**Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice Advisory Board**

June 27, 2018

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

1112 South Wabash Avenue, Suite 2-200, Chicago, IL 60605

**Meeting Minutes**

**Board Members**

Present in Person: Julie Biehl, Heidi Mueller, Jennifer Vollen-Katz, David Olson, Randolph Stone,

Present by Phone: Walter Brandon, Jerry Butler, Jennifer North

Absent: Annetta Wilson, Rick Velasquez

**Other Attendees** Deloris Smith, Brittany Groot, Esther Yahnig

Two interns of Randolph Stone

1. **Roll Call and Introductions**

The meeting began at approximately 10:15 a.m. with quorum present. Meeting was conducted by Chairperson David Olson.

1. **Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Olson indicated that minutes from both the December 13, 2017 and June 27, 2018 meetings would be presented for approval at the Board’s next meeting in September.

1. **Director’s Report** – Director Heidi Mueller provided the following report to the Board:
   1. **General update**

Director Mueller provided copy of the Safety and Welfare monitor report on DJJ’s effort to address youth prosecution in Saline County. As recommendation of the Judge, this plan was developed in collaboration with the ACLU.

Last year, ACLU filed a motion regarding the increase in prosecutions related to staff from Harrisburg walking complaints directly to the State’s Attorney Office. Originally, the Independent Juvenile Ombudsman identified this issue and raised it to JHA, IDJJ & Governor’s Office. The issue was criminal court outcomes different from how IDJJ would have handled them. The agency cannot prevent staff from seeking legal redress, but we can work to address the behavior by working with our teams to (a) address the behavior that is given rise to this; (b) ensure that staff has faith in the internal disciplinary process; and (c) continue to work on culture change and improving relationships between youth and staff.

*Executive summary report*: The plan includes (1) components to prevent /reduce the likelihood of the behavior occurrence and (2) refine the agency’s response to both youth and staff following an assault. Increase communication and support for staff after an incident, and policies revised to better supports youth’s behavior and the youth’s disciplinary system with best practices; and additional training for staff. NOTE: Data findings indicate that 96% of the time there were immediate and long-term consequences imposed for youth on staff assaults.

We have been working to revising our disciplinary process (along with input from ACLU) to address broad, vague statute regarding the allowable sanctions (wide variance by facility), which include getting a better handling on set-time for youth and the adjustment committee’s recommendations and transparency.

Director Mueller also provided a copy of joint progress report in the RJ v Mueller consent decree.

Esther Yahnig, Acting Chief Legal Counsel provided the update and overview on the report. In April’s meeting with ACLU and monitor, the court ask us to identify top three priority issues (1) mental health system (classification & TX received); (2) youth idle time (confinement & amount of programming); and (3) improved hiring process. The barrier to youth programming is staffing, including retention of staff. There was a hearing on June 25, with another status update hearing scheduled in July.

In the near future, some of our facilities will be coming into compliance (Warrenville and Pere Marquette). IYC Chicago should be in significant compliance in July.

Jenny Vollen-Katz asked about changes to law/variance allowed regarding state hiring process to fill position more quickly. **Response**: We have an established IGA with IDOC for a dedicated person to do background checks for IDJJ hires; at St. Charles, a major issue is leaves/workers compensation. Legislation was passed so that CMS no longer has to pre-qualify applicants for education position.

**Director**: We are looking into how to bring people on temporarily; and looking to create smaller units at St. Charles so that staff can get better acquainted with youth and vice-versa. Develop “zones” in the schools.

The court monitors are scheduled to visit the facilities in last July – early August.

* 1. **SFY 2019 IDJJ Budget**

Budget for SFY 2019; roughly $120 million ($13 million in other funds + $107 millions—about 5 million less). This is the budget we proposed; we did not have issues with appropriations; they understand the need for the money despite the drop in the population; break point is 25-30 youth to achieve a true reduction in costs; we were operating under-resourced for a long time.

* 1. **Population Trends and Patterns** (any substantive changes in number of youth in custody or their characteristics over the past year)

Quarterly reports required by General Assembly vs. monthly reports used in Superintendents meetings, which are held each month; trying to improve data literacy. Agency given a part-time fellow (Megan Toohey) through Harvard and a planning commission was formed within agency. Ms. Toohey helped us develop a new way to do Superintendent Meetings: e.g. first focus on staff assault for a period of time, then stop and move to a new issue (youth-staff relationships).

ICJIA presentation on Monday regarding recidivism

Julie talked about “increase” in girls being admitted to DJJ (they are releasing report).

Director discussed trans-youth; pregnant/delivery outside of facility (authorized absence); discussed specific case of challenges with pregnant youth; policy decision we need to think about as a State; discussion about how to look at low numbers and change over time & percentages.

* 1. **Compliance with Consent Decree in specific areas** (Education, Mental Health, Safety and Welfare)
  2. **Updates on IDJJ’s increased ability and capacity to place youth in the Dept.’s custody in non-IDJJ specialized residential facilities**

**Jennifer**: Do you have increased bed-space? **Director**: We are working on this as part of consent decree (working/focusing on young youth; plus significant Mental Health issues. We have two partner agencies to place youth; working on trying to increase the number of beds (but have some that has been helpful)

* 1. **Update IDJJ Ombudsman**

No change in the Ombudsman office

1. **Goals for next this SFY** (operations and legislation)

Budget includes priorities for consent decree & headcount needed for PREA guidance;

1. **New Business**

* Primary goals of FY are consent decree requirements regarding education and special education challenges for this are St. Charles & Chicago; and engaging with Vera Institute to improve family engagement.
* The agency has an open position for a **Public Information Officer**

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1. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:35 p.m.

**Next Meeting**

Date: September 26, 2018

Location: IDJJ — 1112 South Wabash Avenue, 2nd floor, Chicago, IL 60605