

**DIVISION OF YOUTH REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD**

MINUTES

May 29, 2007

Attendance:

Perry Phelps	DYRS, Director
Wayne Ashbee	Resident, Woodland Heights
Marion E. Plotts	Resident, Woodland Park
Barbara Riley	Dept. of Labor, Div of Voc Rehab
Chandlee Kuhn	Chief Judge, Family Court
Alison McGonigal	DYRS, JDAI Coordinator
Lisa DiStefano	DYRS, Acting Chief, Community Services
Janet Leban	Executive Director, DE Center for Justice
Allison Cassidy	Coordinator, Delaware Girls Initiative

Absent:

Jim Lafferty	Executive Director, Mental Health Association of DE
Rick Pulling	Captain, Delaware State Police, Troop 6
Benton Garrison	DYRS, NCCDC Assistant Superintendent
Kim Pepper,	DYRS, Administrative Assistant
Barbara Crowell	Judge, Family Court
Dory Zatuchni	Executive Director, Jewish Family Services
Kathryn Herel	Parent Information Center of DE
Leslie Newman	Executive Director, Children & Families First
Kaiyra Greel	Methodist Action Program
Annette Miller	DYRS, Superintendent, Ferris
Rick Shaw	DYRS, Deputy Director
Phyllis Berggrun	President, Willow Run Civic Association
Larry Haas	Child, Inc.
Nnamdi Chukwuocha	Kingswood Community Center
Aimee McFarlan	Rockford Center
James Mosley	Director of Public Safety, Wilmington Police Dept
Rita Paige	De State Housing Authority
Vicki Wetherall	Deputy Attorney General
Col. Rick Gregory	NCCPD
Andrew McKnight	Challenge Program

Opening Remarks

Perry Phelps, Director of the Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services opened the meeting at 5:30. Because of the Holiday yesterday, this meeting will be abbreviated.

Purpose of Committee

The Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services' Policy #1.1 states what a Community Advisory Board is. In part, *the members are a representative group of citizens who are active in community affairs and have a broad background in juvenile welfare interests. The Board assists the Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services by evaluating, advising, recommending and supporting policies and procedures that are in the best interest of the juveniles.*

We are going to work within these parameters, looking at the following criteria:

- We do not want our committees too large
- We want representation across the board in order to get the best available services for our kids
- When the sub committees are developed, we will send out the listing to everyone, including objectives for each sub committee
 - Some members have returned their questionnaires with preferences

Video

Director Phelps then showed a video (Keep Yo Game Tight) that was written, produced and performed by Ferris youth in partnership with Media Matters and the Opera House. Because of the partnership and the video, a Ferris youth was offered employment at the Opera House after he completes his residency. This is an example of positive partnering with the Community.

Barbara Riley, Program Specialist for Transition at DVR, stated they visited Mowlds Cottage during their First Annual Youth Career Transition Week. During this visit, concurrent workshops were held with the students on "Job Search Resources" and "How to Get Fired Without Really Trying." The students were respectful, courteous and participated fully in the workshops.

The groups had visited seven other schools and the 17 Mowlds students outshined all of the others. They provided many examples of how they were preparing to re-enter the community and the world of school and work.

DYRS currently oversees approximately 2700 youth and in most cases, they go back to their way of life when they leave DYRS. This is the only environment they know.

Art Show at Grand Opera House

In May, 12 Ferris students were given the opportunity to visit the Grand Opera House to observe art work done by Ferris School (Mowlds, Snowden and Grace Cottages) students that was on display as part of the Art on the Town/Art Loop. Visitors had the opportunity to observe the level of talent of our youth and bid on the pictures in a silent auction, that ended on May 31st.

Enhanced PO's/OJJDP Grant

We are now in the process of applying for 2 grants:

Youth Offender Re-entry Grant through OJJDP:

- *Is all about strengthening families, engaging communities through partnerships, impacting recidivism rates, meeting youth needs for transitional services*
- *Expand CAP in Kent and Sussex, and up to New Castle County*
- *Expand MST slots in the community for youth and their families*
- *Looking to also doing evidence based life skills training in the community*
- *Focuses on pre-release planning, structured re-entry services and long-term support*
- *No match awards ranging from \$250,000 to \$1 million for a period up to 4 years – due 6/8 (a 2 week turnaround)*
- *Must have strong partnerships in community (especially with faith-based organizations)*

We have a much better chance of getting this one:

Youthbuild through USDOL

- *DOL, DE Skills Center, DSCYF, Challenge, Goodwill, etc. will apply in partnership*
- *DOL or Goodwill to take the fiscal agent lead – dollars to go out to the community*
- *Focuses on hard skills training 0 due 7/3 - \$700,000 to \$1.1 million for 3 years*
- *25% match (cash-in-kind)*
- *Works with ages 16 – 24, education and employment skills training to achieve economic sufficiency*
- *DE is one of four states that does not have a Youth build*
- *Focuses on construction training, but can do other types of work*

Results of Questionnaire

We received good suggestions back from the questionnaire that was sent. Thank you for your time. We will be compiling sub committees and send out a mission statement by the next meeting.

Open Floor

- it is a good thing to see YRS, CMH and DFS work as an integrated unit
- we need advocates in the community to help our youth
 - kids will be sent to our system, get cleaned up and then sent right back to the same environment they came from
- it would be interesting to do a profile on convicts on death row to look at their background
- the Governor is a huge advocate for our youth
 - she just took a financial hit because of the conditions at DOC
- we need to get Legislators involved in the Community Advisory Board
 - if they do not respond to our letters we should call them individually
- we are trying to keep our youth in programs closer to home
 - transitional program that opened on Jackson Street a few years ago has since closed
 - We are looking at new re-entry programs
 - We are learning from our mistakes in our process
 - the only suitable program for sex offenders is in Florida

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.