



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
PROBATION COMMISSION
9150 EAST IMPERIAL HIGHWAY – DOWNEY – CALIFORNIA 90242
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MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 14, 2016

The regular meeting of the County of Los Angeles Probation Commission was held on Thursday, July 14, 2016 at the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, room 140, Los Angeles, California 90012.

I. President Gardner called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. He informed the Commissioners and all present that the meeting was being recorded for purposes of increasing accuracy of the minutes. He asked that all identify themselves prior to any statements,

The following Commissioners were present:

1st Vice President Levine
2nd Vice President Hollopeter
3rd Vice President Seaver
Commissioner Caster
Commissioner Jones
Commissioner Butler
Commissioner Mitchell

The following Commissioners were not present:

Commissioner Holt
Commissioner Hoover
Commissioner Kaplan
Commissioner Meredith
Commissioner Martinez
Commissioner Yamashiro
Commissioner Shutan

The following were present:

Dennis Carroll, Bureau Chief, Detention Services Bureau
Melissa Soto
Stan Ricketts
Dave Evans
Aaron Broom
Patricia Rodriguez
Patricia Rodriguez
Pamela Villanueva, Public Defender's office
Kaile Shilling, ARB for Incarcerated Youth network
Carrie Clarke, County Counsel
Vicki Kozilkoujelian, County Counsel
Nader Poursadeghi, Morrison
Dana Garcetti Boldt, Office of Independent Monitor
Scott Sanders
James T. Johnson
Nathan Martinez
Dominic Gonzales
Abby Sewell, LA Times

Commissioners

Joe Gardner-President,
Jan Levine-1st Vice President, Clayton Hollopeter-2nd Vice President, Daniel Seaver-3rd Vice President,
Donald Meredith-Sergeant at Arms, Azael Martinez-Sonoqui, Cyn Yamashiro, Esq.,
Fitzgerald Jones, Gabriella Holt, R.N. E.J.D. Jacqueline Caster, Esq, Jo Kaplan Esq,
Olivia E. Mitchell, Peter Shutan, Zachary Hoover, Betsy Butler

II. LOS ANGELES COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Bureau Chief Carroll identifies that he will be the presenter for the Department as well as others.

Bureau Chief Carroll begins with a Hope Center Update: As a reminder, the Hope Center at Central has been in operation since May 30, 2016. Detention Services Bureau is working to have additional Hope Centers open by August 1 to be able to meet direction of Board of Supervisor' motion. Two Hope Centers will open at Barry J Nidorff, one for the "unfit minors" and one for the general population. At Los Padrinos, the Hope Center will be co-ed.

Commissioner Seaver reminds all that the Commission has asked for regular updates regarding the use of the Hope Centers/ Special Handling Unit.

Bureau Chief Carroll confirmed that as requested, a 6 month review of the Special Handling Unit data was shared with Commissioners on June 22, 2016. Director Sanders agrees to provide this report once a month to Commissioners.

Commissioner Seaver requests information regarding training to staff.

Director Sanders explains the two prong approach on training for staff so they can be clear of the "mind shift" as well as change in policy. Town hall meetings were held with staff as well as trainings regarding aggression replacement training, de-escalation training and 'trauma-informed care' trainings. In this respect, Detention Services Bureau was well poised to support changes quickly. Director. Sanders acknowledged progress and impact in the Bureau where any challenge is met with intention to be resolved before sending staff out to the Hope Center. He also recognizes that staff has launched the new practice with success as all minors walk the Hope Center when necessary. This is a 'big picture' change in practice and staff has responded well to the shift in mindset.

Commissioner Seaver expressed strong desire to support staff so that they feel prepared and fortified in the implementation of this new policy since it may create increased pressure on staff during the transition. He believes training and support will empower staff for greater adherence to the policy. Commissioner Seaver requested continued updates on progress of training and staff development.

Internal Services Division (ISD) will be painting and moving furniture at the juvenile halls. Commissioner Kaplan suggests that computers should be added to the Hope Center where youth can do other things including job search and career exploration. Bureau Chief Carroll confirms that this can be done by Probation.

Director Ricketts, Superintendent of Central juvenile hall, shared a narrative that expressed an understanding of the growth being sought from all staff from a custodial mindset to a treatment mindset. There is a clear understanding the new practice is better for youth and staff after they conduct the trainings and town hall discussions. Staff responded well to the Aggression Replacement Therapy training where new policy was discussed.

Director Ricketts stated that initially some staff expressed a very limited view and had concerns, but after the training staff were more comfortable with path forward.

Commissioner Seaver inquire if staff had enough support or they had identify what is needed? Director Ricketts responded that staff needs support from supervisors, mental health and partners to intervene or 'tap out' when necessary. Commissioner Shutan explored the support offered to staff when they are asked to step back or take a break in the 'tap out' experience. Director Ricketts acknowledge that training and experience helps staff understand tools to be more effective. He shared that part of the professional development of all Probation staff is to develop the skills to be effective in supporting the youth's growth. The Hope Center is an opportunity for a youth to learn and develop a tool for greater capacity, and to deal with life challenges in a healthy way. Commission Seaver reminds all that the skills learned at the camp can be a powerful intervention to deter any further engagement with the justice system.

Commissioner Caster inquired on the changes being made at the Academy training level to introduce the "new" mindset instead of the obsolete approach. She also inquired for the status of the Restorative Justice training with Centinela Youth Services. Bureau Chief. Carroll expressed his desire to initiate training at the Academy is to empower officers with new skills, including Aggression Replacement Therapy and De-escalation training starting in with the next cohort in July, 2016; In order to best equipped staff with appropriate mind-set. He also shared that contact has been made with Centinela Youth Services and a meeting date and time has been scheduled.

The Commission is informed that Dialectical Behavior Therapy will be used at Barry J. Nidorff juvenile hall where youth are in detention for longer periods. Bureau Chief Mitchell will use Dialectical Behavior Therapy at camps as youth are engaged for 5 to 9 months. For shorter periods of youths in detention at juvenile halls, Aggression Regression Therapy is considered to be more effective.

Bureau Chief Carroll shared a data summary of Hope Center use from Central juvenile hall for June, 2016: 63 minors were referred to the Hope Center. 55 of those youth participated in Aggression Replacement Therapy. 4 youth participated through Operation Read to support literacy all youths are assessed for literacy. Operation Read can support outside of the Hope Center. Most youth are in the Hope Center for 45 to 60 minutes and stay no more than 90 minutes.

President Gardner inquire on information regarding parent engagement. Director Ricketts explained that LACOE has an ongoing parent workshop on Sundays were he estimates 15 to 17 parent participation each session. Commissioners expressed concern that participation is low and encouraged efforts to increase parent engagement. Central juvenile hall hosted mothers' and fathers' days' activities. Staff worked with Victory Outreach to bring low-rider cars to the juvenile hall. Mental Health, Department of Public Social Services & Los Angeles County Library are also made available to parents and offer food and music. The goal is to have a 'fair' style day instead of a detention facility atmosphere.

Commissioner Seaver inquire if "isolation units" would continue to be observed and if any Commissioner has visited Central Juvenile Hall.

Director Ricketts explained that some youth would be on a 'cool down' period and possibly be on enhanced supervision, where a deputy was assigned to watch the youth. He clarified that there is a mental health unit that exists independent of the Hope Center.

President Gardner requested to discuss questions on visitations and Title 15 standards that were identified by Commissioner Hollopeter.

Director Sanders begins by explaining that Los Angeles County offers more opportunities to visit than is required by minimum standards. Currently, visitation is available 2 hours on Saturdays, 3 hours on Sundays, and special visits if a parent cannot come on the weekends and also after court. Commissioner Hollopeter provided a list of questions for the Department response, the responses are as follows:

1. What are the policies and procedures and how are they shared?

Director Sanders responded that visiting policies are posted at every facility and are given to each youth and parent/guardian at every intake. All staff are aware.

2. Are parents viewed as suspicious?

Director Sanders responded that no they are not viewed as suspicious. They are 'wanded' as they enter a facility as a means of keeping parent and youth and staff safe.

3. Are visiting parents made to feel welcome by staff and leadership?

Director Sanders responded that yes, parents are welcomed. They are shown to the visitation area and staff is available to answer any questions they may have.

4. Is parking available for visiting parents?

Director Sanders responded that parents/guardians are able to use general parking areas at all facilities. Parking is available but limited. If there is a disability involved, accommodations are made where possible.

5. Is transportation provided or made available for parents utilizing public transportation?

Bureau Chief Carroll responded that Mental Health will pick up parents if there is no other means of transportation. Commissioner Levine inquire if services are restricted to youths receiving Mental Health services? Bureau Chief Carroll will confirm the extent and limitations of this service before his next visit to the Probation Commission meeting. Commissioner Caster would also like to know how parents are made aware of the services.

6. Is there a "host-guide" available to greet the parents, notify the dorm that a youth's parents are there, and escort the parents to visiting areas?

Director Sanders responded that yes, staff is assigned to greet and clear visitors and then escort to day room or visitation area. Depending on the weather or facility, some visits are allowed on picnic tables or chairs outside.

7. Is there a suitable area? Are refreshments provided? Ice water? Snacks?

Director Sanders informed that each location has a designated area that varies given the location. Ice water is provided. Snacks are not provided during visiting as there is a set schedule for meals and snacks. All families are welcome in the Day Room. Families may bring in items for special visits and these are arranged on a case by case basis by the case worker. Due to safety and security of minors and staff this is a limited option.

8. May a family visit outside of established visiting hours?

Director Sander's responded that yes, special visits are available on a case by case basis as arranged by the caseworker.

9. May persons significant to the youth visit i.e. grandparents, uncles, siblings?

Director Sanders responded that in most cases, grandparents, & parents/guardians are approved visitors.

Special visits that are arranged may include siblings or other relatives. If family members would like to add their names to the approved list for regular visits, they can request a petition to the court. We welcome all persons who are on the approved list.

10. May families provide 'personal items' for their child? (I.e. deodorant, body lotion, tooth paste)?

Director Sanders responded that all youth are provided with standard supplies. In general, personal items are not allowed from the outside.

11. Are youths with parents that cannot attend visiting days given additional telephone access to call home?

Director Sanders stated all youth receive one call a week. If a youth does not have a visit, they can arrange for a phone call.

Commissioner Caster inquired on the use of Skype or 'Face time' if a parent cannot attend a visit? Director Sanders stated at this time, these services are not available to youth. Bureau Chief Carroll expressed that video conferencing is available at some locations and other strategies can be explored for future opportunities.

Commissioner Hollopeter expressed desire to emphasize that parents have the right to visit and must be welcomed to visit and support their child during detention periods. Bureau Chief Carroll extends the thought to include a desire for parents to know the progress at school and overall well-being of the youths. Director Sanders reminds all the Barry J. Nidorff has a PTA (Parent Teacher Association).

Director Evans, Superintendent Barry J. Nidorff shares that a robust engagement exists through a once a month Saturday PTA meetings are held and supported by Probation and Los Angeles County Office of Education staff.

Outreach has been done through the Family Resource Center. The principal reports ongoing dialogue, issue identification and resolution and a valuable opportunity for families.

Commissioner Seaver acknowledges the challenge in working to engage families and to track their activity. He reflects that it is valuable to know how many families do and how many do not participate as it reflects a reality about the challenges the youth face in transitioning through and out of camp.

Commissioner Holloperter recalled recommendations made previously regarding greater access to halls using bus routes. He recounts the need to increase access and to advocate for action from Metro to increase services through public transportation.

Commissioner Seaver updates group about the work with Supervisor Ridley Thomas' deputies for transportation and Probation. They have had conversations with Metro to begin exploring possible action.

Commissioner Caster would like to know if there is any way to incentivize parents to increase their engagement during their child's detention.

Bureau Chief Carroll suggests that by having programs on the weekends, parents may also increase participation. He reminds all that many parents are working to keep jobs and have great challenges to engage in the visitation schedule. He hears the need to continue to make a strong effort to work with families.

Director James T. Johnson, Superintendent of Los Padrinos shares that maintenance projects have been completed on this site. Los Padrinos has increased safety and recreation space by removing gopher holes and tree trunk roots that were exposed. Volleyball and basketball courts are now available. Tutoring services are now available at one unit from 6:00-7:30 pm on Monday and Tuesday and are provided by a Reserved Deputy Probation Officer. Other programming is provided by Mission College for youth to earn college credits and a new pilot is developing in partnership with LACOE and Probation that will inspire youth to continue their education even after earning a diploma.

Commissioner Jones inquired on the screening and training for the reserve officers. He wonders if their skill level is aligned to their ability to meet needs of youth. Commissioner Shutan commends staff for using the reserves in increasing capacity of the Department. He also urges Bureau Chief Carroll to continue to build and expand the use of the reserve officers. Commissioner Shutan believes there are approximately 60 to 100 reserves in the Department.

Director Johnson shared that reserve officers who were interested have gone through a three week course with the Probation Education Director in order to provide the tutoring.

President Gardner requested for Bureau Chief Carroll to inform Bureau Chief Mitchell for the next meeting. The Commission would like an update on the Capital Improvements projects as well as a date on when Camp Miller is expected to be closed. President Gardner has requested to table the report on Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act as Monica Garcia is not present.

President Gardner requested for Bureau Chief Carroll to share information regarding the use of force incident at Barry J. Nidorff in April. Bureau Chief Carroll shared that due to the investigation is currently ongoing and is a personnel matter, information is limited. At some point the report will be sent to operations and then a determination will be made at that time. Commissioner Caster inquire if there was any grievance filed from the youth involved in the April incident prior to the incident. Bureau Chief Carroll confirms that there was a grievance however, he cannot discuss due to the ongoing investigation. Commission Caster also inquired if the deputies in question had ever been involved in any disciplinary action issued against them in past. The information cannot be discussed due to the ongoing investigation.

One Commissioner inquired as to the communication protocol going forward to inform Commissioners about incidents as they occur. Bureau Chief Carroll confirms that this topic is being discussed with Chief Remington.

Commissioner Levine revisits the request from Commission to be informed by the Department about significant incidents. She requests that this report back on the status of leadership conversation be placed on agenda for the first meeting of August.

III. NEW BUSINESS

President Gardner requested for Commissioners review the following minutes.

Commissioner Seaver moves approval of minutes for April 14, 2016. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Butler. Minutes were approved.

Commissioner Caster moved approval of minutes for June 9, 2016. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Levine. Minutes were approved. Commissioner Seaver abstained.

A Commissioner Butler moved approval of minutes for June 23, 2013. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Jones. Commissioner Seaver abstained. Minutes were approved.

A set of minutes for April 25, 2016 were available for review and will be on the agenda at the next meeting for approval.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

President Gardner tabled discussion on Capital Improvement Expenditures and the Fair Chance Initiative until the next meeting.

President Gardner reminds all Commissioners to submit activities for inclusion in the monthly recap report.

V.COMMISSION INSPECTION REPORTS

Inspection report from Commissioner Martinez visit of July 2 will be tabled.

Inspection report from Commissioner Levine and Yamishiro will be tabled to discuss with Bureau Chief Mitchell. Commissioner Levine did not see anything that needed immediate correction or attention.

Inspection report of Camp Rockey was completed by Commissioner Gardner. He did not find any glaring problems outside the aging facility.

VI. COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORTS

Nothing to report.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Butler invited all Commissioners to attend a Prison Project event on August 4, 2016 at Walden House to support a re-entry program. The event is from 10:30 am -1:30 pm. Commissioner Butler and Commissioner Mitchell visited the Inside - Out Writers workshop where she collected writing from youth throughout state if anyone is interested to view she will gladly share a copy.

Commissioner Mitchell shared some reflections from her visit to Los Padrinos and expressed urgency to do more for individuals and community. She advised this will be included in the report that will be submitted.

Commissioner Butler also shared reflections and concern about her experience especially as it related to the use of psychotropic medication.

President Gardner reminded all that Probation Week is July 17 through 23. He also reminded all that a presentation would be made to the Oversight Work Group on August 17 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. He invited all Commissioners to attend and provide moral support.

Commissioner Seaver, Mitchell, Hollopeter, Levine and Gardner will be attending the Housekeeping Inspection meeting with Bureau Chief Carroll on July 29 at 10:00 a.m. at Los Padrinos. Bureau Chief Carroll advised all that staff is not aware of the visit. Commissioner Mitchell shared that she may have alerted staff as she arrived at Los Padrinos on June 29 and summonsed all present before she realized the meeting was in July.

Commissioner Hollopeter requests that a discussion of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy be added to a future agenda. He referenced Commission minutes of March, 2016 where Dave Mitchell refers to Dialectical Behavior Therapy as a foundation piece of the work with youth and research he did online. He submitted research to the Chair for dissemination to Commissioners.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

A speaker addressed the Commission, he introduced Kailee Schilling with Arts for Incarcerated Youth and expressed desire for Commission to receive a presentation from this group at a future meeting.

Commissioner Butler reiterates concern that Commissioner Mitchell raised regarding choices for girls' underwear in the halls. Bureau Chief Carroll suggested the Commission could hear from procurement staff to be informed about options at a future meeting.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioners Seaver moved to adjourn the meeting. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Levine and meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.