

**Stanislaus County
Juvenile Justice Commission
October 22, 2020 – Probation Department - Microsoft Teams**

Members Present: Darin Gharat, Chair, Sharma Uma, Marian Martino, and Lt. Scott Houston

Members Excused: Vicki Maldonado, Stephen Ashman, The Honorable Ann Ameral, and Jeffrey Graham

Probation Department Present: Chief Probation Officer Mark Ferriera, Assistant Chief Probation Officer Leticia Ruano

Superior Court Present: The Honorable Ruben Villalobos, Juvenile Court Judge

Call to Order: Chairman Darin Gharat called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

Public Comment: No public individuals were present.

Approval of Minutes: MOTION: CPO Mark Ferriera. SECOND: Marian Martino

Probation Department Report

Chief Mark Ferriera reported the following:

- The population at the Juvenile Institutions as of today is 54 boys and 9 girls.
- Safety procedure requirements are in place to avoid the spread of COVID-19 in Juvenile Institutions, ensuring youth and staff safety. Currently, unit A in the Juvenile Commitment Facility is used as a quarantine unit, and visitations with the family are being done through Zoom or Teams.
- Outside vendors have resumed programming after several months of facility closure to all external facilitators, except for school, as it continues to be through remote access.
- Juvenile Institutions has not had any positive COVID-19 tests since the start of the pandemic.
- DJJ Realignment update: SB823 was signed into law by the Governor on September 30, 2020, closing DJJ intake to all new youth commitments beginning July 1, 2021, and eventually closing to attrition. Before this date, youth delivered or committed to DJJ will remain under the DJJ jurisdiction and will not be returned to county facilities. The DJJ total count for Stanislaus County as of today is 24.
- In collaboration with community-based agencies, the Probation Department has formed a workgroup to prepare for the DJJ transition. The group met earlier this week.
- Staffing Update: Juvenile Institution is currently experiencing significant staffing shortages; now, 20 vacant positions are resulting in a 23% vacancy rate. The attributing factors and recruitment resources were discussed.
- The Alternative to Custody Programs and transportation duties assigned to Institutions have been transitioned to the Field Services Division.
- The Detention Analysis Report has been completed and was presented to the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council last week.

Juvenile Court Report

Honorable Judge Villalobos reported the following:

- The approval has been received for Dependency and Juvenile Court proceedings to be held at the Juvenile Commitment Facility. He noted the possibility of starting next week once the agreements are finalized. He thanked CPO Mark Ferriera for his assistance in making this possible. The group discussed the use of the Juvenile Commitment Facility and legal factors involved when proposing to change the facility's original intent; the possibility of future updates to legislature could impact Juvenile Justice, resulting in a potential full usage of the JCF.
- The Honorable Judge Ameral will be returning next week, and new judges will be starting the first quarter of 2021.

Review Juvenile Justice Commission By-laws

Chairman Darin Gharat gave credit to CPO Mark Ferriera for reviewing the By-laws and suggesting the update. He noted agreeing with Mr. Ferriera, indicating the last update was in 2014.

- The Juvenile Justice Commission reviewed the By-laws and discussed updating the following sections:
 - Section 1 of Article III
 - Section 3 of Article III
 - Section 2 of Article IV
 - Section 2 of Article V
 - Section 7 of Article V
- The following suggestions were made:
 - Structure of the by-laws following W&I codes.
 - To modify the language with spelled out processes such as length of term and reappointing members upon completing their term.
 - Modifying how often meetings will be held.

With the assistance of the Honorable Judge Ruben Villalobos, CPO Mark Ferriera agreed to review the JJC By-laws in detail. Any changes made to the By-laws will be presented to the group for feedback and comments; once the group is ready to vote on approving the modifications, the item will be added to the next Commission meeting agenda.

Lt. Scott Houston advised the group he oversees the Explorer group that currently has over 30 youth enrolled. He noted some of these youth might be interested in being a member of the JJC. The JJC members stated that it would be a great idea.

Update on Judge Underwood Scholarship

Eva Carrasco reported there is currently one student receiving scholarship funding. He continues to be enrolled in school and provides quarterly updates of enrollment and grades. Lt. Houston and Vicki Maldonado interviewed a new candidate on September 22, 2020. Lt. Houston reported a unanimous decision had been made to move forward with the scholarship funding. Marian Martino thanked the JJC members for supporting this youth.

Chairman Darin Gharat noted the Judge Underwood Scholarship was started and handled by a fundraising group that no longer exists. At that time, the responsibilities of this scholarship were taken over by the JJC. He asked the group if this added responsibility should be added to the commission's official duties and added to agenda items for voting. He noted it could be added to the annual report in addition to displaying benefiting community activity. The group discussed the current voting procedures for awarding youth with the scholarship; there will be a further discussion later.

Juvenile Institutions Inspection

Assistant Chief Probation Officer Leticia Ruano conducted a tour of both Juvenile Hall and the Juvenile Commitment Facility.

The meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.