

Child and Youth Services Committee Meeting
Douglas County, Nebraska

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

The meeting convened at 1:31 P.M. in Room 903 of the Omaha-Douglas Civic Center, 1819 Farnam Street, Omaha, NE 68183. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is located on the wall near the entrance of the room. A notice of the meeting was published in the January 31, 2017, issue of *The Daily Record*. County Commissioners present at the meeting were Chris Rodgers, P.J. Morgan, and Mary Ann Borgeson. Others present at the meeting included Patrick Bloomingdale, Catherine Hall, and Pam Murphy, Administration; Brad Alexander and Mark LeFlore, Douglas County Youth Center; Shelly Hug and Karen Cox, Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative; Shawne Coonfare, Juvenile Assessment Center; Janee Pannkuk, Operation Youth Success; Laura McCormick and Constance Mierendorf, Douglas County Clerk/Comptroller's office. Chris Rodgers chairs the Committee.

A video recording of the meeting is available on the Douglas County Website:

<http://commissioners.douglascounty-ne.gov/board-meetings/videos>

Douglas County Youth Center

- Brad Alexander said that the Average numbers for Calendar year 2016 (Attachment A) were:

▪ Average Daily Population	70
▪ Staff Secure	9.6
▪ Home Program	26

These numbers were all trending down at the end of the year.

- Population numbers as of February 7 are:

▪ Average Daily Population	74
▪ Staff Secure	9
▪ Home Program	34

- Mr. Alexander said Craig Boykin, nationally known author and motivational speaker, will come to the Youth Center to speak with some of the kids and have lunch with them on Monday, February 13. He has written several books on direction and motivation and will speak on what he calls, "living up to your greatness."

- One student from the Center completed his high school diploma on February 3 and left the Center today. He graduated ahead of schedule. The Center is expecting 3-4 graduates in the Spring.
- EPIC has moved over to the Blackburn/Boys and Girls Club location at 27th and Hamilton Street and is currently serving 6 youth. Now that it is established, Mr. Alexander hopes the numbers will trend up.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled for February 15 and 16. They are for students who have been at the Center for at least 30 days. Meetings are scheduled in the afternoon and early evening to be completed before visitation.
- The Barnes and Noble book drive was held on December 17. The Youth Center received \$1,327 from the drive.
- The Multi-disciplinary Treatment Team has been meeting. It consists of 2 Licensed Mental Health Professionals, nurses and medical staff, a psychologist, a transition specialist, a probation officer, a special education teacher, and someone from the Public Defender's office.
- Mark LeFlore said the Treatment Team helps expedite placements for youth who have a release order, but increasingly more youth are presenting with mental health issue and the Team is dealing with them. The Team is able to provide information to the court to get court dates moved up. An extra benefit of the Team working together is the knowledge they share and the problem solving that results when multiple perspectives are considered.
- Students from Creighton University School of Psychiatry will be coming to the Youth Center to assist with mental health.
- Mr. Alexander said approximately ¼ of youth at the Center have been prescribed psychotropic drugs. Many of the prescriptions for those drugs have not been filled for a long time, and many kids are self-medicating or selling drugs. Some are on the run; while others' parents do not fill their prescriptions.
- Mr. LeFlore said youth with mental health issues are on the rise and this needs to be addressed. The Center is not a mental health facility and it cannot do treatment.
- Commissioner Rodgers asked where the public schools are in treating these youth and how many students attend the Omaha Public Schools (OPS).
- Mr. LeFlore said 80% of the youth at the Center are from OPS and the Center serves students from 8 different districts.
- Mr. Alexander said many of the youth come to the Center with criminal charges-- a delinquency or criminal offence-- but in fact, they have mental health issues.
- Mr. LeFlore said it would be helpful if a mental health evaluation could be done before juveniles come into the Juvenile Justice system.
- Commissioner Borgeson said she believed Project Harmony's Deb Anderson is going into the public schools for counseling and therapy in an effort to identify kids who may have problems. The Committee might want to invite her to make a presentation about their efforts.

- Mr. Alexander said the Step-Up summer jobs program will begin putting appointments together next month. This program works best if youth are interviewed and hired early in the spring.

Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC)

- Shawne Coonfare presented some high level numbers from calendar year 2016. Of the youth who presented to the Douglas County Attorney's office with delinquency matters and were referred to JAC, 602 had satisfactory diversion completions and 209 received warning letters; in total, 811 were diverted from the Juvenile Justice System. An additional 109 youth went through Youth Impact or the Cross Over Youth Practice model and completely avoided the Juvenile Justice system.
- Additional youth have presented to the County Attorney's office with truancy or status violations. Ms. Coonfare thanked Operation Youth Success for the help of Emily Adams who is compiling data on these youth. She will have detailed data including demographic breakdowns for the next meeting.
- Two vacant positions at JAC are written and are waiting to be posted in Human Resources: a data position and a front desk position.
- Commissioner Borgeson requested copies of the numbers from presentations at the meeting.
- Commissioner Rodgers asked Mr. Alexander about presenting a report to the Board. He said that in addition to the information presented today, Mr. Alexander should emphasize Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) to educate the Board.
- Commissioner Borgeson asked that Mr. Alexander also include information about mental health—what staff is in place; what contracts the County has; what the County provides.

Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI)

- Shelley Hug presented Targets: Warrants and DMC (Attachment B). While the average length of stay (ALOS) increased between 2015 and 2016, the average daily population (ADP) has decreased. Disproportionate Minority Contact decreased 7% between 2015 and 2016.
- Ms. Hug said that the Alternative to Detention Committee (ADC) will be focusing on why youth are coming in on warrants. The data specialist will be analyzing how many on warrants are failure to appear and how many are unlawful absence warrants. She will also be looking at the success rates of the ADC.
- The DMC Committee held a Community Conversation training on January 28 with a good turnout. It was a successful day.

- Case Processing will be a focus this year. Many juveniles remain detained because of court case complications. The Committee will seek solutions to moving youth along more quickly, remaining mindful of the need for due process.
- The Data Committee will be looking at what the Juvenile Justice indicators are.
- Mr. LeFlore said the DMC committee would be holding one meeting per quarter. The next meeting will be held at North High School on March 29 at 6:00 P.M.
- Commissioner Borgeson said the last DMC meeting was good, but it consisted mostly of providers. The goal is to engage more families. Reaching out to neighborhood groups and taking DMC to them would be a good strategy.
- Discussion followed about what happens to youth who run from placement and what the best place for them might be. It is a challenge for providers to find the right place for youth who run multiple times. Services in the home might be an alternative to multiple placements. If a child runs 10-15 times, he/she is likely to stay longer at the Youth Center. Ideally, services would be provided in the home to reduce the trauma to the youth and their families.
- Ms. Hug said Alternative Response is now in Douglas County. This provider goes to parents first and offers to help families.

Operation Youth Services (OYS)

- Janee Pannkuk reported that Step Up is doing an amazing job on placing youth with summer jobs (Attachment C). Currently a full-time person is working with businesses and handling the placements.
- On March 23, OYS will partner with metro area superintendents and Omaha Community Partnership for an implicit bias training event.
- Black Male Achievement will be hosting a full 2-day conference with national speakers July 12-14. Willie Hamilton of the OYS outreach group is spearheading this effort.

Other Business

- Commissioner Rodgers said he believed case processing will be a focus for the year to come. Re-engagement by County Attorney Don Kleine and Public Defender Tom Riley will help drive the effort. New, effective case processing data will also help drive the process.
- Commissioner Borgeson said LB 10 in the State Legislature would add a 6th juvenile court judge to the County. An amendment adding a 7th judge has also been filed. The addition of these judges will impose a space challenge for the County. A 6th judge might be accommodated on the 6th floor, but there is no room for a 7th judge. She asked Mr. Bloomingdale to begin discussions regarding a Juvenile Justice Campus and to create a plan for the future.

- Commissioner Rodgers said he had some preliminary discussions with Jerry Leahy about a Juvenile Justice Center. This would be a cost savings and a security benefit.
- Commissioner Borgeson said the conversation about a Juvenile Justice Campus should be elevated now whether or not additional judges are added.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 P.M.