

Board of Juvenile Justice
Thursday, June 28, 2012
10:00 AM
Department of Juvenile Justice
3408 Covington Highway
Decatur, Georgia 30032-1513

Opening Remarks

Board Chairman Avery D. Niles called to order the meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice and DJJ Board of Education.

DJJ Staff Present: Commissioner L. Gale Buckner; Assistant Commissioner Jeff Minor; Deputy Commissioner Carl Brown; Deputy Commissioner Shawanda Reynolds-Cobb; Deputy Commissioner Michael McNeely; Deputy Commissioner Rick Harrison; Miguel Fernandez; Dr. Audrey Armistead; Director Sarah Draper; Latera Davis; Tracy Masters; Director Jim Shuler; Matt Montgomery; Lisa Casey Bryson; Monique Brandenburg; Arkeysha McCullough; Kimberly Gore; Ken Nash.

Others: Judge Quintress Gilbert, Judicial Advisory Council; Joe Hood, Office of Planning and Budget; Nathan Branscome, Office of Planning and Budget; Helen Sloat, Nelson, Mullins; Emily Acker, Youth Villages; Angelique McClendon, Attorney General's Office.

Chairman Niles asked all guests to stand and state their name and affiliation.

Chairman Niles asked everyone to stand for the invocation given by Chairman Niles, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Vice Chairman Menefee.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Taylor asked if there were any changes to the May 24 Board Minutes and hearing none asked for a motion that the Board accept the Minutes of the May 24 Board Meeting. The motion received a second from Board Member Perry McGuire and the Minutes were approved unanimously.

Chairman Niles asked Secretary Taylor to conduct the Roll Call. Board members present were: Michael L. Baugh, Willie C. Bolton, Angie M. Holt, Perry McGuire, Daniel Menefee, Avery D. Niles, Franklin D. Rozier, Elaine P. Snow and Sandra H. Taylor. Secretary Taylor noted a quorum was present.

Secretary Taylor asked for a motion to approve the Agenda for the current meeting. Board Member Michael Baugh seconded the motion and the Agenda was approved.

Gang Update

Director of Investigations Sarah Draper presented the Board with an update on contraband found inside DJJ facilities and the impact it has on our incarcerated youth as well as staff.

Monique Brandenburg followed Director Draper with a presentation on Gangs. The presentation included the large number of youth inside our facilities who are Gang members, and the numerous different Gang groups throughout Georgia's incarcerated youth population.

Safe Sleep Campaign/Atlanta YDC Video

The Safe Sleep Campaign is a statewide campaign co-chaired by Governor and Mrs. Nathan Deal. Commissioner Buckner is a member of the Safe Sleep Campaign Cabinet and is offering DJJ support of this campaign by placing Safe Sleep Campaign folders in all DJJ facilities, to include Court Services Offices and Central Office.

Communications Director Jim Shuler followed the Safe Sleep update with a video created by Communications staff to provide insight to the media prior to the opening of the Atlanta YDC. This video was useful in squelching some of the discord voiced by the community in opposition to the opening of the YDC.

Juvenile Code Re-Write Update

Deputy Commissioner Michael McNeely advised that the Juvenile Code Re-Write legislation failed to pass during the last legislation session, but it is an important piece of legislation to Governor Deal and DJJ. In an effort to be prepared as best as possible DJJ has been meeting with the Pew Center on the States. The Pew Center recommendation is expected in the very near future for all involved parties to review in an effort to see the legislation pass in the upcoming session.

DJJ Judicial Advisory Council Member Judge Steve Teske has been named as a member of the Governor's Special Council on Criminal Justice Reform.

Aging Facilities

Deputy Commissioner Shawanda Reynolds-Cobb briefed Board members on problems DJJ staff face daily dealing with aging facilities. The older facilities share major plumbing and HVAC issues and the outdated design makes them more difficult to manage by causing a need for increased staffing.

Deputy Commissioner Reynolds-Cobb went on to state that under the direction of a previous Commissioner DJJ had contracted with Wakefield and Beasley to conduct an assessment of all facilities. A final draft of the report was received earlier this month. A summary of the information contained in the report was provided to the Board.

DJJ staff are ensuring the Office of Planning and Budget along with the State Properties Commission understand this three-phase project and its challenges as we move forward addressing issues we are faced with aging facilities.

Commissioner's Report

Governor Deal last week appointed Board Chairman Avery Niles to the Accountability Court Funding Committee. Chairman Niles is the only appointee to the Committee who is not a judge.

Effective July 1 forward, Deputy Commissioner Carl Brown, who has a strong background in Community, will begin devoting all of his focus to concerns in Community as well as ensuring timely placements.

Also effective July 1 Sarah Draper will become Deputy Commissioner for Facilities.

Commissioner Buckner recognized Mr. Joe Hood from the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB). Mr. Hood is the new OPB Division Director for Public Safety.

Chairman Niles requested a motion to adjourn from the regular DJJ Board meeting and reconvene as the Board of Education. A motion was made by Board Member Menefee and seconded by Board Member Snow and the motion carried.

Board of Education

Chairman Niles called on Superintendent Buckner. In an effort to make the Board aware of the safety and security issues faced by our educators, Commissioner Buckner played a DVD of CCTV footage of a youth assaulting a librarian at the Eastman facility the previous week.

Commissioner Buckner called on Dr. Audrey Armistead to present the Education update.

The educational staff is continuing to partner with the technical schools to enhance the courses available to our youth.

The educational staff is also working with Programs to ensure that programming is a part of our youth's aftercare as they transition back into society.

Strategic Plan for Education has been completed and will be presented at the July Board Meeting.

Dr. Armistead introduced two new Education staff members, Ms. Corey Baugh as Curriculum Director and Dr. Kimberly Gore to oversee Special Education.

Chairman Niles asked for a motion to adjourn from the DJJ Board of Education and reconvene as the regular DJJ Board. Board Member Menefee made the motion to adjourn and reconvene as the DJJ Board. The motion was seconded by Board Member Snow and the motion carried unanimously.

Regular Session

Chairman Niles announced the Board was back in regular session.

Chairman's Comments

Chairman Niles announced that over the last three months he had visited 10 to 12 facilities and encouraged other members to visit facilities and show support to our employees.

Chairman Niles relayed the Board's sympathy to Board Member Franklin Rosier for the loss of his father.

Call for Old Business – Board Member Snow expressed her appreciation to Commissioner Buckner and Chairman Niles for the clarity of information being provided to the Board.

Secretary Taylor stated August 22 and 23 are dates for expanded Board meeting and training and will be conducted in the Eastman facility. Secretary Taylor asked for input on agenda items for the August meeting.

Call for New Business – None

Chairman Niles stated the next DJJ Board Meeting would be held in Central Office on Wednesday, July 18 at 10:00 am.

Chairman Niles called for a Motion to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Juvenile Justice.

Board Member Menefee made the motion to adjourn. Board Member Holt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned.

Avery D. Niles, Chairman
Board of Juvenile Justice

L. Gale Buckner
Commissioner

Sandra Taylor, Secretary
Board of Juvenile Justice