

Connecticut Juvenile Training School
Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes, 4/28/14

Present: Karl Alston, Deputy Director, CSSD; Abby Anderson, Executive Director, Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance; Debra Bond, CJTS Clinical Director; James Connolly, Esq., Supervisory Assistant Public Defender; John DiPilla, CJTS Assistant Superintendent; Robert Francis, RYASAP/Catalyst for Community Change; William Rosenbeck, CJTS Superintendent; Ann Smith, JD, MBA, Executive Director, AFCAMP

Guests: Ken Mysogland, Director, Office of the Ombudsman
Jason Criscio, Deputy Superintendent, CSSD

Establishing a Quorum

Atty. Connolly acknowledged that with the members present a quorum is established.

Minutes

The March 17, 2014 meeting minutes were accepted as amended by Atty. Carino.

Membership

- Present Resident / Ex-Resident Voting Member
Atty. Connolly identified a resident to join the March meeting; however, as there was a disagreement on whether they would be appropriate due to behavioral issues that needed to be investigated they did not join. The current by-laws state a former resident can be considered for membership. Atty. Connolly recommends changing the by-laws to allow a current resident as he is concerned that the board would not know who the pool of former residents is. The other concern is figuring out the transportation issue. Mr. Rosenbeck stated that a former resident who is out in the community for a few months would be best suited. Our pool of former residents is growing as more and more of our kids are in the community for longer periods of time. The other concern is that we really want the current residents to focus on why they are here and not put them in special roles. We already have a mechanism for having their voice heard through the Student Council. Mr. Rosenbeck shared a memo from a communication a CJTS Clinician had with a former resident who is doing very well, as an example that there are currently kids on parole that we can look at. Ms. Anderson pointed out that with the Pueblo Girls Program we could look at a female and not just the male residents. However, as the girls' stay is much shorter that may be more difficult. Atty. Smith suggested that we discuss the selection and eligibility criteria. She also suggested we refer to them as "former students". Youth should have some say in suggesting a candidate rather than just choosing someone as we can miss an opportunity around community involvement.

Atty. Connolly suggests that the by-laws language be framed to allow us to make the decision to have a present or former resident from CJTS and the girls program. The selection criteria will not be in the by-laws. CJTS staff will have an opportunity to give feedback whether they agree on the candidate but the final selection will be up to the board members. Student council would be the mechanism to identify a potential candidate. We could invite the individual in for an interview. Members agreed to develop the selection criteria between this meeting and the next meeting. Members also agreed that the resident appointed to the board will be a voting member. Mr. Rosenbeck requested to see the language changes to the by-laws when written.

- CJTS Line Staff - Request to Commissioner as ex-officio member
As there is a strong presence of CJTS administration on the board, Atty. Connolly recommends line staff as ex-officio members. This, however, falls under the Commissioner and she makes the appointments. Mr. Rosenbeck stated that he already had a conversation with the Commissioner about looking into various departments to expand membership and she is in support of this. Atty. Smith raised the question around collective bargaining union member implications of bringing a staff into this type of role. We would need to think about having a discussion with the unions. The board voted on making the recommendation to the Commissioner to add line staff as ex-officio members and all agreed. Atty. Connolly will encourage staff to play an active role in this meeting; it may not be crucial to be ex-officio members but just as members of the public.
- Melissa Pelletier and Sam Gray - Update
Atty. Connolly reported that Melissa Pelletier expressed a desire to join the board and was going to check with her administration if they had any concerns, but has not heard back yet. Mr. Rosenbeck reported that Sam Gray expressed an interest but has not heard back. We will keep these two candidates active.
- Membership Terms - 2 year and 3 year terms starting January 2014
We will look to change the by-laws whereby the terms will be staggered for 2 years term and 3 years terms and have appointment dates of January and July. Discussion regarding membership will be further discussed at the next meeting.
- Vice-Chairperson
The by-laws speak to a vice chair person, so if anyone is interested in that role, please let Atty. Connolly know.

Old Business

- **Ombudsman/Grievance Procedure**

The Board has expressed concerns around the grievance process and are recommending for CJTS to mirror the Ombudsman Grievance process of CSSD. Atty. Connolly spoke with Attorney Carino and Rapillo and they both are in support of this recommendation. The recommendation is to hire an independent contractor to provide the Ombudsman services at CJTS.

Ken Mysogland, Director of the Office of the Ombudsman and CJTS administration listened to the concerns raised around the grievance process in the previous meetings. They worked together and revised it to closely mirror that of CSSD. Mr. Mysogland was invited to present the new process. Criteria were developed whereby serious incidences are addressed by someone independent of the facility; the Ombudsman and the routine ones are addressed by the DRC. When Mr. Mysogland reviewed the recent batch of grievances, 50% of them were in fact ones that a DRC could address. Out of the remaining 25; 22 were actual grievances, 1 was immediately referred to the Careline and 2 were requests to speak with the Ombudsman. Mr. Mysogland reports to Deputy Commissioner, Susan Smith who oversees the DCF QA work. He strongly believes that he is an independent body and urges the board to give this new process an opportunity to be fully implemented and allow it to work. Allowing this to work for a couple of months will give us a chance to see its effectiveness. The DRC route empowers the youth in the process by allowing them a quicker turnaround time in the response / action. Staff concerns are flagged right away and this is what is also done on the CPS side. This process was shared with the DRC's, unit leaders, put on the agenda for Student Council and boxes were ordered. Mr. Mysogland will be at the facility two half days per week to go through the grievance forms, maintain a database and look for trends.

Atty. Smith commended the administration for taking the feedback that was previously shared and incorporating it into the existing process. However, the concern around the independence piece and perception of objectivity remains. She would also like to see more detail of the process if the youth don't see an appropriate response and how it is being communicated to the youth. Mr. Rosenbeck explained that Unit Leader Gaunichaux reviews the process with the youth at orientation and it is in the resident handbook. Ms. Anderson shared that the need for having an independent person review the grievances are being heard outside of this room. Atty. Connolly recommended putting closure on this topic and

motioned to recommend to the Commissioner to contract with an independent Ombudsman to oversee the CJTS grievance process. Furthermore, the department is to develop policy and procedures that utilize and are consistent with Best Practice Standards. Board members all voted and unanimously approved the recommendation.

Mr. Rosenbeck stated that this was an interesting process as CJTS did a lot of work to make the changes based on the input from the Board and not giving this a chance to work is counterproductive. CJTS has an operational plan to address the best practice and before it is kicked off and given a chance it is being voted as a recommendation to the Commissioner. Ms. Anderson added that that the work that went into this process is very much appreciated; however, someone who is paid by the same body is a conflict of interest. Mr. Rosenbeck argued that with that said, CSSD pays for their contracted independent Ombudsman and thereby, has the ability to not renew it if they choose to.

New Business

- **Public Comment**

The Board discussed adding a Public Comment section to the agenda. Atty. Smith raised a concern around privacy rights of having a resident participate in this board with the public having an option of sitting in and how we would manage that. Atty. Connolly stated that resident and parent would have to acknowledge that the public would come to meetings. We could look into the possibility of video or Skype and remove the video element during public comments segment. Also, the public has access to this meeting regardless. The board voted to add the Public Comment to the agenda with the exception of Ann Smith who abstained. Attorney Connolly invited Youth Services Officers Ryan Shukis and Gabe Crespo as well as Bonnie Liedtke, AFSCME, Council 4, P-2 Service Representative to participate in the "Public Comment"; they did not have comments at this meeting.

- **Posting of Minutes and meeting agenda**

A concern was raised that meeting minutes are not posted. Mr. Rosenbeck clarified that most CJTS minutes including the CJTSAB are posted on the SharePoint site under "Meeting Minutes" once they are accepted / approved. Atty. Connolly will forward the agendas to Irene to post as well.

Performance Based Standards "What Youth Say Matters"

Atty. Connolly invited Jason Criscio, Deputy Superintendent of CSSD to present on PBS. Mr. Criscio brought copies of a PBS brochure and 2013 Score card to share with the group. PBS began in mid to late 90's where data is collected from specific facets of an

operation. There are 106 standards for corrections and every April and October data is collected, entered into a data base which generates a report. If anything is flagged, it can be added to an improvement plan. ACA helps to develop good policies and PBA measures and ensures that those policies are put into practice. It is a management tool that makes an organization get better. Once CSSD receives their site report, they review the data. PBS adopted this accountability tool from the military and it is a green light red light system. CSSD has been contracting with PBS since 2005 and really rely on this tool. Mr. Rosenbeck stated that CJTS also contracted with PBS some years ago and liked it, however when a decision was made to be accredited by ACA, it became a fiscal issue and the PBS contract ended in 2008. In addition, there was no "like" facility in New England where our data could be compared to and with the cost of \$10,000 we decided to forego the contract. We did however; incorporate a lot of the practices of PBS into our work. Atty. Smith stated that the more opportunities an organization has for feedback the more they are able to improve the system. Mr. Rosenbeck stated that we can relook at bringing PBS back; however, the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) is taking a lot of our time now. Atty. Connolly motioned to recommend that Commissioner reengage PBS for CJTS including the Pueblo Program. Board members all agreed to the recommendation.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date is Monday, June 2, 2014 at 2:30 p.m. to be held at the Pueblo Unit with a tour prior to the meeting. Mr. Rosenbeck stated that we are in the process of scheduling an "Open House" and if it happens prior to 6/2 then the meeting will be held at CJTS.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Irene Yanaros