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**NEVADA STATE JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION
MINORITY/GENDER COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
July 13, 2016**

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Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chairman John Martin at 5:16 p.m.

Roll Call – Alice Mueller

Members Present by Phone: Kirby Burgess, Dawn Lozano, John Martin, Egan Walker, Lonnie Wright

Members Excused: Lisa Morris Hibbler, Paula Smith

Staff Present by Phone: Leslie Bittleston, J. Alice Mueller

Members of the Public Present by Phone: Cheri Ely (NCJFCJ)

Prior to Quorum – Jack Martin

Before quorum was achieved, Cheri Ely, Program Manager with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) requested more information about what was going on with the School to Prison Pipeline. She suggested coordination with the existing Truancy Diversion Program. It already has a relationship with 65 schools, which she felt would be helpful in establishing the new assessment center.

Chairman Martin explained that they had not yet brought in Judge Elliott nor the Truancy Program as that was not the focus of this project. They are working with both Carlos McDade and Pat Skorkowsky directly since schools are where referrals to the juvenile justice system often start. The assessment center could provide an alternative to that beginning involvement. Mr. Skorkowsky has been very supportive of the sheriffs and under sheriffs. The groups involved with the assessment center are the Clark County School District (CCSD), CCSD Police, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD), and the Division of Family Services' (DFS) Department of Social Services. The attempt is to get government entities on board so that they can provide support with in kind services or be an actual dollar source.

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In addition to finding a location, memorandums of understanding (MOU) are being developed and there has been outreach to those who could provide smaller operations within the center. Usually, assessment centers are not driven by juvenile justice, but by community providers. Ultimately, it would be nice to see 51% government control with representatives from juvenile justice, the district court, LVMPD, CCSD, parents and youth. The idea is to have a no wrong door to juvenile justice approach.

In addition to an article about the assessment center in the Las Vegas Review-Journal, there had been another article about the creation of a Statewide Juvenile Justice Improvement Initiative Task Force. The Council of State Governments Justice Center, a nonprofit nonpartisan organization, will do an analysis of Nevada's juvenile justice system and report its findings to the task force which will then make recommendations to the 2017 Legislature. Judge Saitta and first lady Sandoval will co-chair this task force.

Questions were asked about the membership of the Juvenile Justice Improvement Initiative Task Force. Among the members are Nancy Saitta, Kathleen Sandoval, Mike Willden, Egan Walker, William Voy, Thomas Stockard, Oren Shaw, John Hambrick, Frank Cervantes, Ross Armstong, Jo Lee Wicks, Bridget Duffy, Susan Roskie, Ben Bianchi and Scott Shick. At their meeting, it was asked "who is missing from the table?" Chairman Burgess felt very strongly that Commissioner Morris Hibbler should be on the task force. She is a Juvenile Justice Commissioner, is on the Minority and Gender sub-committee and also, runs the City of Las Vegas Department that addresses juvenile issues.

It is important that the task force represents all of Nevada's communities and the youth in those communities. They have been provided funds and resources to do a top to bottom evaluation of Nevada's juvenile justice system, but have a very short time frame. Legislation will need to be drafted by the November Bill Draft Request (BDR) deadline.

Chairman Burgess noted that whenever a commission, committee or task force is put together, we have to be conscious of the need for diversity in the groups. This diversity must be both in terms of discipline and in representation.

Quorum was finally achieved at 5:16 and the meeting proceeded as per the agenda.

Public Comment and Discussion

There was no public comment at this time.

Review of Official Minutes from March 9, and June 1, 2016 Meeting

Commissioner Lozano moved that the March 9 and June 1, 2016 minutes be approved with a second from Commissioner Walker. The minutes were approved by the Committee.

Specific Strategies for DMC of African American Youth – Jack Martin

Commissioner Walker was invited to speak about plans for the Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Summit. He explained that although he had done some discussion, including a conference call, nothing else had really been accomplished to move the summit forward. Both Chairman Martin and Commissioner Morris Hibbler had reached out to Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson to talk about this summit. He was very concerned about what the agenda items would be. Care must be taken that it doesn't become a gripe session, but rather becomes a solution session. Therefore, there should be some ideas developed for agenda items. These need to be something that he can take to the Black Caucus, and the Hispanic Caucus. So the question is, what specifically is going to be addressed?

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It was pointed out that the Juvenile Justice Commission cannot lobby for legislation. The Commission is a state advisory group that can make suggestions and advise. Here, the Commission would be advocating for awareness and development of point of contact training. Part of that awareness is what was pointed out earlier, in the make-up of the new task force. There is an obligation to speak up about minority and gender representation. All too often, those not affected are unable to see the problem. Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) is so entrenched, that nothing is moving forward. Essentially, people are not seeing what they need to see. There is a need to educate ourselves out of this condition.

A dynamic speaker such as James Bell from the Haywood Burns Institute, could come and speak on the impact of DMC on communities. There is long term social, economic and law enforcement impact. Such a nationally recognized speaker could kick off this conversation. The question is, are we brave enough to have a real discussion and admit where failure is occurring. There will be no substantive change until there is dialogue between all the communities, including the police communities and communities of color. What we do, and don't do together, has become very important.

There is a culture clash occurring because of ignorance. If something happens to someone who isn't like you, does it really happen, or can it be denied. People from different cultures don't share the same experiences, which is not the same as saying their experiences are not occurring. Education is very important, as is getting the right people together who can then educate the general public. People such as judges, police and stakeholders, are an important part of the challenge.

The nuts and bolts of the summit must be addressed first. Can a key note speaker be obtained, can it be hosted in Las Vegas, and is there a budget for a speaker such as James Bell. Will this qualify as law enforcement training, first contact training or escalation training? Do we facilitate a discussion among legislators and support them in accomplishing some progress on this topic.

Commissioner Wright stressed the need to not only stream the summit, but also have some form of recording. Sometimes, when new concepts are taught, it can take repeated viewings before it is fully understood. Commissioner Lozano recommended the Communications Coalition at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), at College of Southern Nevada (CSN) for streaming and recording services. They have volunteers who can get the proper equipment, do the streaming and recording.

It was requested that there should be a discussion about setting aside some of the Commission budget for the summit at the next Quarterly Full Juvenile Justice Commission. This could be put on the agenda as a discussion item. Chief Bittleston agreed to speak with Chairman Burgess about possible funds. Since this was listed as only a discussion point on the current agenda, no motions could be passed.

To recap, first of all, available funding must be determined. Then a theme will be developed with specific agenda points. This could be what has been found to work in other jurisdictions or the need to embrace understanding of other cultures. Not only does a dynamic speaker need to be contacted, but elected officials should be invited to attend. Not just state elected officials, but also local officials.

Commissioner Walker said that he would start planting some seed with the NCJFCJ about partnering on the summit. He also said that Justice Saitta and First Lady Sandoval would be approached about the need for diversity on commissions and committees.

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The next bullet point on the agenda was point of contact training. At this time, no appropriate training has been found. Research will continue to locate or perhaps create something that would be satisfactory.

School to Prison Pipeline Update – Jack Martin

It was pointed out that some discussion on the assessment center had occurred before quorum was obtained. The July 13th Las Vegas Review-Journal article was referenced and October 8th, given as the anticipated opening date. Those involved have been encouraged by the Colorado model which has successfully diverted youth. In this setting, it could mean that a great number of minority youth would be diverted from formalized juvenile justice care.

About a year ago, Dr. Miethel and Dr. Pocheski from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), were engaged to examine the existing risk assessment tool, also called the probation assessment tool. It was found to not function very well. Portions that were felt to be important to Clark County were assembled into a new assessment tool which is currently being Beta tested. This has generated some interesting numbers in terms of how many youth are placed on formal probation, who perhaps should not be there due to being a low risk to the community. It is felt that the earliest intervention that can be done, is not to put a child on probation if they present no risks to the community or themselves.

There is quite a bit of excitement about this formalized, validated long term study. The launch date for the new tool should be in the next couple of months. At that point, they can match the level of supervision to the youth level of risk to the community. Five years ago, there were 270 youth in detention, today there are 106, so progress is being made. The next step forward deals with the quality of assessment made.

New Business

UNLV requested that the Juvenile Justice Commission partner with them on a Policy Grant Proposal. Specifically, they required data to assist them with studying DMC in Las Vegas. The Commission agreed to provide them this data and offer support, if the grant were awarded.

In many of the previous Minority and Gender meetings, information has been requested from the rural communities about what they are doing to assist youth. Winnemucca opened their Family Resource Center on June 25, 2016. Services at the center include health counselors, substance abuse counselors, senior respite, and a community health care nurse. There is also a project AWARE through the school district, where parenting and other classes are provided. They are building sustainability by using providers who are in private practice. Essentially it is a one stop shop for this rural community.

Comments from Public

There were no comments from the public at this time.

Set Time, Date and Agenda for Next Meeting

The next Committee Meeting will be on September 14, 2016 at 5:00 pm and will be a teleconference.

Agenda:

Specific Strategies to address DMC in African American Youth, emphasis on training.

DMC summit plans and ideas.

School to Prison Pipeline

Adjourn

Co-Chair Martin moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:46 p.m.