



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Uma Ahluwalia
Director

COMMISSION ON JUVENILE JUSTICE
Retreat Meeting Minutes
February 21, 2015

CITIZEN MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Currie, Chris Fogleman (Chair), Michael Gruenberg, Barbara Holtz, Mehul Madia, Julie Malloy, Perry Paylor, Dana Pisanelli Carlean Ponder, Wendy Pulliam.

AGENCY MEMBERS PRESENT: Francha Davis, Susan Farag, Mary Siegfried, George Simms, Michael Subin, Ira Thomas, Jenny West-Porter and Elijah Wheeler

ABSENT MEMBERS: Carole Brown, Frank Duncan, Julian Haffner, Risa Mainprize, Roberta (Birdie) Pieczenik

STAFF LIAISON PRESENT: Diane Liningger

EMERITUS MEMBERS: Dr. Lee Haller

GUESTS: Karyn Gross.

Commission on Juvenile Justice

7300 Calhoun Place, Suite 600, Rockville, Maryland 20855 • 240-777-3317 • 240-777-4447
facsimile

I. Discussion of Decorum and Civility at meetings – Chris Fogleman, Chair

A. Commissioners were asked to minimize as much as possible all sidebar conversations during meetings.

B. Commissioners were asked to discontinue making comments regarding speakers during meetings.

II. Panel Discussion on Pending State Legislation affecting Juveniles – Mehul Madia, Co-Chair of Government and Community Relations Committee and Francha Davis, Co-Chair of Government and Community Relations Committee

A. Discussion was held regarding Senate Bill 172 – Juveniles- Transfer Determinations- Confinement in Juvenile Facilities

- Mary Siegfried, Office of Public Defender – stated her office is for the bill because it makes certain that Juveniles charged as adults will be placed in youth facilities
- George Simms, Office of the State’s Attorney – stated his office is against the bill because at present judges in Montgomery County have the ability to decide whether or not youth with adult charges are suitable for juvenile facilities and the judges do a good job of making that decision.
- Elijah Wheeler, D.M.C. Reduction Coordinator, Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families, Inc. – stated that not all counties in Maryland have judges that make suitable recommendations regarding placement of youth with adult charges and not all counties give their judges the leeway to make that decision. Some counties automatically place their children in adult jails which can be damaging to the youth. Adult jails do not have the correct programming for youth.
- Susan Farag – County Council – County Council has not looked at this bill yet but Susan believes that they would not support the bill because the situation in Montgomery County works well.
- Mike Subin – County Executive’s Office – believes that the County Executive would also be against the bill.
- Dr. Ira Thomas – MCPS – believes that whatever decision is made it will have a strong impact on the schools.
- Commissioners took a vote and decided that they were not in support of the bill in its present form but would support it with amendments. It was agreed that Mehul would write a letter stating the Commission’s position which would then be sent to the Sponsor of the bill, County Executive, President of the

County Council, Delegate Kathleen Dumais, Senator Jamie Raskin and Delegate Ann Kaiser.

III. Legislation Wish list of agencies - Mehul Madia, Co-Chair of the Government and Community Relations Committee and Francha Davis, Co-Chair of the Government and Community Relations Committee.

- Mary Siegfried stated that HB 337 is a bill that states Juveniles who are charged as adults should not be indiscriminately shackled unless the person is dangerous. Crimes committed before a youth's 18th birthday should not be sentenced to life. A youth who is sentenced to life should be allowed to have a parole hearing after 15 years and every 5 years after that. Mary is in support of this bill.
- George Simms – The prevention truancy program is now working with 10 middle schools, would like to see that program expanded

IV. Letter to support giving contracts for DJS support groups – Carlean Ponder, Vice-Chair

- Carlean has re-written the letter with the help of Mary Siegfried who had gotten feedback from the Juvenile Judges about the letter and wanted to sign on.
- Motion was made to send the letter to Secretary Abed, DJS and CC County executive and President of County Council. Letter will also be CCed to Jennifer Gauthier, Lead4Life, Pride Youth and the Amen program.

V. Committee Structure – Chris Fogleman, chair.

- Commissioners were asked to discuss the present Committee structure to decide if they want to keep both committees, have ad-hoc committees or come up with a completely different alternative
- Discussion ensued and it was decided that the Commission would start its meeting at 7pm and end by 8:30pm. Committees would then meet at 8:30pm if they decided they need to meet.

VI. Meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m. due to the inclement weather.