



Tulare County
Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission
Meeting Minutes – January 31, 2023

Location: Connections Center, 3249 W. Noble Ave, Visalia, 93277 and via Zoom

Members Present: Sneha Kumar, Sam Weiser, Bud Darwin, Galen Quenzer

Members Absent: Jennie Bautista, Megan Casebeer

Additional Attendees: Margarita Luna, Jose Gonzalez, Mike Santos, Leanne Williams, Manny Castro, Judge John Bianco, Carla Calhoun, Jeff Jacobs, Beth Wilshire

- I. **Call to Order:** Bud Darwin called the meeting to order at 4:38 p.m.
- II. **Public Comments:** There were no public comments made at this meeting.
- III. **New Business:**
 - a. **Juvenile Court Update:** Judge John Bianco said staffing remains the same for the Judges who handle juvenile cases. There are currently three (3) Juvenile Court Judges. Two (2) Judges are in Visalia and one (1) Judge is in Porterville. Juveniles committing crime is not as heavy as it was in the early 2000's; however, it is now back up to pre-Covid levels. Juvenile cases get reviewed every 3-6 months. The main goal is to dismiss the juvenile petition and seal the record. However, juvenile records are confidential.
 - b. **Probation Update:**
 - i. Division Manager Jose Gonzalez said officers continue to participate in Career Fairs at various schools to speak about careers with the Probation Department and the roles of Probation Officers. Additionally, Division Manager Jose Gonzalez said he is working with Probation Administration and schools within Tulare County to possibly bring back the Gang Resistant Education and Training Program (GREAT Program). The program is geared towards kids in 4th – 8th grades. The GREAT Program provides a partnership between Probation and schools. Sworn officers would be located at school sites and teach a curriculum as well as interact with students. Probation previously participated in the GREAT Program, but due to various reasons, it was stopped. Division Manager Gonzalez added that approximately eleven (11) officers volunteer with ProYouth and devote time once a week to go interact with the juveniles in the ProYouth afterschool program.
 - ii. Division Manager Mike Santos also gave an update and said the goal is to keep youth out of the facility and utilize all programs available to them. Currently, no one tool is utilized more than the other; all tools and resources are used equally. The Probation Department utilizes the Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS) to determine the risk level of each juvenile who offends. Judge John Bianco added Probation has a lot of great programs to help juveniles. The recidivism rate for juveniles is pretty good. The goal is to modify their behavior, so they don't continue to get in trouble.



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IV. Actions Items and Discussion:

a. Actions Items:

- i. Judge John Bianco made a motion to approve the November 29, 2022, meeting minutes. Division Manager Mike Santos seconded the motion.

b. Discussion:

- i. Interim Chief Probation Officer Leanne Williams said the Probation Department is in the process of working on an agreement with the Tulare Volunteer Bureau. This would create more opportunities for community service to be completed. Transportation continues to be an issue for juveniles trying to complete their community service hours. Chief Williams also mentioned they are looking at utilizing some of the available space at Connections to create programs for juveniles not on probation. Additionally, the department is looking for more space in Porterville.
- ii. Bud Darwin mentioned applications are still being accepted and reviewed. The commission is still trying to recruit youth to serve on the commission. Jeff Jacobs stated he will continue to reach out to the youth he works with to see if they would be interested as serving as a member of the commission. Swearing in of new commission members will take place at the next meeting. Judge John Bianco said if the need arises, a special session for swearing in could take place via Zoom or at the courthouse.
- iii. Manny Castro briefed everyone on the "Call to Action" community meeting and thanked those who attended. Overall, the feedback was very positive. The effort Visalia Unified School District puts in to connect the students with the community is appreciated. Manny stated that was the first of many community meetings and he would like to commission members to participate in the meetings. Manny also mentioned Champions contracted with Visalia Unified School District for SIP Coaching. They hired four (4) SIP Coaches to provide resources at throughout the district.
- iv. Carla Calhoun mentioned Community Services Employment Training (CSET) recently spoke and Porterville College and will going to Porterville to Provide their Income Tax Assistance Program to the community. Jeff Jacobs added that he would like to see more collaboration between the Probation Department and Porterville Community College.
- v. Galen Quenzer stated he would like to learn more about the Juvenile Justice System and believes it would be beneficial for the commission members. He would also like know what direction the commission is going in as well as what direction the county is going in. Sam Weiser added that it would be beneficial to touch on the Adult Justice System and the resources/programs Probation provides to adult offenders. Interim Chief Probation Officer Leanne Williams said she would be open to have a question-and-answer meeting regarding Juvenile Probation and the Juvenile Justice System.
- vi. It was suggested that the commission members look at other Counties to see how they developed their website. It was also suggested that the website for the Tulare County Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission



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allow for the public to submit questions. Additionally, it was proposed that future commission meetings dedicated time for Community Organizations to come and share what they do and the resources they provide.

- V. Correspondence Received by the Commission:**
 - a. No Correspondences received.

- VI. Agenda Development for the Next Meeting:**
 - a. Report on applicants.
 - b. Have new members present so they may be sworn in.

- VII. Adjournment:**
 - a. Meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.
 - b. The Next Scheduled meeting is March 28, 2023.
 - c. Minutes prepared by: Jennifer Noel, Staff Services Analyst.