

Child and Youth Services Committee Meeting

Douglas County, Nebraska

Tuesday, November 7, 2017

The meeting convened at 12:45 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 October 31, 2017, issue of *The Daily Record*. County Commissioner Chris Rodgers chaired the meeting. Commissioners present included Mary Ann Borgeson, Clare Duda, and P.J. Morgan. Others present at the meeting included Patrick Bloomingdale, Diane Carlson, Pam Murphy, and Catherine Hall, Administration; Brad Alexander and Mark LeFlore, Douglas County Youth Center; Shawne Coonfare, Juvenile Assessment Center; Amber Parker, Operation Youth Success; Larry Storer; and Constance Mierendorf, Douglas County Clerk/Comptroller's office.

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

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

Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC)

- Shawne Coonfare presented statistics on the number of youth placed on diversion this year compared with last year (Attachment A). The JAC tracks youth in 4 categories: those placed on Diversion with delinquency charges, youth who are diverted from the system, those who are status referrals, and truancy referrals.
- 615 youth have been placed on Diversion this year. In 2016, the total number was 782.
- Next month Ms. Coonfare will present a truancy snapshot, which is delayed because tracking only starts with the beginning of the school year.
- Youth Impact has just reached its 5-year anniversary and was invited to attend a meeting in Lincoln on November 6 where they presented a data snapshot of those 5 years and other data from the UNO Center for Justice Research to the Court Improvement Project. The state is trying to expand the program across the state and is looking at Douglas County's model.

- Several webinars are being produced by Georgetown University that will include data from the Douglas County program.

Douglas County Youth Center

- Brad Alexander reported that there are currently 92 youth at the Center. Because of PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) rules, the staff has had to double-up on coverage and incur some unexpected overtime.
- The average population at the Youth Center has been 79 this year. The Average Length of Stay (ALS) is 50 days.
- Discussion followed about counting youth in the ALS data if they were at the Center less than 24 hours. Counting the short-stay youth keeps the ALS number low but is not a realistic look at the lengths of stay.
- Approximately 1/3 of all youth fall into this category and they have not been counted since 2014.
- The ALS appears to be going up as a result of legislation that has directed youth to the Juvenile Court.
- Commissioner Borgeson said a note should be added to the data indicating that youth who are detained less than 24 hours are not counted in the ALS.
- Mr. Alexander said Title I has funded Acellas Online Learning Software to be installed at the Youth Center. All local school districts are using Acellas, so youth can transition from coursework at the Center back to their home schools with ease.
- The Center had one graduate in September.
- The Dusk to Dawn program and the You Turn program began on November 1.
- The Teen Chat Circle for girls is hoping to launch soon.
- Mark LeFlore has been appointed to the Advisory Board for Foster Grandparents at ENOA (Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging) and is still looking for foster grandparent volunteers.
- The yoga program is in its 4th week and it has had mixed results. Currently, there seems to be more support from involved youth and the program will be re-evaluated in December.

- Mark LeFlore said Heartland Workforce Solutions is starting to recruit at the Center for summer employment. All of the youth at the Center should qualify for the program long as they are released by summer.
- Mr. Alexander said the per diem rate is now set at \$323.57. The Center is working with Health and Human Services on the contract that is nearly finalized; this will enable them to bill at that rate going back to July 1. Probation will probably be billed at that rate as of November 1.
- The Center is in full compliance with Nebraska Jail Standards.

Operation Youth Success (OYS)

- Amber Parker said the next OYS steering committee meeting will be held on November 16 on the 3rd floor in the Jesse Lowe Conference Room from 8:30-11:30.
- OYS is hiring a new data analyst. Final interviews are occurring next week.
- OYS is co-sponsoring a linen drive to benefit families and youth who are system involved. They will be collecting linens through December.

Other Business

- Commissioner Rodgers said the Community-Based Aid (CBA) grant program will be discussed at the next OYS meeting with recommendations for funding ½ of the requests and asking the agencies to request \$332,000 from the County.
- The recommendations of the Advisory Council appointed by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners reviewed 26 proposals, which exceeded available funding by almost \$1 million.
- The Committee's recommendations will be discussed at the OYS meeting on the 16th.
- Commissioner Rodgers said the agencies should make their cases to the Board and said he believed the move to some hard money was a good one.
- Catherine Hall will send out a notice to all OYS Steering Committee members.
- Larry Storer expressed concerns about privacy for youth, the definition of the "family team" in dealing with youth with special needs, and the desirability of keeping research dollars in the state.

- Commissioner Borgeson said OYS is a community-based organization that does include input from families. The Foster Grandparent Program is coordinated through ENOA.

The meeting adjourned at 1:24 p.m.