

Monmouth County Youth Services Commission

Tuesday, February 6, 2024

Minutes

4:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER: OPEN PUBLIC MEETING'S ACT Amy Fischer

The meeting was called to order and the Open Public Meetings Act statement was shared. Welcome and Introductions were completed. The December 2023 Meeting Minutes were approved.

II. YSC CO-CHAIR REPORT

Desiree Whyte

Desiree shared that the YSC needs a YSC Co-Chair. Desiree will temporarily fill this role.

III. YSC ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

Dustin Knoblauch

Ellen Cohen will be on extended medical leave for up to 6 months. Please reach out to Dustin Knoblauch – Director of the Division of Child and Youth Services during this time. Ivan Kaplan has also been supporting the YSC. We are closing out all 2023 YSC and JDAI Innovation funds; we are also wrapping up 2023 billing. The three-year Youth Services Plan for 2024-2026 was completed and posted on our Division's website. The YSP has also been shared with the Department of Human Services (DHS) Needs Assessment Team. Please send qualitative and quantitative data to Dustin Knoblauch as it relates to the Needs Assessment.

IV. Office of Child and Youth Services

Dustin Knoblauch

As of January 2024, our office became the Division of Child and Youth Services, which includes: The Children's Interagency Coordinating Council (CIACC), Juvenile Detention Alternatives (JDAI), and the Youth Services Commission (YSC). All youth related contracts are being reported to this Division.

The CIACC coordinates and reports CSOC related presentations/outreach/community engagement to the state. Our Division has been in touch with several agencies, community-based providers, and schools to deliver Youth Based Services presentations. Please reach out if interested. All presentations can be coordinated to best meet the needs of the audience; we can deliver in as little or as much time allows. Community education was written into the YSC 2024 by-laws. In this past quarter, presentations were provided to the following: Monmouth County Probation, Neptune Preschool staff, and the Monmouth County Health Dept. We will be collaborating with Tom Fichter of the Prosecutor's Office to deliver a third presentation to the Juvenile Officers in March 2024. A special thank you to all those providers who have taken the time to present.

The next Positive Youth Development Hub is scheduled for March 15th at 10am via Zoom; this is a larger meeting. The hub has identified priority areas and will be gathering in work groups to discuss. Areas for the purposes of this meeting include, Safe and Free Places and Youth Violence & Gang Awareness; we've welcomed retired Lt. Eddie Torres who will assist in the coordination of training. A special thanks to the other members also.

Upcoming events:

Ed Partnership – 3/8/24 School Refusal

V. Prosecutor's Office

Raymond Santiago

Thomas Fichter

2023 revisions came out and have been summarized. Officers are being trained in Handle with Care. There have been several emerging issues related to the decriminalization of marijuana; this is on the radar. Tom shared the change in legislation as it relates to a juvenile's right to council; this is also on the radar. Tom recognized Sergeant Shawn Murphy for heading the Monmouth County School Threat Assessment Team. There have been expected issues that the team is navigating, including parent consent.

VI. Court & Probation Updates

Amy Fischer

Caitlin Mejia

Amy shared that they are finalizing our annual submission on juveniles docketed, diverted, and adjudicated for 2023. For the past few years, this data has been very skewed due to the expungements. When we run the reports in January, only existing cases will be captured. Cases that have been expunged will not be counted at all. Therefore, we will be providing the general number of expedited expungements completed for the year, which is 128 cases, 74 of which resulted from successful diversions. SO far in 2024, we've already expunged 15 cases for successful diversions.

For 2024, we have expanded the data we are capturing for expedited expungements to also include, age, gender, race and charges. We also expect to increase the number of overall expungements as we are catching up expunging those cases eligible after successful deferred disposition.

New Family Judges: Scott Arnette, Jason Rockwell, and Natalie Watson

Continue to experience challenges with on-call where law enforcement does not seem to sufficiently understand what to do regarding the detention process. This puts a burden on our juvenile staff-which is problematic because many of them are new and trying to learn their own role-therefore they are not able to provide technical assistance to law enforcement.

Youth Empowerment Program-is there any opportunity to provide funding to this program? We've had success with this program but learned recently that their funding was cut for 2024.

Probation continues to host the Gun Violence Reduction Task Force, which has met success over the last few months.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

IX. NEW BUSINESS None

X. OLD BUSINESS None

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT None

XII. ADJOURNMENT