

ESSEX COUNTY YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, November 16, 2023

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88689451491>

Attendees: **Hon. Philip Degnan**, Co-Chairman of the Essex County Youth Services Commission – Family Part of the Superior Court, **Kesha Manning**, - Family Division, **Keisha Walker**- Probation Officer, **Anthony Higgins** – County Prosecutor Office, **Michelle Callari**, – County Public Defender, **Lenora Humphrey** – County DCP&P **Rosi Hermida**, Superintendent of the County Vocational School, **Anibal Ramos Jr.**, Co-Chairman of the Essex County Youth Services Commission - County Human Services Director, **Jessica Torres** – Youth Shelter, **Todd Barcliff** -Youth Detention Center Director, **Tyrone Hunter**– Juvenile Family Crisis Intervention Unit, **Lt. John Henriques**, – Law enforcement representative who works with youth/Police, **Colette DeGrazia** – County Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, **Pamela Cohen** – Workforce Investment Board, **Adejobi Odeneye** – Business Representative, **Lori Scott Pickens**, **Jasmine Joseph Foreman** – Education Sector, **LaQuanda Williams** - victims’ rights groups, Rev. Bernard Wilkes – Clergy, **Amy Godfrey**-Other interested persons who deal with children, **Gino Arevalo** - Other interested persons who deal with children,

Jason Martinez - Administrator of Youth Services Commission, Amanda Compton, Ronald Small – Court Liaisons of Juvenile Justice Commission, Erica Cashaw-Newark Public Schools, Taieta El-Amin – Community Engagement, Essex County Department of Economic Development Training & Employment, Issac Medina – Aspira Inc, Shanique Pace – Newark Municipal Court, Altarik White - Leaders for Life, Michael Rivera - Cope Center, Chris Torres, Bethany Rosen – Community Solutions, Joey Drucker –Family Connections, Nayellie Collazo, Edward Morris – NCC, Alyssa Wahlers – PCE, Flohisha Johnson-Hill,

This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 -10:4-21. Notice of this meeting has been provided on the Essex County Website.

Agenda Item I **Reading of the Open Public Meetings Act** **Approval of Minutes – October 19, 2023**

Director Ramos asked for a roll call of voting members which was administered by Administrator Martinez. It was determined that there was a quorum. The Open Public Meeting Act was read by Director Ramos. Director Ramos asked for a motion to approve the minutes for October 17th, 2023. *Jessica Torres motioned to approve the minutes and Lori Scott Pickens 2nd the motion. Minutes were unanimously adopted.*

Subcommittee Reports:

- **Planning** - Laquanda Williams reported an email of the Comprehensive Plan to review and coordinate a time to answer the questions from the plan.

- **Monitoring** - Lori Scott Pickens reported there is one more monitoring that needs to be held which is the “What it’s all about” Conference. It will take place in December. This is the last conference for the year as they are prepping for the next year.

Jasmine Joseph Foreman asked will the monitoring subcommittee would have to attend the conference or if they are going to interview the staff post the conference. Ms. Pickens stated she thinks it will be both. If eligible, the conference will take place at NJIT. If you are monitoring and evaluating, it will be a great opportunity to see it in person.

- **Allocation** - Michelle Callari presented a budget of the Partnership 1/3 Set Aside which included the salary, fringe an additional cost of the Home Detention Monitors and MDTs. The total budget presented for the Home Detention Monitor at \$160,953.00 and the MDTs at \$287,190.00. Currently, there are two MDTs and is requested to hire an additional MDT.

Director Ramos then mentioned years ago there were three MDTs, and it would be helpful to have an additional person.

Judge Degnan stated is in support of a third MDT. MDT service plays a huge role in the court system, especially with remaining compliant with the recommendations made at the court system. Judge Degnan stated they are several hundred docket numbers ahead of where they were last year at this time and the previous year as well. An MDT is a tremendous job and extremely important in how Judge Khan and he evaluate the ability to release individuals from the detention center. It’s a big factor that contributes to the decision-making process when an MDT is available to offer services for the child. It is also something that they monitor at each court date. An MDT will refer a juvenile to a specific program and is also responsible for updating the court on their progress and expressing to the judge if the juvenile is being compliant with the recommendations and program that they were referred to. An MDT is also responsible for finding programs for court-involved kids even when the programs are over capacity. Judge Degnan proceeded to say it is a big job for just 2 people which is why the recommendation of a 3rd MDT would be beneficial for not only the court but the children involved in the court system and the attorney. Judge Degnan concluded his statement by stating he supports having a 3rd MDT.

Joseph Jasmine Foreman, asked if this MDT is only specifically for somebody coming out the home detention or if is there a difference in MDT. Administrator Martinez stated the goal is to assist with the family court and the use of alternative and alternate programs for juveniles in the program to spend the least time as necessary.

Leonora Humphrey, asked if there are two MDT, if so, what are their roles? Administrator Martinez responded that the current MDT has a high intake, which means they need a 3rd person to assist one another. Humphrey asked if the MDT is one for detention alternative, reentry, and recruiting. Director Ramos stated that they do not specialize in specific areas. They assist with various needs of a juvenile. Director Higgins then stated we want someone who can help us connect our children to services, so they are not returning into the court on a new or different matters. So, the Prosecutor Office is a 100% in support of MDT.

Action Item:

1. Approval of 1/3 set aside for Home Detention Monitors

- ✓ *Lori Scott Pickens motioned to approve the extension and Rosi Hermida for the 2nd motion.*

- **Judge Degnan-Yes**
- **Kesha Manning-Yes**
- **Anthony Higgins-Yes**
- **Michelle Callari-Yes**
- **Leonora Humphrey- Abstain**
- **Rosi Hermida-Yes**
- **Jessica Torres-Yes**
- **Tyrone Hunter-Yes**
- **Director Ramos-Abstain**
- **Todd Barcliff-Abstain**
- **LT Henriques-Yes**
- **Colette DeGrazia-Yes**
- **Pammela Cohen-Yes**
- **Dr. Jobi-Yes**
- **Gino Arrevalo-Yes**
- **Lori Scott Pickens-Yes**
- **Laquanda Williams-Yes**
- **Rev Bernard Wilks-Yes**
- **Amy Godfrey-No**

2. Approval of 1/3 set aside for Multi-Disciplinary Teams

✓ *Lori Scott Pickens motioned to approve the extension and Laquanda Williams for the 2nd motion.*

- **Judge Degnan-Yes**
- **Kesha Manning-Yes**
- **Anthony Higgins-Yes**
- **Michelle Callari-Yes**
- **Leonora Humphrey- Abstain**
- **Rosi Hermida-Yes**
- **Tyrone Hunter-Yes**
- **Jessica Torres-Yes**
- **Director Ramos-Abstain**
- **Todd Barcliff-Yes**
- **Lt. Henriques-Yes**
- **Colette DeGrazia-Yes**
- **Pammela Cohen-Yes**
- **Dr. Jobi-Yes**
- **Gino Arrevalo-Yes**
- **Lori Scott Pickens-Yes**
- **Laquanda Williams-Yes**
- **Rev Bernard Wilks-Yes**
- **Amy Godfrey-Abstain**

Presentation Bethany Rosen, Community Solutions Ince-Multi Systematic Therapy:

Bethany Rosen proceeded to present on Multi Systematic Therapy. MST is an evidence-based, intensive family/community-based treatment that addresses multiple determinants of serious antisocial/defiant behavior in juvenile offenders. They are a community-based and family-based program. They receive referrals from the

community and family as well. A therapist has a caseload of 5-6 families. The team is available 24/7 for crisis. MST delivers all treatments. The ages MST caters to is 11-18.

Gino Arevalo, asked if referrals are mainly behavioral, and do they have clinicians for the behavior. Rosen answered they have 3 therapists; they go to intensive training and consult with MST experts. Some people are licensed through the program. Since there is a specific model, anybody who has a bachelor's degree can be fit for the role. The program is Medicaid-based if you are not eligible for Medicaid the program does not have a cost for services.

Amy Godfrey then commented that anybody with a CMO or MST who initiates a referral needs to make sure the CMO is inactive, as it can create a delay with the families. Judge Degnan asked if they had open spots available. Rosen stated she has 8-9 spots available and is actively hiring more therapists. Judge Degnan then asks how many cases are court-involved and through other community-based referrals. Rosen stated they have 5 courts involved in cases in Essex and Hudson County. Lori Pickens asked about capacity and do they have a waitlist. Rosen mentioned when reaching the capacity, they tried to hire more staff, and they would also contact the family to see if they want to be on the waitlist and provide them with other resources.

ECYSC Updates:

Administrator Martinez, reported the Comprehensive Plan and Application will be presented on December 7th for a vote and submit to the JJC before December 15 deadline.

Also, there will be a public meeting as regards to the Restorative and Transformative Justice for Youths and Communities Pilot Program which will take place on December 6th at West Side Park at 5:30 pm.

Restorative and Transformative Justice for Youths and Communities Pilot Program Updates:

Cynthia Alfonso, reported that UCC's training certifications have been sent to JJC. Also, the JJC visited UCC's Satellite RTJ Hub on Spruce Street, which the JJC was impressed with the progress between Essex County and UCC in anticipation in rolling out the RTJ Pilot Program in Newark. As well, Cynthia gave out a reminder for the community meeting for the Restorative and Transformative Community Pilot Program that will take place on December 6th at West Side Park at 5:30 pm.

Juvenile Justice Commission Announcements:

No Updates

Public and/ or Youth Service Commissioner Announcements: Public Portion of the Meeting

No Updates

Adjournment:

Director Ramos thanked everyone for attending and asked if there were any further questions or comments. With no further announcements, a *motion was made by Laquanda Williams & seconded by Anthony Higgins to adjourn the meeting.*