

Delaware County Juvenile Detention Board of Managers  
18 October 2022  
4:30pm EST.

Hybrid: Delaware County Council Meeting Room and Virtual

**Present:**

Chris Eiserman	Deputy Controller Kelly Diaz
James E. Turner	Councilwoman Elaine Schaefer
Candice L. Linehan	Chekemma Fulmore Townsend
Councilman Kevin Madden, Chair, JDBOM	Marie N. Williams, Vice-Chair, JDBOM
Judge Nathaniel Nichols	Dr. Monica Taylor, Chair, Delaware County Council

**Call Meeting to Order:** Chair/Councilman Madden called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Public Comment, Agenda Items Only:** Kayleigh Kennedy, Upper Darby, PA, requested clarification of architectural design.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the September meeting were approved unanimously.

**Reports:**

**Juvenile Court and Probation Services-** Kiersten Keenan, Resource Supervisor, provided Monthly Detained Youth Report. Eight (8) Delaware County youth are currently detained: four (4) males detained in Bucks County, one (1) male detained in Montgomery County, two (2) direct-file females in Morgantown, and one (1) male direct-file in Morgantown.

**Questions:**

Judge Nichols asked whether or not Delaware County is the only county sending direct-file youths out of County for placement.

Ms. Keenan responded that to her knowledge, Chester County will not house their own direct-file youths, Montgomery and Bucks Counties have their own direct-file units available only for youths within their respective counties. Ms. Keenan also stated that Abraxas Morgantown accepts direct-file youths from out of county and that discussions are underway in regard to contracting beds in Jefferson County, Ohio's Juvenile Detention Center.

Chairman Madden added many smaller counties throughout the state do not have their own Juvenile Detention Centers.

Ms. Keenan agreed with Councilman Madden's observation and noted that the absence of such facilities elsewhere creates a competition for direct-file housing space.

**Juvenile Detention-** Nelson Walker presented a report on the new architectural program design of the Juvenile Detention Center. The plans reflect the key elements of the new facility design of a secure county-operated Youth Detention Center as advanced by the board design subcommittee that has been meeting twice a month. The diagram provided shows how space will accommodate trauma informed care and programming. Approval of this design is a crucial step for the contracted architectural firm's feasibility study which is scheduled to be presented before the board at the November meeting

**Presentation:**

**Bob Reid, Brendan Murphy- Spiezle Architectural Group**

Mr. Reid presented the Board with the architectural designs based on county needs, existing space, and lessons learned from the designs of other Juvenile Detention centers. Keeping in mind the ideals of the County, the design fits the following criteria:

- Trauma-informed
- Multipurpose facility for prevention, detention, and rehabilitation
- Parental, Community, and Partner-Involved
- Modern, supportive, academic design
- Sustainable
- Suitable for initial and long-term fiscal responsibility
- In conjunction with licensing requirements as defined by the Commonwealth

Key takeaways from research and visits to area detention centers reflected many of these ideals. Features that supported a rehabilitative and trauma-informed Center included elements specific to the facility itself, the facility interior, and the grounds of the facility. Regarding the facility itself, key elements include:

- Remote and local locking
- Natural lighting
- High ceilings in community spaces
- Medical facilities at Intake
- Secure outdoor recreation
- Impressive visitor entry

Regarding the facility grounds, key elements include:

- Nice views
- Gardening areas

Regarding the facility interior, key elements include:

- Bedrooms with desks and chairs
- Flexible, multi-use community spaces and dining area with moveable furniture
- Murals/artwork throughout facility

The facility should include a community area as well as a secure detention portion with security increasing inwards. Additionally, the facility should foster a supportive culture.

Furthermore, Mr. Reid specified next steps regarding Spiezle including program approval from the board and initiation of the feasibility study which will include the initial planning recommendation. These recommendations will provide further insight as to what needs to be

reorganized, what can be renovated, and what may need to be built under current parameters and intentions.

The board unanimously approved a motion to accept the proposed design.

**Questions:**

Vice Chair Williams asked whether the proposed design fits the existing floor plan of the facility on the secure side and whether the feasibility study shows how these programs can thrive in the existing space.

Bob Reid responded in the affirmative; the proposed designs are not conclusive; however, approval of the feasibility study will allow greater insight into what is possible with existing space, and what may need to be renovated or added to the building. Some elements of the secure design are possible with the existing design but require rearrangement, namely placement of sallyport and medical.

Judge Nichols asked whether the architectural firm had consulted with Danielle DiMatteo.

Mr. Reid responded that at this time he is unsure whether or not Ms. DiMatteo is familiar with the design plan.

Judge Nichols reminded Mr. Reid of the importance of Ms. DiMatteo's input as she is knowledgeable about the youth that the facility would serve.

Chairman Madden asked whether the design is over-ambitious, citing his concerns about whether elements of the design are obscure and costly (such as barber shop and recording studio).

Rev Turner responded that the examples Chairman Madden cited are not expensive. Each room's function would be based on its furnishings rather than by its architectural design. Utilizing these spaces in this matter is conducive to the rehabilitative mission of the facility.

Chairman Madden noted that potentially, future analysis will illustrate that some items in the design plan are not as frivolous as they may seem on paper.

Vice Chair Marie William commented that the proposal does not include luxury items or elements that will not directly serve the therapeutic goals of the program. She added that amenities like barber shops and recording studios create an outlet for youths who may need them, but also an opportunity to learn practical life skills.

Chekemma Fulmore-Townsend acknowledged the commitment and hard work completed to blend the architectural design with the rehabilitative programming. She requested that the innovative ideas conceived for the facility not be overshadowed by the constraints of space and budget.

Deputy Controller Diaz asked whether the square footage listed on the diagram in certain areas such as bedrooms complies with 55 Pennsylvania Code Chapter 3800.

Mr. Reid responded that the square footage proposed complies with Chapter 3800, and that the feasibility and all future planning will comply with that section as well as with any other applicable laws.

Vice Chair Williams asked whether the design proposal was being presented for consideration at the October meeting or thereafter.

Chairman Madden confirmed that approval for the design was being sought at the October meeting, but noted that the proposal was merely a guide for future planning rather than a final approval for groundbreaking. If approved, nothing in the proposed design is guaranteed to be included in the final project.

**Old Business:**

No old business.

**New Business:**

Chairman Madden discussed the upcoming contract to house youths with Jefferson County (Ohio) Youth detention center. Regarding past mismanagement of detained youth, Chairman Madden wished to confirm that Juvenile Detention and Rehabilitation, and particularly Mr. Irizarry, is well-informed about such arrangements and has had an opportunity to weigh in on the proposed contract with Jefferson County.

The board approved the proposed contract with Jefferson County pending the confirmation from Mr. Irizarry of his knowledge of the contract.

Vice Chair Williams abstained from voting on the matter.

**Questions:**

Vice Chair Williams asked whether David is aware and knowledgeable about the contract with Jefferson County. She stated that she was uncomfortable proceeding with the contract unless she was certain Mr. Irizarry, and his staff are on board with the contract.

Chairman Madden indicated that if necessary, the board could reconvene to vote in 24 hours to allow time for the board to ascertain Mr. Irizarry's knowledge of the contract.

Executive Director Lazarus confirmed that David was aware of the contract but is unsure to what extent his involvement has been in it.

**New Business:**

**Councilwoman Schaeffer** requested that Mr. Irizarry attend a council meeting within the next month or two to provide an update on the progress of the detention center.

**Public Comment:**

Colleen K. Upper Darby, Pa asked that the board allow a round of public comments before the board votes on a motion. She shared her concerns about how much community involvement is happening and offered suggestions for community meetings and input. She also shared concerns about the facility design moving towards incarceration as reflected by the number of beds planned for the facility.

**Board Member Comments:**

Board Member Judge Nichols: Regarding his visit to the Lancaster County Juvenile Detention Center, Judge Nichols commented that he was touched by the impact of youths exploring positive outlets through books in the library. He commented on the positive impact of this type of enrichment and implores the board to keep making positive changes for the Delaware County Youth Detention Center

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

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