



**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, October 26, 2023

6:30 PM



Video for the entire meeting. (23-4024)

Attachments: [VIDEO](#)

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Land Acknowledgment. (23-3864)

Co-Chair Ricardo Ortega Martinez, Jr. called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. County Staff conducted Roll Call, and Commissioner Peña read the County Land Acknowledgement Statement.

Present: Co-Chair Ricardo Ortega Martinez Jr., Commissioner La'Toya Cooper, Commissioner Joshua Elizondo, Commissioner Luisa Flores Urrutia, Commissioner Clarissa Peña, Commissioner Brittianna Robinson, Commissioner Evelyn Karina Rodriguez, Commissioner Myriah Smiley and Commissioner Angela Young

Absent: Co-Chair Amanda Hernandez, Commissioner Sherrie Bradford, Commissioner Martine Jones and Commissioner Flo Valenzuela

2. Approval of minutes from the September 28, 2023 meeting. (23-3865)

This item was tabled to allow sufficient time for Commissioners to review the minutes.

Later in the meeting, on motion of Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Cooper, and duly carried by the following vote, the minutes from the September 28, 2023 meeting were approved:

Ayes: 7 - Co-Chair Ricardo Ortega Martinez Jr., Commissioner La'Toya Cooper, Commissioner Joshua Elizondo, Commissioner Luisa Flores Urrutia, Commissioner Clarissa Peña, Commissioner Evelyn Karina Rodriguez and Commissioner Angela Young

Abstentions: 1 - Commissioner Brittianna Robinson

Absent: 5 - Co-Chair Amanda Hernandez, Commissioner Sherrie Bradford, Commissioner Martine Jones, Commissioner Myriah Smiley and Commissioner Florencia Flo Valenzuela

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. REPORTS

3. Executive Director Report. (23-3895)

Executive Director Tiara Summers provided a brief report on the following:

- **The Department of Mental Health (DMH) is requesting Commissioner feedback regarding Mental Health Service Act Funding. She encouraged the Commissioners to respond to the email and provide their feedback so that a response can be forwarded to DMH.**
- **A candidate for the position of Senior Analyst has been selected and is currently awaiting Executive Office Leadership approval**

4. Leadership Report. (23-3866)

Co-Chair Ortega Martinez, Jr., provided the following report:

- **There is still time to attend the HIV Conference; Commissioners should reach out to staff if they are interested in attending.**
- **Co-Chair Ortega Martinez, Jr., will attend a Conference for Law Enforcement on Friday, October 27, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.; Commissioners are encouraged to attend.**
- **The Youth Banking Program has officially launched; Commissioner were encouraged to share the news.**
- **After review of Commissioner responses, the Commission will retain the structure of two Co-Chairs rather than a Chair and Vice Chair.**

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5. Operations Committee update by Committee Chair Joshua Elizondo. (23-3894)

Commissioner Joshua Elizondo, Chair, Operations Committee, reported that two new Youth Commissioners were approved by the Board of Supervisors at their October 17, 2023, Board meeting: Irving Leonardo Alvarez and Christian Gudiel. They are currently undergoing the onboarding process and they hope to attend the Commission Retreat on

6. Youth Engagement Committee update by Committee Chair La'Toya Cooper. (23-3870)

Commissioner La'Toya Cooper, Chair, Youth Engagement Committee (YEC), reported that the YEC will present a reference guide, survey questions and action plan to the Commission at the November 4th Retreat. The presentation will detail various aspects of listening sessions and will require input from all Commissioners.

Commissioner Elizondo provided an update on the success of the Third District Listening Session, held on October 21, 2023. He thanked Commissioners who attended and assisted in the planning and acknowledged the meaningful engagement of Supervisor Horvath with the youth in attendance.

III. DISCUSSIONS

7. Roundtable discussion with Kenneth Chancey and Kristen Square, Youth Advisory Board Coordinators of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. (23-3867)

Kenneth Chancey, Senior Manager of Special Youth Initiatives, and Kristen Square, Youth Advisory Board Coordinator, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), provided self-introductions and shared an overview of the recent \$15 million initiative funded by HUD for the Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP).

Mr. Chancey responded to questions posed by Commissioners as follows:

- **The age requirement for the YHDP is 18-24, however, it is a five-year program, so an individual enrolled by age 23 will remain in the program until age 28.**
- **Under a HUD restriction, there are no "startup" funds provided to the agencies, they must provide funding on their own, then invoice LAHSA for reimbursement. Private dollars are solicited for those nonprofit agencies who are unable to fund startup costs.**

- Regarding the challenges in SPA 1 (Antelope Valley area), Mr. Chancey indicated that each SPA determined their specific programs and funding levels. Also, LAHSA is looking at several pieces of curriculum with course outcomes so that there is collaboration toward the same goals. At the conclusion of YHDP there will be an impact evaluation with a series of recommendations. The barrier of the credit check was discussed, a fact that a youth, nor LAHSA, can circumvent. Interim housing is critically under-funded, many times creating a barrier for youth who have housing vouchers and rent guarantees.
- SPAs 2 and 7 developed their street outreach that allowed funds for the purchase of two vehicles so that they can transport youth to necessary appointments and errands. The SPAs had to justify the need for a vehicle and follow the public funding purchase requirements.
- Regarding the funding formula, the lead organization, and a number of youth, per SPA, voted on how funding would be divided. Essentially, it was determined that funds would be divided equally with funding caps, with an equal division of any residual funds.
- The Request for Proposal (RFP) process did not include a request to include how additional funding would be obtained to mitigate barriers to housing access, and discussion ensued.

Co-Chair Ortega Martinez, Jr., thanked the panelists for their presentation.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

8. Roundtable discussion with Brandon Nichols, Director, Department of Children and Family Services. (23-3869)

Brandon T. Nichols, Director, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), provided a high-level overview of the DCFS and the efforts made toward child safety within the child welfare system. He indicated that he would attend the Youth Commission meetings on a regular basis and will make himself readily available to answer questions regarding topics that are of interest to the Commission.

Director Nichols responded to questions posed by the Commission as follows:

- The Prevention Taskforce was initiated by Board motion and consists of seven department heads and the Executive Director of First 5 LA and is led by the Director of Public Social Service, Jackie Contreras. The first meeting will take place next week at which time there will be discussions on how to go about the work of the Taskforce. He believes there will be opportunity for youth and other stakeholders to participate, however, it has not been determined yet.

- Regarding the kinship connection, families now receive the same payment amount as non-kin caretakers. Also, families are offered various services such as mental health and trauma support. Families have access to wrap around service programs. There is a fairly new program called Family Urgent Response System (FURS). FURS serves as a hotline for caretakers who are struggling to take care of a child with trauma or hurtful behavior. Mental health support and crisis intervention are deployed to retain youth with the family. The Program has shown to be extremely successful in LA County.
- Studies are being conducted by UCLA regarding the outcomes of some of the initiatives that are underway. Upon conclusion of the study, Director Nichols will share the outcomes with the Commission. However, regarding racial disproportionality, in a three-year period since focusing on this issue, there has been a 42% decrease of African American children into the system. There was approximately 2,200 children a year entering the child welfare system; it is now down to approximately 1,300 children. Over the past nine months there has been an overall reduction of approximately 1,400 children entering the system.
- Once the meetings for the Prevention Taskforce are underway, Director Nichols will advise the Youth Commission of opportunities for their participation and involvement. Executive Director Summers, who also is a member of the Taskforce, clarified the current structure of the Taskforce.
- DCFS staff has no control over who calls into the DCFS Child Abuse Hotline. However, DCFS has been charged by the Board of Supervisors to develop an electronic system that can be accessed countywide as a referral program to services.
- In response to a discussion on the challenge of social workers in SPA 1, and the question about who is being hired, their experience and training, Director Nichols expounded on the challenges of location, turnover, inexperience, and the complexity of cases in the Antelope Valley. DCFS works closely with various universities regarding social worker programs. There are internship programs, and trainings completed within DCFS, and an approximate 7% to 8% attrition rate of social workers annually. Director Nichols encouraged Commissioners to lend their voice where possible for needed training and processes.
- The data regarding how many children come through the system that are CSEC involved (Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children) will be forwarded to the Commission. Discussion ensued regarding data collection and the data that the Youth Commission may be interested in.

Executive Director Summers suggested that the specific data desired from DCFS be discussed at the November Retreat so that Director Nichols is provided with appropriate direction.

- **A list of questions was provided to Director Nichols prior to the meeting. He indicated that he would respond to those specific questions via email.**

Member of the public, Kate from California Youth Connection, addressed the Commission.

IV. 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. (23-3871)

Members of the public, Josh Boykin and Elianna, California Youth Connection, addressed the Youth 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. (23-3872)

There were no matters requested for consideration on a future agenda.

- 11.** Adjournment. (23-3873)

On motion of Commissioner Smiley, seconded by Commissioner Rodriguez, there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.