

DIVISION OF YOUTH REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
June 21st, 2018

Minutes

In Attendance:

John Stevenson, Director, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services
Renee Ciconte, Deputy Director, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services
Tanya Banks, Superintendent, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services
Leann Summa, Quality Assurance Manager, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services
Antony Gifoli, Superintendent, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services
Frank Kennedy, Newark Athletic Club
Keith Zirkle, Family Services Program Manager, Division of Family Services
Eric McLaurin, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services
Michelle Darling, Chief of Community Services, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services
Matia Bryan, Delaware Council on Gambling Problems
Tim Brandau, Child Inc.
Patricia Lyons, Youth Overcoming Obstacles
Jane Lyons, Youth Overcoming Obstacles
Elizabeth Hoffman, DYRS Director's Office

Welcome

Meeting began with general opening remarks and introductions at 9:00am.

YOO Presentation – Jane Lyons

Ms. Jane Lyons spoke to the group and shared her experience running YOO, a program that brings employment opportunities to previously adjudicated youth. She shared past struggles, past success, current goals, and future plans. Last year, the program placed 3 youth and the hope is to place 10 youth in roles this year. In addition, the program is hoping to assist siblings and friends of youth recommended for the program.

YRS leadership was asked to assist in recruiting youth for the program this year. The group was also informed of a pilot resiliency education program that they are designing in conjunction with partners, with hopes of bringing this program to our youth. The program presents teens with realistic problems and offers them the opportunity to use teamwork to find a viable solution. It has been effective with adults and has been modified to adapt to the needs of our youth.

Public Notification of AWOLS – John Stevenson

In light of recent AWOLS from the Residential Cottages, alarm has been sparked in the community, prompting YRS leadership to look more into public notification practices. Director Stevenson shared current practices and asked the group for feedback on how to encourage the

community to actively participate in the Community Advisory Board. The group recommended that the division reaches out to the community to educate members on the various risk levels of youth in our care and the security levels of the facilities. Furthermore, the group recommended providing community tours of the facilities, providing the opportunity to speak to our youth, and division leadership attending upcoming community or civic meeting. The group also suggested that scheduling an evening meeting and providing refreshments may encourage community members to attend. YRS is currently working on a more advanced communication plan to hopefully implement in the near future.

Future of CAB – John Stevenson

Director Stevenson shared his vision for the Community Advisory Board and shared ideas that may positively impact our youth. He called on the services of some board members to help make this vision a reality. He asked the group to help recruit community organizations that can and are willing to provide positive resources to our youth, and encourage them to become members of the board. The group shared their ideas and recommended several outreach methods.

Though residency numbers are low, programming is still a very important piece of youth rehabilitation. Currently the correct youth are in the proper facilities and focus with youth is on rehabilitation and incentives, driving success. Director Stevenson shared his plan for instituting a Program Committee in the facilities that will review current and future programs that are brought to our youth. The board members were encouraged to share their programs and ideas and to reach out to contacts and encourage the same.

Leadership discussed low level youth and programs and services provided to them that assist in keeping them out of the juvenile system. Civil Citation is a fairly new program and focus is on pre-arrest diversion. Civil Citation has been an active program for almost 3 years and has proven successful. Because of this, a new house bill is in the process of being signed that expands the program to include most misdemeanor charges. This will be helpful in keeping youth from obtaining an arrest record that follows them into their adult years and decreases the likelihood of future offenses.

Allocation of New Positions to YRS – John Stevenson

This fiscal year, the division has requested 29 new position for secure care facilities. The request has been approved. Director Stevenson shared his plan for the positions and the positive impact the support will have on our youth, staff, and programming.

Community Services Updates – Michelle Darling

Cheif Darling asked the group to consider services, activities, and employment opportunities that they are aware of and compile a list for the next meeting. The goal is for our youth to develop a relationship with a positive adult in the community that extends beyond probation. The group shared ideas of positive activities youth can participate in for consideration.

Facility Updates – Renee Ciconte

Ferris School

Ferris currently has 18 residents. Ferris residents have very full and busy days with programming. Recently leadership has met with contractors about providing services on the weekends. The facility had an amazing lacrosse season and the youths' efforts were applauded for this past season. Some youth success stories were shared and the group was asked to consider resources on acquiring additional lacrosse equipment. Currently the youth are preparing for the next football season.

Residential Cottages

Antony Gifoli is the new Superintendent of the Residential Cottages. Mr. Waynant is now the Program Manager at Mowlds Cottage. Recently Snowden Cottage was closed for emergency repairs. There are currently 8 boys and 9 girls residing in the cottages.

NCCDC

Mr. Perkins has made an organizational move to New Castle County Detention Center as the Superintendent. There is a bill under review that keeps youth in detention facilities instead of using YCOP until they are sentenced in superior court. There are no immediate concerns regarding this but planning for the change is in place.

Meeting adjourned at 10:32am.

Next meeting: September 10th, 2018
 9 – 11am
 Multi-Purpose Facility
 1825 Faulkland Road
 Wilmington, DE 19805