

**July 20, 2021 MEETING OF THE
JUVENILE DETENTION BOARD OF MANAGERS**

PRESENT: Kevin Madden, Chair
Marie N. Williams, Vice-Chair
Chris Eiserman
Candice L. Linehan
Honorable Nathaniel Nichols (Ret.)

Joanne Phillips
Elaine Schaefer
Monica Taylor
Chekemma J. Fulmore Townsend

ALSO PRESENT: William Martin (County Solicitor)
Danielle DiMatteo (Director, Juvenile Court)

Call to Order. Mr. Martin called the meeting to order at 4:35 P.M., detailing Board action needed to name a Board Chair and Vice Chair and approve bylaws.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Appointment of Acting Chair. Ms. Taylor made a motion to name Ms. Schaefer Acting Chair, seconded by Mr. Madden. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments on Agenda Items. There were no comments on agenda items.

Consideration of Bylaws. Board discussion to revise draft bylaws by striking references to elected "Treasurer" position and adding language allowing the "Secretary" to designate someone to prepare meeting minutes. Mr. Martin summarized final revisions to be made. Mr. Madden made a motion to accept the changes as presented and seconded by Mr. Eiserman. Motion carried unanimously.

Election of Chair. Mr. Nichols made a motion to name Mr. Madden, Chair, seconded by Mr. Eiserman. Motion carried unanimously.

Election of Vice-Chair. Ms. Schaefer motioned to name Ms. Williams, Vice-Chair, seconded by Ms. Fulmore Townsend. Motion carried unanimously.

Board Committees. Ms. Phillips, Mr. Nichols, Ms. Linehan, Ms. Schaefer, and Mr. Madden offered to serve on the Human Resource Committee. Mr. Eiserman motioned to accept Board member offers to serve on this committee, seconded by Ms. Fulmore Townsend. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Eiserman, Mr. Madden, Ms. Taylor, and Ms. Williams offered to serve on the Facilities & Contract Committee. Ms. Linehan motioned to accept Board member offers to serve on this committee, seconded by Mr. Nichols. Motion carried unanimously.

Board Solicitor Appointment. Mr. Martin recommended three (3) attorneys for consideration by the Board to serve as a retained solicitor. Board members will have the option of attending individual candidate interviews to be scheduled in the coming weeks.

Custody data. Ms. DiMatteo reported there were currently nine (9) youth in the County's custody—six (6) in Bucks County, two (2) in Montgomery County and one (1) in the Morgantown/Reading area. Ms. DiMatteo agreed to provide updated custody data at future meetings and responded to questions and committed to following up with requested data regarding gender, age and offense profiles of youth in the County's custodial care.

Detention Center Tours. Board members were presented opportunities to tour the County's now-closed Juvenile Detention Center located in Lima on either July 29th or August 3rd. Members will be surveyed following the meeting to choose a date that suits their schedule.

Vendor Presentations. Board members expressed strong interest in receiving presentations from juvenile justice organizations while noting a process needs to be established for managing an anticipated multitude of requests from organizations interested in presenting to the group. Mr. Madden suggested that members share their input on potential presenters with all Board members to consider.

New Business. Mr. Martin discussed a new state law requiring the public posting of agendas starting in August 2021. Members opted to continue sitting at tables arranged on the floor of the County Council Meeting Room and to record future meetings for subsequent posting on the web. Meetings will not be streamed live though in-person public comments will be accepted on agenda and non-agenda items. Members agreed to share with each other for consideration expressions of interest from organizations in the juvenile justice community to present to the Board.

Public Comments. (All relevant items.) Several furloughed Juvenile Detention Center employees shared their work experience and issues and concerns with not being actively employed. Speakers were urged to keep their comments to three minutes or less.

Carl Elliott, Morton resident. Think of the impact on the staff of regularly being assaulted by youth in custody.

Dennis Bailey, City of Chester resident. Posed questions about the Board's stated direction and prospects for staff returning to their jobs, and how staff can be better protected on the job.

Chris Thomas, Morton resident. As someone proud of his service to the County, he said staff is suffering as a result of outrageous allegations being made. He indicated more and better communication is needed on the Center's status and expressed concerned about the County moving in a direction that would potentially put staff out of work.

Cedrick Brown, Brookhaven resident: Appealed to Board members to gather and share information regarding the status of the now-closed Center. Interested to know how to best communicate with the Board even as it's finding its way as a newly formed group.

Ryan Cannon, Swarthmore resident: With compensation and benefits ending in approximately one month, he queried why he and his colleagues cannot be placed in other county jobs and paid since valid labor contracts are in place.

Charles Tull, City of Chester resident. He has worked at the Center where he was once held as a youth. He contemplated quitting because of the physically abusive treatment of staff from the youth in custody but ultimately decided not to. He earned a degree in psychology to better help the youth in custody. He urged Board members to think about how people in the community are suffering because of the Center's closure.

Jacob Halderman, Broomall resident. The Center's staff worked very long hours each week for low pay and were forced to deal with the population's mental health issues that they weren't equipped to handle. He lamented that staff members lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

Michael Irving, Thornton resident. He felt forced to retire early to keep medical coverage and take a pension after working at the Center for 25 years, dealing with mental health issues he wasn't equipped to handle and working forced overtime- more than 80 hours a week at \$12/hour- - due to chronic understaffing.

Carolyn Farley, Glen Mills resident. Expressed concerns that the Personnel Department is providing incorrect or insufficient information about the status of the Center.

Board Member Comments. Board members expressed a range of empathetic and supportive closing comments ranging from acknowledging the hardship furloughed workers have endured and the need for better communications from the County, the Pennsylvania Attorney General declining to provide a status update on its active investigation of the Juvenile Detention Center, offering a reminder that while the newly convened Board doesn't have authority regarding individual employment it was committed to encouraging better communications with furloughed workers and operating with transparency to the greatest possible extent, and finally to offering sincere appreciation for dedicated employee service.

Adjourn. Mr. Eiserman motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Fulmore Townsend at 6:25 P.M. Motion carried unanimously.