they are.</p> <p>Judge Covarrubias asked if there was parent education on the dangers of fentanyl. Discussion regarding how to educate the public. Suggestions included utilizing the new Youth Equity positions, the county PIO, and brainstorming with the Public Safety Advisory group.</p> <p>Erik to work with Dr. Morales on getting information out to the public. Supervisor Lopez noted that parents are concerned. Betty suggested contacting churches as well.</p>	<p>Erik to reach out to Dr. Morales re: public education regarding fentanyl.</p>	
<p>8) Restorative Justice Update</p> <p>Erik reported that the Harm to Healing program has been launched. Harm to Healing is a restorative justice program and is a collaborative effort between Interface, the District Attorney and Probation. The goal is to steer youth away from judicial intervention. Interface provides skilled facilitators who bring families together to get at the root causes of the offenses. In the last few months, there have been 5 successful conferences, and there are currently 20 individuals conferencing (meeting with Interface and engaging in the process.). Erik gave one case example of a youth who took his mom's car and was throwing eggs at another car on the freeway. Through this program, they were able to bring in the mom of the youth who was able to convey how this impacted her and what the consequence would be. This program focuses on consequences and accountability in a structured, facilitated environment. Erik thanked the group for their support. Judge Covarrubias expressed his support and explained how having victims in the courtroom helps offenders understand the impact of their actions.</p> <p><i>Cheryl Fox left at 4:20pm.</i></p>		
<p>9) Meeting Adjourned at 4:25pm by Chief Varela. Next meeting: March 29, 2023 at 3pm.</p>		