



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY YOUTH COMMISSION
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 374-A
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012**
<https://youthcommission.lacounty.gov>

Thursday, May 25, 2023

6:30 PM



Video for the entire meeting. (23-2090)

Attachments: [Video](#)

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Land Acknowledgment. (23-1939)

Co-Chair Amanda Hernandez called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. County Staff conducted Roll Call, and Commissioner Clarissa Pena read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

Present: Co-Chair Amanda Hernandez, Co-Chair Ricardo Ortega Martinez Jr., Commissioner La'Toya Cooper, Commissioner Joshua Elizondo, Commissioner Luisa Flores Urrutia, Commissioner Jacob Jackson, Commissioner Clarissa Peña, Commissioner Brittianna Robinson and Commissioner Florencia Flo Valenzuela

Absent: Commissioner Ezekiel Nishiyama, Commissioner Myriah Smiley and Commissioner Angela Young

2. Approval of minutes from the April 27, 2023 meeting. (23-1635)

On motion of Co-Chair Ortega Martinez, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Cooper, and duly carried (Co-Chair Hernandez abstaining and Commissioners Nishiyama, Smiley, and Young being absent), the minutes from the meeting of April 27, 2023 were approved.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. REPORTS

3. Leadership Report. (23-1940)

Co-Chair Hernandez reported the following:

- **There will be a training/enrichment retreat in June. The retreat will provide the opportunity to learn about the Commission's role and how it can expand service to the Community.**
- **The open vacancies on the Commission are currently being filled.**

III. PRESENTATIONS

4. Presentation by Youth Justice Reimagine on the status of their work and youth engagement. (23-1949)

Commissioner Jackson facilitated the presentation by Youth Justice Reimagined and discussed the importance of their work with youth engagement. He emphasized the Commission's need to stay engaged in systems that impact youth and suggested that the best way to accomplish this is to have spaces within the community that are easily accessed by youth.

He introduced Marjan Goudarzi, Program Manager, Department of Youth Development, and Kruti Parekh, Healing and Justice Coach, Youth Justice Reimagined (YJR). Commissioners reviewed and discussed a statement from YJR that highlighted YJR's new vision for youth engagement, and the issues of incarcerated youth, the work of the Youth Justice Work Group, the need for resources and for the youth to be reconnected to their families. Most importantly, for the youth voice to be included in all decisions regarding their personal wellbeing.

Ms. Goudarzi, presented the Heart of Youth Justice Reimagined (Heart of YJR), and highlighted the following:

- **The Heart of YJR is a space to support youth leadership and youth engagement within the Youth Justice Advisory Group (YJAG) and YJR work.**
- **It serves as an entry point for youth to be introduced to the work of the YJR and supports the development of youth leaders.**

- It creates a space that recommends long-term strategies for youth engagement in the Department of Youth Development (DYD), including compensation.
- It serves to inform the growth and development of the DYD in equitably supporting young people's voices and leadership.

Ms. Parekh reported that Heart of YJR believes that it is important to go beyond the data, it is crucial to lift the voices of youth with lived experience as there is no accountability without their voice.

It is a space where the community can engage with youth to inform the work groups, learn, and get involved. The Heart of YJR was created to ensure that no matter how the DYD was developed, the community stayed informed. It also provides a welcome space for those youth returning from lockup along with resources for the youth and their families, and it holds the DYD accountable for lifting up youth voices.

Ms. Goudarzi then highlighted the following:

- Outreach
 - Youth Building Networks
 - Schools and systems impacted youth
- Relationship/Capacity Building
 - Circle Sharing
 - Special Events
 - Listening Sessions
 - Resource Support
- Emergency Response Coordination
 - Create strategic methods and supports
 - Respond to urgent needs
 - Build momentum around youth in vulnerable environments
- Accountability Structure
 - Build dialogue with youth
 - Create a pathway for youth feedback
 - Center youth voice within work groups

Ms. Parekh provided meeting information and invited Commissioners to attend.

Co-Chair Hernandez inquired as to the age range of the youth being engaged. Commissioner Jackson responded that the focus is middle and high school age youth, although, the age will differ based on those incarcerated. Ms. Parekh added that all ages are welcomed into the Heart of YJR space.

Co-Chair Hernandez also inquired as to the reception from schools. Commissioner Jackson indicated that the schools are receptive, and communication is ongoing.

Co-Chair Ortega Martinez, Jr., inquired if YJR is collaborating with the DYD and their pilot programs in the three regional areas: Antelope Valley, East Los Angeles and South Los Angeles. Ms. Goudarzi responded that some of the outreach networks overlap with the pilot regions. However, they are working to engage young people throughout the County. Co-Chair Ortega Martinez, Jr., stressed the uniqueness of each District. Ms. Goudarzi responded that they working to get young people out of probation and get them into new spaces within the community, and discussion ensued. During discussion, the importance of mobilizing all County departments to get involved, and to review the Department of Probation budget was suggested.

Commissioner Elizondo inquired if there was an age limit for participation. Ms. Goudarzi indicated that anyone could participate, and it can go all the way up to 30. However, Ms. Parekh clarified that to obtain the participation stipend, one must identify as a youth on the registration form.

Commissioner Jackson indicated that outreach is taking place at El Camino College, and Commissioner Peña spoke about Project Rebound, and various Commissioners discussed their interest in getting colleges in their Districts involved in outreach.

IV. COMMITTEE UPDATES

5. Ad Hoc Committee on Policy and Programming update by Florencia Valenzuela, Chair, Ad-Hoc Committee on Policy and Programming. (23-1948)

Commissioner Florencia Valenzuela, Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Policy and Programming, reported that the Ad Hoc Committee was created to evaluate all County departments and to provide recommended report cards on their service and engagement with youth. It was also created to recommend three policy focuses for the YC, they identified Homelessness, Juvenile Justice, and Universal Basic Income. The report card has been developed with a concentration on two main departments, DCFS, and the Probation Department (Probation). The initial structure of the report card has been developed. However, the report card will have to be reviewed by commissioners to ensure that DCFS is appropriately serving youth. The Probation report card is pending greater participation by impacted youth.

Commissioner Valenzuela reported that the Ad Hoc Committee on Policy and Programming has been sunsetted since commission bylaws state that ad hoc committees must address short term matters/issues or projects of less than one year.

Co-Chair Ortega Martinez, Jr., commended Dr. Wendy Wiegmann, Project Director, California Child Welfare Indicators Project, University of California, Berkley, who offered her guidance during the report card development process. He also commended La'Mikia Castillo, Castillo Consulting, and Commissioners Nishiyama and Valenzuela, Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Committee for their work.

- 6. Youth Engagement Committee update by La'Toya Cooper, Chair, Youth Engagement Committee. (23-1947)**

Commissioner La Toya Cooper, Chair, Youth Engagement Committee (YEC), reported that the YEC will hold an in-person meeting on Monday, June 12, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. She will keep the Commission informed as to any changes.

She reported that the next Listening Session will be held in the Fourth Supervisorial District on June 17, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. at Don Knabe Regional Park in Cerritos. Commissioner Robinson informed that the public pool facilities will be open at the park on that day.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7. Operations Committee update by Joshua Elizondo, Chair, Operations Committee and Recommendation to Approve the Nomination of At-Large Youth Commission Candidate. (23-1944)**

Commissioner Elizondo, Chair, Operations Committee (OPS), reported that the last OPS meeting was held on May 15, 2023, where the OPS is in the current recruitment process, and timelines were discussed. The next meeting will be held on July 17, 2023, where an in-depth review of the same topics will take place along with material editing. He then reported the following:

The two At-Large Youth Commission candidate nominations of Evelyn Rodriguez and Martine Jones were approved by the Board of Supervisors at their May 16, 2023 meeting. They will join the Commission as soon as the onboarding process has been completed.

Commissioner Elizondo's resignation from the At-Large position and subsequent appointment to the "Board Appointed" position created an

"at-large" position vacancy. After the application and interview process, Sherry Bradford was selected as the OPS recommendation for the At-Large position. Commissioner Elizondo is seeking the Commission's approval of her nomination.

On motion of Commissioner Elizondo, seconded by Commissioner Jackson, and duly carried (Commissioners Nishiyama, Smiley and Young being absent), the nomination of Sherry Bradford for the At-Large position was approved by the Youth Commission to be presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

Commissioner Elizondo clarified that the newly appointed Commissioners Evelyn Rodriguez and Martine Jones will be attending the June 3rd retreat as seated Commissioners. Ms. Bradford was invited to attend the retreat as a member of the public.

- 8. Recommendation of a new Ad Hoc to create a recommended report card for Probation and DCFS. (23-1945)**

Commissioner Valenzuela facilitated a discussion on the need for an Ad Hoc Committee for the purpose of finalizing the report card for DCFS and Probation. Commissioner Robinson asked how the Committee will be able to engage with youth when probation camps and juvenile halls are to be shut down. Commissioner Peña responded that the Ad Hoc Committee would determine the process. Commissioner Cooper questioned the participation process. Co-Chair Ortega Martinez, Jr., advised that the Ad Hoc Committees must be less than a quorum, however, they are not subject to Brown Act requirements and will be allowed to hold meetings online.

After discussion, on motion of Commissioner Valenzuela, seconded by Co-Chair Ortega Martinez, Jr., and duly carried (Commissioners Nishiyama, Smiley and Young being absent), the Youth Commission approved the creation of an Ad Hoc Committee to create recommended report cards for DCFS and Probation for the commission's approval, with a one year term.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

- 9. Opportunity for members of the public to provide comments to the Commission on item(s) of interest that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission. (23-1941)**

Kate from the California Youth Commission addressed the Commission.

10. Commissioner discussion of matters not posted on the agenda, to be considered, and placed on the agenda at a future meeting of the Commission. (23-1942)

Commissioner Valenzuela requested that the Department of Children and Family Services be invited for a discussion on their strategy and outreach for youth engagement. Commissioner Robinson suggested that having system involved youth also attend would be helpful in obtaining another viewpoint.

11. Adjournment. (23-1943)

Co-Chair Hernandez adjourned the meeting in memory of Moses D. Cooper, father of Commissioner La'Toya Cooper. A video was presented of Supervisor Holly Mitchell adjourning in his honor at the May 16, 2023, Board of Supervisors' meeting. After which, the Commission offered a moment of silence on behalf of Mr. Cooper.

On motion of Co-Chair Ortega Martinez, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Flores Urrutia, there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.