



Marc Elrich
County Executive

Dr. Raymond Crowel
Director, DHHS

COMMISSION ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

Tuesday, September 16, 2019

7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

101 Monroe Street 9th floor conference room, Rockville, MD

CITIZEN MEMBERS PRESENT: Kimberly Alfriend, Diana Barney, Bonnie DeWitt, Karen Francis, Tracey Friedlander, Dan Gaskill, Christopher Jennison, Erynn Penn, Wendy Pulliam, Kevin Redden, Vernon Scott, Ebony Stoutmiles, and Gwen Williams.

AGENCY MEMBERS PRESENT: Joanna Bonner, Francha Davis, Frank Duncan, Steve Neff, Shaun Michael for Carlotta Woodward and Nathaniel Tipton.

ABSENT MEMBERS: Susan Farag, Chris Fogleman, Sean Gagen, Mary Siegfried, Michael Subin, Thomas Squire and Elijah Wheeler.

STAFF LIASON PRESENT: Diane Lininger

GUESTS: John Fields, Edmund Morris, Joshua Pestaner and Nicolle Schorchit.

Commission on Juvenile Justice

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I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Speaker - Priya Sarathy Jones, National Campaign Director at the Fees and Fines Justice Center. Maryland considered a bill by Senator Smith last year that would eliminate certain juvenile fees, including the practice of charging indigent youth and families for the cost of public defenders or court-appointed attorneys. She will discuss juvenile fines and possible legislation or advocacy for the Commission.

- There is a larger picture of advocacy happening by groups focused on eliminating fines and fees in the juvenile system across states.
 - o California and Nevada are the only two states that have accomplished this so far. The two states accomplished this in very different ways.
- In Maryland there is a shift to more coalition building before moving forward again. There are several groups interested in this topic but not a lot of collaboration/coordination currently. The larger criminal justice reform initiatives are also impacting these efforts and advocates are trying to tease the juvenile justice fines and fees out as a separate issue. Trends indicate that fines and fees is a more bipartisan issue that can garner support as a separate issue.
- Recommended Resources (click on each to access hyperlinks below):
 - o [Juvenile Law Center – Debtors’ Prison for Kids](#)
 - o [Making Families Pay by Berkeley Law Clinic](#)
 - o [Double Punishment](#)
- Driver’s License Suspensions – advocacy is currently happening by groups around the suspension of driver’s licenses because of outstanding court fees (in adult and juvenile systems). Virginia and Texas are two states that have ceased driver’s license suspensions recently.
 - o [State Senator William Stanley](#) from Virginia has been very impactful in recent justice reform in Virginia.
- Montgomery County does not utilize court fees or fines. Many state associated fees that could be assessed in Montgomery County are up to judicial determination. Other counties such as Prince George’s County do utilize fees and fines in the juvenile system.

In Montgomery County, Screening and Assessment Services for Children and Adolescents (SASCA)

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Program.aspx?id=BHCS/BHCSSASCA-p1961.html>

is free however fees for services can come into play if youth are referred to services such as substance abuse treatment programs through private insurance. Fees assessed for placement cost are rare.

- Court Appointed versus Public Defender – In Montgomery County, minimal administrative fees are associated (\$50) with accessing a public defender; youth must apply for and be approved for a public defender. Court appointed lawyers are not public defenders and may charge fees which vary widely.
- Restitution – this can be ordered in Montgomery County however there are concerns that this is not effective or feasible for many. Restorative Justice

Programs were mentioned as a possible alternative being implemented in many schools across jurisdictions. Restitution is a separate issue from fines and fees.

- Possible next steps for the commission to consider –
 - o connect with those around the state (advocacy groups, other boards/commissions, etc.) interested in this topic, learn the various stances and build upon existing partnerships to strengthen a coalition for advocacy efforts
 - o explore what the practices are across Counties regarding fees and fines; identify those that may be willing to align with efforts to support legislative change
 - o explore what is working within Montgomery County regarding how the systems are funded without relying on fines and fees

III. July 2019 minutes – July 2019 minutes were adopted and approved

IV. New Business

- a. **Annual Report – The report reflects July to July (previous year) and is due at the end of October. Sign-up sheet was passed around soliciting volunteers to write articles for this report.**
- b. **Interviews for new Commissioners – Interviews took place last week and letters have been sent to the Executive's Office for appointment.**
- c. Visit to the ERC – Commissioners toured the new ERC location recently. Commissioners felt welcomed by the staff at the center and felt the center is rich in resources available to enrolled youth. Commissioners were surprised by the low number of youths encountered at the visit. Discussion took place around the ERC's role as an alternative to detention in Montgomery County. The ERC is state funded through DJS. Capacity is capped at 20 youth at any time.
- d. October meeting, we will have Alyson Clements from National Juvenile Justice Network to speak on Youth engagement.

V. Ad-Hoc Committee reports

- a. Vision Statement Ad-Hoc committee – revised vision statement approved, no objections, 1 abstained
- b. Youth involvement Ad-Hoc committee – the subcommittee discussed the need to bring in speakers (such as the Oct speaker) to help share information with the commission on youth engagement. The hope is that this information will help inform next steps.

VI. Announcements from Agency Members, Commissioners and Members of the Public.

- Briefing: Behavioral/Mental Health Services in Juvenile Justice System - A joint session with County Council's Public Safety and Health & Human Services Committees is taking place at 9:30am on Thursday (9/19).

VII. Meeting Adjourned

