



Tulare County
Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission
Meeting Minutes – August 8, 2023

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

Members Present: Bud Darwin, Jennie Bautista, Galen Quenzer, Sneha Kumar, Carla Calhoun, Manny Castro, Jeff Jacobs, Ernest Gibson, Mario Flores, Sylvia Hanna

Members Absent: Sam Weiser, Megan Casebeer, Timo Pizana, Frank Escobar

Additional Attendees: Margarita Luna, Miguel Garcia, Americus Campos

- I. **Call to Order:** Bud Darwin called the meeting to order at 4:46 p.m.
- II. **Public Comments:** There were no public comments made at this meeting.
- III. **New Business:**
 - a. **Juvenile Court Update:** Judge Sylvia Hanna stated that she just returned from two weeks of juvenile justice training and will provide a brief overview of her training at the next meeting. Judge Hanna said that it is important not to repeat programs at the county level that were provided to DJJ youth at the state level.
 - b. **Probation Update:**
 - i. Deputy Chief Probation Officer Margarita Luna provided an update on the numbers of youth at the Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF). There currently are 68 juveniles in custody with 61 or 90% male and seven (7) or 10% female; of the total 68 youth in custody, eight (8) or 12% are SYTF; there are 34 in programs and 34 are general population youth or pre-disposition. The population counts are fluid.
 - ii. The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) closure was official as of July 1, 2023, and there will be continued updates over the next several months. Five (5) youth were returned to Tulare County from DJJ; one (1) was released with four (4) remaining. A contract with Phoenix Transitional Housing Plus (PTHP) is underway to provide step-down transitional housing and program services to DJJ returned youth and Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF) youth upon release from JDF and to provide similar services to the Local Custodial Programming (LP) youth released from JDF.
- IV. **Actions Items and Discussion:**
 - a. **Actions Items:**
 - i. Jeff Jacobs made a motion to approve the May 30, 2023 meeting minutes. Carla Calhoun seconded the motion.
 - ii. Bud Darwin mentioned an annual conference for juvenile justice training for commissioners in Ontario, CA this September 5-8, 2023, and said that it would be good if a representative from this group were present. The conference name is California Probation, Parole & Corrections Association (CPPCA) and registration is available at <https://www.cppca.org>. Mr. Darwin said that one full day of the CPPCA conference is dedicated to commissioners. Mr. Darwin is not sure he can attend this year. Jeff Jacobs, Carla Calhoun, and Galen Quenzer expressed interest but cannot go this year due to other commitments. Judge Sylvia Hanna asked if this group could send materials in lieu of in-person attendance. Mr. Darwin said



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that he is not aware of any funding or compensation opportunities for members to attend.

- iii. Carla Calhoun shared that several members of this committee formed an education subcommittee in July. The ad-hoc subcommittee met and discussed the JAIS assessment, juvenile demographics, the intake process, policies and procedures, and inspection of juvenile facilities. This subcommittee attended the education class for commissioners presented by Beth Gong from the Board of State and Community Correction (BSCC) and plans on attending other commissioners' meetings, field trips, youth graduations from programs, etc. The subcommittee decided that it would be beneficial if Probation staff were to provide 30-minute training/educational sessions each time the Commission meets to help laypersons better understand probation and its processes. The JAIS Assessment tool was used as an example.

b. Discussion (Roundtable):

- i. Galen Quenzer asked what the process is and how long it takes for those who are at JDF and are awaiting disposition to receive program services and Deputy Chief Probation Officer Luna replied that each youth and case is situational and is based on several factors including the court and counsel for the youth. She also said that all youth at JDF receive essential services such as school regardless of the status of their disposition and that each youth has a case plan developed within 60 to 90 days of intake. Mr. Quenzer asked what happens when youth have psychological, counseling, and/or medication needs. Deputy Chief Probation Officer Luna said these are considered during the intake process and accordingly addressed.
- ii. Jeff Jacobs asked if there is a risk assessment done prior to disposition and asked what tool is used. Deputy Chief Probation Officer Luna said that each youth is given an assessment and the JAIS assessment tool is used. Mr. Jacobs wanted to know who proctors the assessment and if they are trained to do so. Bud Darwin asked if the same person who proctors the assessment also interprets the results. Deputy Chief Probation Officer Luna said that trained staff, including Probation Officers, Program Specialists, and/or the vendor administer the assessment and that the actual assessment ascribes a score based on the answers provided by youth to questions on the assessment. A case plan for each youth assessed is developed based on their assessment score. Mr. Jacobs asked if there is a line of review of the assessment. Deputy Chief Probation Officer Luna replied that there is indeed a review process in place for the review of completed assessments and that the review could include trained staff, Supervising Probation Officers, and/or Division Managers. Mr. Jacobs asked how much time is involved with training those who review the assessments and Deputy Chief Probation Officer Luna said approximately 40 hours. Mr. Jacobs then asked how a layperson can get involved with assessments – understand them, determine the transparency of them, etc. Mr. Darwin suggested that Probation develop an education sub-committee for



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this. Deputy Chief Probation Officer Luna agreed to look into this and get back to the group at a later date.

- iii. Judge Sylvia Hanna talked about the increase in school criminal threats and confirmed that school shootings have risen. She attributed this to the reopening of schools in late 2021 following COVID closures. Prior to the reopening of schools, the most common criminal threats (PC 422 and PC 653m) were threats to kill or harm others and were family related. She said that the most common charges are battery-related and resisting arrest.
- iv. Americus Campos inquired about volunteer work for youth at JDF and suggested Bible studies, baking, arts and crafts, and book clubs. There was mention of online and in-person services offered by the Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE). Deputy Chief Probation Officer Luna suggested that anyone interested in volunteer work at JDF initiate conversations with the Division Manager there.
- v. Bud Darwin asked if there should be an outside person who is responsible for developing the agenda and taking the meeting minutes. A Probation employee currently is taking the meeting minutes, and this could be a conflict of interest. He said that Beth Gong said that the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission should have a Secretary and Treasurer and the secretary would take the meeting minutes.

V. Correspondence Received by the Commission:

- a. No correspondence received.

VI. Agenda Development for the Next Meeting:

- a. Ongoing educational topics.
- b. Judge Hanna – overview of the State of Courts and Juvenile Justice Dependency
- c. JDF Inspection
- d. Probation – 30-minute overview JAIS Assessment
- e. Brown Act

VII. Adjournment:

- a. Meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.
- b. The next scheduled meeting is September 26, 2023.
- c. Minutes prepared by Gina Rizza, Staff Services Analyst.