



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Uma Ahluwalia
Director

COMMISSION ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 15, 2014

7:50 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

CITIZEN MEMBERS PRESENT: Carole Brown, Linda Currie, Chris Fogleman (Chair), Jennifer Gauthier, Michael Gruenberg, (Chair, Care, Custody and Placement) Christopher Jackson, (Chair, Government and Community relations), Julie Malloy, Roberta Pieczenik, Dana Pisanelli, Carlean Ponder, (Vice Chair), Wendy Pulliam, and Jasmine Shergill.

AGENCY MEMBERS PRESENT: Francha Davis, Frank Duncan, Susan Farag, Risa Mainprize, Mary Siegfried, George Simms, Michael Subin, Jenny West-Porter (Leanna Mckenzie) and Elijah Wheeler

ABSENT MEMBERS: Robert Carter, Blaine Clarke, Julian Haffner, Barbara Holtz, Gladstone Marcus, Mehul Madia, Perry Paylor, and Ira Thomas

STAFF LIAISON PRESENT: Diane Lininger

GUESTS: Karyn Gross, and Nick Moroney

Commission on Juvenile Justice

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facsimile

I. **Announcements /Preliminary business**

- A. No meeting in August
- B. Frank Duncan, DJS to speak at September meeting.
- C. Chair Chris Fogleman went to quarterly Commission chair meeting with Director, DHHS. Chris attended the quarterly Commission meetings.
 - 1. There is a new "Homelessness" Commission in Montgomery County.
 - 2. There are now 19 commissions in Montgomery County.
 - 3. Chris suggests that our two CJJ committees prioritize and submit items for the county budget, as apparently there is now the possibility of receiving finances.
 - 4. Chris suggested that we extend an invitation to other commissions to hear from the Juvenile Court Judges, when they address our Commission.
- D. Executive Committee met on Tuesday, July 8 – attached is the minutes from that meeting.
- E. Noyes advisory committee meeting on July 10th - Mary Siegfried, Elijah Wheeler, and Mike Gruenberg attended the recent Noyes Advisory Committee. At that meeting they learned that there is apparently a lack of funding to provide for new trailers at the Noyes Children's Center. The care and custody committee agreed to draft a letter to Senator Raskin asking for funding for new trailers at Noyes.

II. **Old Business**

- A. The June meeting minutes were approved.

- III. **Speakers: Mary Siegfried, Agency Member and Office of the Public Defender and George Simms, Agency Member and Office of the States Attorney - what their jobs entail and what issues the courts are seeing at present.** Deputy District Public Defender, Mary Siegfried, outlined the role of the Office of the Public Defender in Juvenile Court. Ms. Siegfried is the Chief of the Juvenile Court Attorneys in the Montgomery County Public Defender's Office. She supervises five delinquency attorneys, one educational attorney, and one social worker. Her team represents juveniles who are charged in juvenile court. Ms. Siegfried's team also represents juveniles who are charged as adults. Ms. Siegfried's team works on motions to transfer cases against children who are aged 14 or older, or 16 or older, whose cases should be transferred to juvenile court. Ms. Siegfried cited an example of a 16 year old who got into an argument with her sister. The argument escalated to a curling iron being thrown, which apparently caused a burn on the sister and the 16 year old was charged as an adult with first degree assault. Ms. Siegfried's team was successful in working with the prosecutor to properly transfer this case to juvenile court.

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The Public Defender's Office employs "community defenders" who work with the child and help the child after the case ends. For example, Ms. Siegfried gets a call every Mother's Day from a former juvenile client who calls to thank Ms. Siegfried.

The Public Defender's Office also has a "juvenile protection unit" which investigates and works to improve juvenile placements. The Public Defender's Office also has a "collateral review unit" which works to overturn sentences against children charged and convicted in adult court. For example, there are seventeen juveniles in the Department of Corrections who were sentenced to life without parole for an act committed when they were a juvenile. There are thirty-two individuals sentenced to life for an act committed when they were a juvenile.

The Public Defender's Office does legislative work to make suggestions for proposed legislation. For example, the office is working on a bill which would require any juvenile charged as an adult to be housed in a juvenile facility pending the resolution of the adult case.

A question came up about the percentage of juvenile cases handled by the Public Defender's Office compared to cases handled by private attorneys. Ms. Siegfried estimated that 75% of all juvenile cases in Montgomery County are handled by the Office of the Public Defender or by attorneys paid by their office as "panel" attorney due to potential conflicts.

George Simms, III addressed the State's Attorney's perspective on juvenile justice issues.

Mr. Simms passed out an 8 page presentation providing a summary of the work that the State's Attorneys Office does on juvenile justice issues. Mr. Simms, the Juvenile Prosecution Team Leader, outlined the structure of the State's Attorneys Office under State's Attorney John McCarthy. Mr. Simms outlined the purposes of Juvenile Court, with emphasis on the unique rehabilitative focus as described in Courts Article 3-8A-02.

Mr. Simms then explained the special terminology of the Juvenile Court and summarized the relationship of the State's Attorney's Office with Department of Juvenile Services. Mr. Simms then presented data on juvenile complaints and petitions which suggests that the commission of delinquent acts in the State of Maryland and in Montgomery County has been declining over the past three years.

Mr. Simms then gave an overview of multi agency juvenile diversion programs utilized by the State's Attorney's Office such as Teen Court, the Truancy Prevention Program, the Kennedy/Watkins Mill High School Project, the Truancy Review Board, and the Screening and Assessment Services for Children and Adolescents (SASCA).

A question was asked regarding Truancy Prevention Programs in Montgomery County. At this point, Karyn Gross, the liaison between the MCPS and the Court outlined the

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role of the Pupil Personnel workers in reducing truancy. Another question came up about the fact that DJS authorized 1,058 cases in FY 2013 and the State's Attorney's Office petitioned 833 of those. The question arose about the reason that those approximately 225 cases were not petitioned. George Simms agreed to consider looking into this issue.

V. The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.