

DELAWARE COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION BOARD OF MANAGERS
TUESDAY MAY 21ST, 2024
5:30 PM

HYBRID: DELAWARE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING ROOM AND VIRTUAL

Board Members Present:

Kevin Madden, Chairman/Council member
Marie Williams, Vice Chair
Dr. Monica Taylor, Council Chair
Elaine Schaefer, Council Member
Nathaniel Nichols

Kelly Diaz
Candice Linehan
Chekemma Fulmore Townsend
Rev. James Turner

Call Meeting to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:33PM.

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment (Agenda Items Only): No public comment.

Approval of Minutes: Board Member Turner moved for approval of the minutes from the previous meeting. Councilwoman Schaefer seconded the motion. The meeting minutes from Tuesday April 16th, 2024, were approved.

Report:

- A. Monthly Detained Youth Report, Juvenile Court and Probation Services, Danielle DiMatteo, Chief- There are currently five youths in detention. There is one male detained at George Junior Republic (Grove City, Pa), and one male detained at Abraxas Morgantown. The remaining three juveniles are direct file cases with one male at George Hill Prison (Delaware County), one male at George Junior Republic and one female at State Correctional Institution (SCI) Muncy.
- B. Superintendent for Juvenile Justice Services, David Irizarry- Mr. Irizarry updated the Board on year-to-date census data of Delaware County's youth detention admissions and additional initiatives. Mr. Irizarry state that as of May 16th, 2024, census data shows the following:
- The average weekly census for 2024 was **six** detained youth (one fewer than the year prior).
 - The highest weekly census of 2024 was **eight** detained youth on 2/23.
 - **Sixty-nine percent** of the weekly census has been direct file youths (up from **sixty-one percent** in the year prior).
 - To date, the highest number of detained youths in a weekly census was **five** youths (one fewer than the year prior).

Chairman Madden commended the positive downward trend in detention but noted the increase in direct-file cases.

Mr. Irizarry stated that that higher number of direct file cases reflects reserving detention for youths with more serious offenses. Referencing fourteen weeks of data in 2024, juvenile direct file youth have made up no less than fifty percent of the total census. Additionally, there have been two weekly census reports where one hundred percent of the census was juvenile direct file cases (3/28/ and 4/11).

Regarding Delaware County juvenile detention admission by gender, the report showed the following:

- On average, the weekly censuses in 2024 have shown that detained youth were **seventy-seven percent male** and **twenty-three percent female** (compared to **sixty-one percent male** and **thirty-nine percent female** in the year prior).
- The highest number of **males** detained at one time on the weekly census was **seven** (one fewer than the year prior).
- The highest number of **females** detained at one time on the weekly census was **two** (two fewer than the year prior).

Regarding data on secure detention resources in 2024, Mr. Irizarry stated that there were six weeks where there was at least one turn-away incident due a lack of available secure beds (2/8, 2/15, 2/23, 3/14, as well as 5/2/and 5/16, which saw two turn-away incidents). Additional data showed the following:

- The average weekly turn-away rate is **0.6**.
- The highest weekly need for secure beds in 2024 was **nine** beds (six fewer than the year prior)
- The average weekly need was **seven** beds (one fewer than the year prior).

Shifting focus to programmatic goals, Mr. Irizarry stated that three main areas continue to remain in focus regarding development and implementation. These areas include:

- School-based prevention and diversion-Delaware County's baseline assessment showed that **one-third** of youth's enter the system through school. The goal is to work with local initiatives and help schools strengthen climate and support staff and offer prevention programs to help schools identify and direct students who may be at risk for delinquency.
- Community-based prevention, diversion, and detention alternatives- A Request for Proposals ("RFP") for community-based detention provider was approved and should be posted in the month of June 2024. A potential contract agreement with the National Assessment Center (NAC) will be brought before council to help identify and partner with existing community nonprofits and organizations that provide community diversion and can serve as locations for social gatherings and non-school activities for youths.
- Youth re-entry services-collaboration continues with Workforce Development to develop to expand and build on existing programs within Delaware County.

These areas of focus remain in line with the needs identified by Delaware County's youths through the Youth Survey, which revealed the following:

- “I know where to go to get information about services and programs for youth in my community,” -**Sixty percent** of youths felt neutrally or disagreed with this statement.
- “My community has services and supports to help youth be successful,” -**Sixty percent** of youths felt neutrally or disagreed with this statement.
- “If I had money to help youth in my community, I would spend it on . . .” - **Fifty percent** of respondents indicated they would spend it on art/music/creative endeavors, **thirty-six percent** would spend it on mental and behavioral health services, and **thirty-three percent** would spend it on mentoring programs.

Mr. Irizarry additionally provided figures from youth survey from a statewide survey conducted by Juvenile Justice Stakeholders. Those needs were identified as the following:

System Practitioner Identified Needs

- Secure detention and residential treatment facility bed availability (**57%**)
- Adequate staffing (**35%**)
- Managing/referring youth with mental health needs (**30%**)
- Gun violence prevention and reduction (**18%**)
- Access to/availability of community services (**17%**)
- Mental health/suicide prevention and intervention (**16%**)
- Diversion programs (including school-based) (**15%**)
- Violent crime reduction (**12%**)

Youth, Family and Community Identified Needs

- Mental health/suicide preventions and intervention (**60%**)
- ‘Safe spaces’ for youth to hang out, gather, and enjoy free time (**53%**)
- Life skills (**51%**)
- Positive youth development (**49%**)
- Evidence-based programs (programs proven to be effective in reducing or preventing unhealthy behaviors in youth) (**43%**)
- Career/vocational education (**36%**)
- Alcohol and substance use disorder treatment and services (**34%**)

Councilwoman Schaefer asked if she could receive a copy of the final RFP for community-based detention before it is posted.

Mr. Irizarry stated that he would send copies of the RFP to the Board.

Councilwoman Schaefer asked for an update on the facilities subcommittee.

Mr. Irizarry stated that they recently met with Public Works regarding next steps, and that a facilities subcommittee update will be an agenda item in the coming months.

Councilwoman Schaefer asked if members of the Board who are not on the subcommittee are welcome to join in on a subcommittee meeting

Chairman Madden welcomed the participation of other Board members these are not closed meetings.

Old Business: No old business.

New Business: No new business.

Public Comment: John Robinson, Chester County, Pa- Mr. Robinson stated that he works for a nonprofit based in Delaware County, Child and Family Focus, that provides prevention and diversionary programs that could be useful to the juvenile justice service goals in Delaware County. Mr. Robinson stated that he was available to speak with Mr. Irizarry after the meeting.

Board Member Comment: No Board Member comment.

Adjourn: Board Member Turner moved to adjourn. Board Member Nichols seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:54PM.

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