

DRAFT

**DOÑA ANA COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE CONTINUUM BOARD
February 15, 2023**

The following are summary minutes from the Doña Ana County Juvenile Justice Continuum Board meeting held on Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at 12:00 p.m., City Hall Room 2007B, 700 S. Main Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sgt. Manny Melendez (LCPD)
Brian Kavanaugh (Families & Youth, Inc.)
Lindsay McDonnell-Benatar (Public Defenders Dept)
Dr. Robert Lozano (LCPS)
Cynthia Ohrazda, (CYFD)
Robert Nunez, (City of Las Cruces)
Rory Rank (Retiree)
Bill Rothengass (Retiree)
Marianne Hernandez (CYFD-PS)
Steve Nance (Doña Ana Community College)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Susana Chaparro (DACB of Commissioners)
Judy Baca (Mesilla Valley Hospital)
Ken Miyagishima (CLC/ Mayor's Office)
Sylvia Herrera (Drug Court 3rd Judicial District)
Chief Vanessa Ordoñez (Anthony NM Police)
Manuel Arellano (LCSCA)

OTHERS PRESENT: Sofia Hughes (CLC Youth Services)
Kimberly Avina (FYI)
Aralis Chacon (FYI)
Claudia Chavez (CLC Interim Deputy Director Youth Svs)
Pat Acosta (YDDP JCP)
Chelo Guerrero (DAC HHS)
Kayleigh Martinez (Peak Behavioral)

STAFF PRESENT: Martha Moreno (Recording Secretary)
Becky Baum, (RC Creations, LLC, Transcriptionist)

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:01 by Sgt. Manny Melendez and recognized the meeting as having a legal quorum.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Board members, staff, and guests introduced themselves.

1
2 **4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

3 None.

4
5 Mr. Rank is dealing with CYFD on his own behalf regarding marijuana use by
6 children. The definition of what a delinquent act the statute says, "a delinquent act
7 is somebody who if you're an adult commit a crime." Question is, can children use
8 marijuana and not be charged with a delinquent act? That issue is with CYFD
9 director and legislative liaison on whether to carve out within the children's code
10 for limitations, such as alcohol.

11
12 **5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

13 Mr. Kavanaugh moved to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by Ms.
14 McDonnel-Benatar. Motion carried unanimously.

15
16 **6. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

17
18 6.1 Doña Ana County Juvenile Justice Continuum Board Meeting Minutes for June 15,
19 2022

20 Mr. Rank moved to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Dr. Lozano.
21 Motion carried. Mr. Kavanaugh abstained.

22
23 **7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

24 None.

25
26 **8. NEW BUSINESS**

27
28 8.1 Board Chair Resignation (Update)

29
30 Ms. Chavez stated that Judge Madrid resigned via e-mail last week.

31
32 8.2 Election of new Board Chair (Action)

33
34 Mr. Rank mentioned Judge Jacquez who is Juvenile Drug. Also Judge Duran is
35 the Children's Court. Would either want to participate. Judge Duran was
36 approached when Judge Beyer stepped down and turned it down. A Judge is not
37 stipulated in the bylaws. It is recommended due to the relationship judges have
38 with the legislators, politics, etc. Ms. Acosta will inquire of the judges.

39
40 Mr. Rank moved to table the Election of a New Chair until a candidate is
41 approached, seconded by Ms. Hernandez. Motion carried.

42
43 8.3 Introduction of Juvenile Diversion Program Supervisor/DACJJC Coordinator
44 (Update)

1 Ms. Acosta had devoted 38 years of her profession in domestic violence. She has
2 worked in Las Cruces for 12 years at La Casa as Support Services Director.
3 Currently, she is the Supervisor for Youth Development Diversion Program. We
4 will be moving away from "Citation" to a more positive aspect and focus more on
5 the diversion aspect. She is working with a good TEAM who are supportive and
6 very creative. We have created an environment that allows people to come and
7 give it their all. **"Great things in business are never done by one person.
8 They're done by a team of people."** (Steve Jobs quote.) All the agencies
9 represented in the room need each other. We are in the process of hiring one
10 intake specialist, and two youth diversion specialists (used to be called community
11 educators). They work directly with Peak Behavior Center and have a great
12 relationship. In Hatch they are teaching classes and created a satellite. Also, a
13 lot of youth referred with truancy, or vaping issues, and once the intake
14 assessment is completed, they are seeing a lot of self-harm, suicide ideations and
15 mental health issues. A lot of times there is an insurance barrier or wait list. Peak
16 has been able to help quickly.

17
18 Ms. Martinez of Peak Behavioral, the Southern New Mexico Liaison. She travels
19 throughout southern New Mexico to assess needs. Hatch was feeling left out and
20 so she created a coalition to bring all the organizations and see how they look in
21 Hatch. They are working together, what can be done for the individual, how to do
22 wrap around services. Continue to allow that within the services can create a
23 better community.

24
25 Ms. Acosta stated they need to listen to what the needs are. Each community is
26 unique. They started intakes last month, with six referrals, of those five came to
27 the intake. They went to them. First classes were on February 4th. They are
28 going Saturdays for five hours, providing the classes. March 20th we already have
29 four referrals for new children to attend, and then doing classes in April. One
30 month is devoted to intakes and assessments, and the following month devote the
31 Saturdays for them. Hatch's commitment of the community at large seems good.
32 They have lot of partners that the program has already established, some will be
33 revitalized due to COVID, and establishing new ones as well. They met with the
34 Department of Health asked to customize presentations for the youth, and they
35 now have presentations on fentanyl for all age groups, STD information, vaping
36 dangers, drug and alcohol complications and dangers to their bodies. The fentanyl
37 is a huge problem.

38
39 Another new partnership is Doña Ana Village Association. They focus on activities
40 and groups to self-care and self-respect of the youth. They have a drop-in place
41 where if a youth needs something (jacket, shoes, school supplies), they can
42 provide that for them. They just started a partnership with La Tiendita/Jardin de
43 Los Niños. They have a thrift store that looks like a boutique. They clean out the
44 little store, sort out things, and help the volunteers there. And then they are taken
45 to Jardin de Los Niños to see the importance of their contribution in helping
46 children. Similarly, they have a local garden that the kids get to pick from and then

1 go and cook with what they picked. Also coordinating meetings with LCPD. Also
2 meet with Sierra Middle School due to some concerns. They do get referrals from
3 schools from the SRO officers.
4

5 Question on how they get the referrals. Ms. Acosta stated they come from SRO
6 officers, parents, are informal referrals; along with formal referrals via JPO. Mr.
7 Rank suggested keeping in mind due process of the children, in that sometimes a
8 child will admit crimes, and how to handle that. Ms. Ohrazda stated that the
9 referrals from the Juvenile Probation Office go through the due process. Kids
10 come in, read their rights, given opportunity to deny the charges which are then
11 sent to the DA. Use the program as a graduated sanction so cases do not go to
12 the DA when it is not necessary. Sgt Melendez stated any referral from the
13 resource officer is conducted as an initial investigation. The officer has the choice
14 for juvenile class 3 citation or go through the diversion program, which is made on
15 a variety of factors including: the child's history, child's demeanor, the charge, etc.
16 Ms. Ohrazda mentioned that things have changed greatly in the Juvenile Justice.
17 When a child is sent to the Juvenile Citation Program, using it as a graduated
18 sanction, if they do not complete it, it does not get sent to the DA office, the case
19 is closed. Ms. Ohrazda stated that kids get referred to their officer, hold a
20 preliminary inquiry and at that time determine what types of community
21 resources/interventions are appropriate, and then make a referral. Sgt. Melendez
22 stated the informal referral process is not in their general orders presently. Dr.
23 Lozano mentioned they have seen increased referrals within his program. Need
24 some type of standard operating procedure as bringing the children towards the
25 programs just to make sure legally.
26

27 Formal is from JPO and courts. Informal is from the schools, SRO officers,
28 parents, principals. The juvenile citation program is voluntary and if the child does
29 not go, they do not go to jail, not court, no on probation. The families are informed
30 of the importance and the benefits. Most of the kids do like the program. A
31 question was asked on if an informal was every converted to a formal. That has
32 not happened yet.
33

34 8.4 Continuum Services – JPC (Update)

35 Included in discussion of 8.3.
36
37

38 8.5 Continuum Services – JARC (Update)

39
40 Ms. Chacon reported for December, January, and February referrals have picked
41 up for the schools, but drop with SRO referrals and citations. Only two intakes and
42 both were citations, one a THC and the other was evading a police officer. The
43 referrals are increasing with schools and coming from the counselors, looking for
44 outpatient services, tutoring services. They now have a resource coordinator who
45 is there to screen the referral to determine what program fits best for the
46 participant. They have a variety of socials for art, dance, and most are age

1 oriented, plus social for families. They have their Pride Prom scheduled May 12th
2 for ages 12 to 24.

3
4 **8.6 Amendment to Subcontract (Action)**

5
6 Mr. Nunez stated they were notified from CYFD regarding the subcontract with FYI
7 and in the services being provided. Their definition of case management and what
8 has been practiced in the past are being questioned regarding how we as a
9 continuum have been providing the services and what CYFD is now looking at as
10 specific case management. This amendment would adjust the current agreement
11 with FYI as well as getting the approval through CYFD to create a wider opportunity
12 to be able to offer additional services that are currently listed within the agreement
13 with the subcontractor. These would be life skills. And work with FYI to create
14 that, find a model program to follow, and provide to CYFD for approval. This would
15 hopefully be this fiscal year, but with the fourth-year agreement they are moving
16 into July 1st this year. Question right now is whether CYFD is going to reimburse
17 the funds of services provided, specifically to case management and follow-ups.

18
19 The request today is to move forward to discuss with FYI to amend the current
20 agreement with the approval of the Board to include life skills as a component for
21 services to be provided by this continuum and the subcontractor.

22
23 Mr. Rank stated there was a whole deal done on life skills from 10 years ago that
24 were never implemented. That this might be able to be utilized. As well as Juvenile
25 Intensive Probation that Jay Wisner had run doing life skills. Ms. Ohrazda stated
26 JIPSP stated that that is not done anymore due to adjustments in the way they
27 work and the way they look at kids. All work is based on trauma informed care,
28 and JIPSP is not a part of that. All people working with the kids are licensed and
29 certified. Ms. Acosta stated it is allowing the respective communities to teach
30 curriculums that are going to embrace the cultural diversity of the communities.

31
32 Ms. Chacon gave a couple of examples of what FYI is asking for. At point they are
33 paid for intakes; case management which is one-on-one services like follow-up
34 calls, care coordination and follow-ups at discharge. The youth they are seeing
35 are needing tutoring, follow-ups on counseling and having the one-on-one session.
36 Needing help with job placement, doing resumes. La Vida project helps youth get
37 their high school diploma. The youth in the JARC program are not part of the
38 SOW, so trying to add life skills to incorporate all the extra services and be able to
39 provide them.

40
41 Ms. McDonnell-Benatar moved to approve the amendment to the subcontract,
42 seconded by Ms. Ohrazda. Motion carried via roll call vote. Mr. Kavanaugh
43 abstained. Mr. Rank abstained unless trauma informed care is part of the life skills.

44
45 **9. OLD BUSINESS**

1 Mr. Kavanaugh stated in terms of item 8.2 Election of New Board Chair he wants
2 to recommend to the Board to understand what the Board's responsibility is. On
3 the website for CYFD the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board's for the continuum grant
4 funds, there are five primary functions and purposes of the Board:

- 5 1) Analyze local trends that put youth at risk.
- 6 2) Assess community resource gaps that affect youth and families.
- 7 3) Build partnerships with key community leaders that positively impact
8 policy regarding youth.
- 9 4) Fund programing that directly impacts the concerns and issues facing
10 our youth, which is currently JCP and the JARC.
- 11 5) Involve community leaders and experts to address youth and family
12 issues.

13 When looking for anybody to assume the position of Chair, regardless of if it is a
14 judge or not, it is extremely important that whoever entertain should understand
15 these priorities and what this Board is charged to do as an advisory board. And
16 focus on the five primary functions as a Board. Possibly a discussion of the Board
17 Members on how they would rank on each of the categories currently. A critical
18 assessment as a Board and where to improve as a Board. An "ornamental Chair"
19 such as a Judge just because they are a judge, does not serve the Board well.
20

21 A suggestion to create orientation/training for new members to discuss the Board
22 and its duties, but also a refresher for current Board Members. Mr. Nunez stated
23 they are visiting with CYFD regarding the board, the continuum coordinator, and
24 as some are City employees and what is the requirement from the state and City
25 statutes. Possible contracting a continuum coordinator specifically for that
26 position.
27

28 Mr. Rank moved put on the agenda for April 19 orientation and Chair, seconded
29 by Mr. Kavanaugh. Motion carried unanimously.
30

31 9.1 DACJJCB Meeting Dates for FY23 (Update)

- 32 • April 19, 2023
- 33 • June 21, 2023

34
35 **10. ADJOURNMENT**

36 Mr. Nunez moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Kavanaugh. Motion carried
37 unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:02 p.m.
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43 _____
Recording Secretary

Date