



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROBATION COMMISSION
9150 EAST IMPERIAL HIGHWAY – DOWNEY – CALIFORNIA 90242
(562) 940-2754



MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 12, 2018

The regular meeting of the County of Los Angeles Probation Commission was held on Thursday, July 12, 2018 at the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, 7th floor, Conference Room 743, Los Angeles, California 90012

I. Commission President Joe Gardner welcomed all and called the meeting to order at 10:15 A.M. He informed the Commissioners and all present that the meeting was being recorded. He asked that all identify themselves prior to making any statements.

The following Commissioners were present:

1st Vice President Jan Levine
Commissioner Meredith
Commissioner Martinez
Commissioner Caster
Commissioner Kaplan
Commissioner Mitchell
Commissioner Shutan
Commissioner Butler
Commissioner Herbon
Commissioner Quintana

The following Commissioners were not present:

2nd Vice President Seaver
Commissioner Yamashiro
Commissioner Hoover

Commissioners

Joe Gardner-President,
Hon. Jan Levine (Ret.)-1st Vice President, Daniel Seaver – 2nd Vice President,
Donald Meredith-Sergeant at Arms, Azael Martinez-Sonoqui, Cyn Yamashiro, Esq.,
Jacqueline Caster, Esq, Jo Kaplan Esq, Olivia E. Mitchell, Peter Shutan,
Zachary Hoover, Hon. Betsy Butler (Ret.), Randy Herbon, Jessica Quintana

The following staff were present:

Sheila Mitchell, Chief Deputy
Luis Dominguez, Acting Deputy Director
Tiana Murillo, Chief of Staff
Genesis Cervantes, Staff Assistant

The following individuals were present:

Ramon Quintana
Maureen Pacheco
Eduardo Mundo
Diana Velasquez
Tyson Nelson
Natasha Khamashta
Garrett Giffin
Nicole Davis Tinkerhim

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Shutan made a motion to approve the minutes of June 28, 2018 with amendments to the list of individuals that were present at the meeting. Commissioner Martinez seconded the motion and minutes were approved.

III. LOS ANGELES COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Report Back on Final Policy of W.I.C 210.6

Acting Deputy Director Luis Dominguez clarified the W.I.C 210.6 policy does apply to the use of handcuffs. In regards to bringing youth handcuffed to court, Acting Deputy Director Dominguez stated it is not in their policy to bring youth handcuffed to court unless requested by the court. The court will be required to fill out documentation forms if there is a request to bring youth in handcuffs. In terms of shackling youth for transportation, a decision will be made by the Probation Officer on a case by case basis. The Probation Department has already incorporated procedures. Acting Deputy Director Luis Dominguez stated the policy is still in draft form and should be finalized by September 2018. An update will be provided in 30 days.

Maureen Pacheco from the Public Defender's Office stated her concern with the implementation of the new policy and inquired if the decision to transport youth in handcuffs is based on behavior in the facility. Acting Deputy Director Luis Dominguez stated in the past there have been youth who have attempted assaults on one another. The Probation Department wants to ensure the safety of staff and youth and will take youth's behavior into consideration. Acting Deputy Director Dominguez clarified youth with mental health concerns will be assigned a staff member to look after them and will not be handcuffed.

Ombudsman Update

Chief Deputy Sheila Mitchell discussed the feasibility of dedicated rooms in the facilities to call the Ombudsman. Chief Mitchell stated the Probation Department would have to move the payphones which requires extensive work. The Probation Department will first evaluate the effectiveness of the new speed dial to the Ombudsman. Chief Deputy Sheila Mitchell stated Georgetown did not recommend for the Ombudsman to be an individual outside the Probation Department. The Probation Department has selected a new Ombudsman and this person is currently undergoing a background check. The Ombudsman will be an office of three staff operators.

Commissioner Caster inquired about the grievance phoneline confidentiality. Chief Deputy Sheila Mitchell stated youth have unimpeded access and privacy to make phone calls. Acting Deputy Director Luis Dominguez stated if youth want to call anyone other than the Ombudsman the youth must notify staff and staff dial the phone call. Commissioner Caster stated with this practice staff will be aware when youth are calling the Ombudsman. Chief Deputy Mitchell stated although staff may be aware youth are dialing the Ombudsman, the nature of the call will remain private.

Commissioner Caster inquired on youth reporting grievances to staff. Acting Deputy Director Luis Dominguez stated that youth may report grievances to any staff including teachers, mental health providers, and/or volunteers.

Commissioner Herbon inquired if the Probation Department has considered using the conference rooms in the facilities for Ombudsman phone calls since video conference rooms give youth enough privacy. Acting Deputy Director Luis Dominguez stated that they have taken that idea into consideration and it is an option.

Commissioner Caster inquired if all youth are seen by mental health providers since there are youth that have been in custody for 2-3 years. Chief Deputy Mitchell stated youth are seen by mental health providers at some point. Commissioner Caster inquired if youth are aware that they may call the Ombudsman at any time as well as how to file grievances and if staff know how to process requests for services. Acting Deputy Director Luis Dominguez stated youth are aware they may file grievance or request for health services. Grievances are handled by Grievance Officers and health services requests are handled by Medical or Mental Health Services. Chief Deputy Mitchell stated there is signage throughout the facilities regarding the Ombudsman and the Probation Department is working on updating the Youth Orientation Guide video to inform youth on how to file grievances and request for services.

Commissioner Martinez inquired who the Ombudsman Office will report to. Chief Mitchell stated the Ombudsman Office will report to the Bureau Chief of Internal Affairs.

Commissioner Martinez inquired the start date and operating hours of the new Ombudsman staff. Acting Deputy Director Luis Dominguez stated after the completion of the background check the new Ombudsman staff will most likely begin in September

2018. Chief Deputy Mitchell will discuss with the Bureau Chief of Internal Affairs regarding hours of operation.

Mr. Mundo inquired about the average length of stay of youth in custody. Chief Deputy Sheila Mitchell stated the average length of stay for youth in juvenile halls is 15 days. At a future meeting the Probation Department can present and distribute a histogram that shows various data on the average length of stay of youth in custody.

Ms. Pacheco inquired if there is an appeals process. Acting Deputy Director Luis Dominguez stated there is an appeals process which consist of a form that goes through a granted or denied process. If the grievance is granted it is signed off by the Supervisor. If the grievance is not granted the minor can appeal to a Supervisor who can then appeal the grievance to the facility Director.

Progress of Recruitment Process

Chief of Staff Tiana Murillo stated the Probation Department has a team, with the leadership of the Human Resources Manager and Human Resources Consultants, with a plan in place to conduct a comprehensive review of about 15 job classifications. The team will insure the job description reflects what the job is and appropriately reflect rehabilitative language. The team will begin with the sworn classifications. The team, comprise of Probation Department leaders in both adult and juvenile operations, staff training, and Human Resources, have drafted first level comprehensive edits to 6 classifications including Group Supervisor, Nights (GSN), Detention Services Officers (DSO), Senior Detention Services Officers, Supervising Detention Services Officers (SDSO), Supervising Transportation Deputy, and Transportation Deputy. The team will get through 15 classifications at which point the team will engage with the Probation Department's labor partners for discussion and agreements. The changes will be submitted in a Board Letter for the approval of the Board of Supervisors. The team is expected to complete the first level edits of the first 15 classifications by September 1st, 2018.

Commissioner Meredith discussed that while working in the Probation Officer Academy he has observed that many new recruits have diverse backgrounds. Commissioner Meredith has concerns the Probation Department will lose recruits who are placed in positions that may not be fit because their degrees and backgrounds are overlooked. Chief Shelia Mitchell stated recruits are hired based on their qualifications. Commissioner Meredith mentioned many recruits who have degrees and credentials do not get Deputy Probation Officer II positions. Acting Deputy Director Luis Dominguez stated if the issue is raised to the Probation Department it may be rectified.

Commissioner Butler requested retention numbers from the Probation Department.

Commissioner Herbon stated he has concerns with the hiring process and inquired about the process of new recruits who are college graduates. Chief of Staff Tiana Murillo stated the Probation Department does not have data of new recruits with college

degrees. Commissioner Herbon stated the data can aid the placement process. Commissioner Herbon is concerned the Probation Department does not have the statistics to improve the recruitment system. Ms. Murillo stated the Probation Department is acting on recruitment issues. Recently the Probation Department allocated for the hiring of a Manager for the recruitment unit effective July 1, 2018. The Probation Department is in the process of hiring an Assistant Probation Director to staff the recruitment unit. At the moment, the recruitment unit has been run by HR Staff but they are looking to fill the dedicated position to focus on recruitment. The Probation Department plans to fill the position within a month.

Commissioner Meredith stated there is no excuse for a department as big as Probation to have data issues. Commissioner Meredith stated the Board of Supervisors needs to approve a data system. Chief of Staff Tiana Murillo stated the Probation Department has requested budgeting and resources for new data systems. Ms. Murillo stated there is training data that can be shared on training but there is work that must be done to improve the Probation Department's data systems.

President Gardner stated the Probation Commission is willing to advocate resources for the Probation Department. Commissioner Kaplan proposed the drafting of a letter to the Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Kaplan stressed the importance of clarity in the Probation Department's job descriptions. Chief Deputy Sheila Mitchell stated the Probation Department is clear on the kind of staff they want, but even though there may be an ideal candidate the labor union must agree.

Commissioner Caster inquired about the Probation Department handling culture change within Probation Officers. Chief Deputy Sheila Mitchell stated that the Probation Department is in the process of recruiting the right kind of candidates, but it is important to mentor and review with Probation Officers what is expected of them in following the Probation Department's mission. Ms. Murillo stated there are efforts being made such as extending the Academy Training by 4-weeks. Ms. Murillo stated there is room for improvement on how the Probation Department uses performance evaluation. Commissioner Caster requested for a report back on progress to improve the usage of the evaluation process for a future meeting.

Commissioner Herbon inquired if the Probation Department have gone to veteran fairs. Ms. Murillo stated they have gone to veteran and minority fairs for recruitment.

Commissioner Kaplan requested an answer from Human Resources (HR) on their hiring process and why veterans or potential candidates are not getting positions.

Ms. Pacheco inquired the start date of the additional 4-week training Probation staff will receive. Acting Deputy Director Luis Dominguez mentioned the additional training pilot program began at Central Juvenile Hall. Commissioner Meredith stated the 4-week extension training will begin in August.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

V. OLD AND CONTINUED BUSINESS

President Gardner discussed the pending agenda items list attached to the agenda as Agenda Item 8 and asked the Commission to review the list for any additions. President Gardner asked Chief Deputy Mitchell to provide dates for responses.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Meredith announced August 24th, 2018 will mark the 50th anniversary of the loss of 7 inmate firefighters and a fire in Glendora at St. Lucy's. On September 2nd, 2018 marks the 63rd anniversary of the loss of 5 inmates and Captain Glenn Rockey in the Hacienda Heights Fire. Commissioner Meredith will share any further information on the recognitions.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The L.A.C.D.P.O Union's 15th annual scholarship and awards banquet will take place on August 10, 2018 at 6:00 P.M. at the Sheraton Universal Hotel, 333 Universal Hollywood Drive, Universal City.

There will be a Use of Force Training for Leadership, coordinated by Deputy Director Dave Mitchell. Set dates will be announced in September.

Commissioner Kaplan discussed for the first time at Central Juvenile Hall there was a graduation held for the youth who were graduating from high school which was a suggestion made by the Commission.

Chief Deputy Sheila Mitchell shared Deputy Director Dave Mitchell is in Nashville accepting a National Association of Counties (NACO) award for the innovated work at Campus Kilpatrick. The Commission congratulated the Probation Department.

Chief Deputy Sheila Mitchell announced there will be a Kitten Program at Camp Scott for the youth to care for kittens with the possibility of interning at the Los Angeles County Department of Animal Control.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Meredith moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Shutan seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 A.M.