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**Nevada State Juvenile Justice Oversight Commission
Youth Committee
March 22, 2019**

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: Commissioner Justice Nancy Saitta called the meeting to order on Friday, March 22, 2019 at 2:00 pm.

Roll Call:

In Person: None

On the phone: Justice Saitta, John Munoz, Ricardo Villalobos, Kiera Bracken, Emmanuel Torres

Public: Katie Brubaker, Emily Tiehm

Public Comment: None

Open Meeting Law Reminders: Commissioner Justice Saitta gave Open Meeting Law reminders.

Meeting Minutes:

Commissioner Justice Nancy Saitta: Commissioner Justice Nancy Saitta and John Munoz had prepared a power point presentation about the Juvenile Justice System in Nevada to share with Committee Members, however, because this material wasn't given to Ms. Tiehm beforehand, she did not attach the link to the calendar invite. The bottom line was that the other Youth Members did not have access to the power point, so this agenda item was postponed. Commissioner Justice Nancy Saitta asked John Munoz to send Ms. Tiehm the power point so Ms. Tiehm could make sure all Youth Members had access to it. This item will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Committee Report and Other Notes:

John Munoz: Reminded everyone that one of the Youth Committee revised goals was to compose and present a report to the Full Commission regarding the facility tours. Their office sent out two attachments, one for the Caliente Youth Center report, and one for the Summit View tour report. It is important to get everyone's input, so they can generate a thorough report. Those who went on the tours, whether it was CCDC, Caliente, the Jan

Evans facility, whichever they were, if they can provide the written feedback for those sites, that would be great. The more comprehensive the report is, the better it will be for the JJOC. One thing you all need to be thinking about is what are the needs of the girls in the Juvenile Justice System and how do they address those needs. How can the Youth Committee figure out what else to do to address those needs and gaps in service? I'm looking forward to working with everyone and figuring out some solutions moving forward.

Katie Brubaker: Suggested they set a due date for those remaining reports from any of the other detention centers or facilities people visited on April 5th. The working JJOC session is on April 12th.

Katie Brubaker: Can the Youth Committee Members think about what kind of questions they might want to ask other providers and hand those in. We have not received any questions from the members.

John Munoz: It is imperative for everyone to provide them a list of those questions for the surveys. We can add that task to the April 4th deadline date.

Commissioner Kierra Bracken: Need clarification on what a Juvenile Justice provider is and what kind of questions are they supposed to be thinking of.

Katie Brubaker: In terms of a Juvenile Justice provider, they're thinking of Probation and Parole. Providers that touch on Mental Health issues, or Education. A broad spectrum of folks that could potentially be touching Juvenile Justice youth in the system.

Commission Justice Nancy Saitta: I would like to add that I and John Munoz have spoken between our meetings about lending purpose and direction to the committees. We both think that one of the most valued pieces of this entire reform is Youth Member voices. That's something that is the cornerstone of reform. That's really what I'm hoping we will have going forward.

Katie Brubaker: Examples of questions she might want to ask. How do you currently work with the youth in the system? What is your role? What does that look like? What are some of the things that you think work well? What are some things that you think should be approved upon, and how?

John Munoz: They really need more vocational opportunities in the facilities to prepare their young people to return into the community to be employable, to be job-ready. If they were to ask providers, "What would you be willing to provide to our youth in our facilities?" and open up the door for those questions. Hopefully, for some good answers on what people would be willing to provide as far as job readiness training and employability skills, that would be great.

Commissioner Kierra Bracken: Summit View kids knew the Superintendent. They were very respectful, and they had a good relationship with the Superintendent. The Superintendent seemed like he was really involved with the facility. Security seemed very intense, like it was for high-level offenders. It seemed like it was almost intended for just going to prison rather than trying to get kids ready to go back out in the community. It's intimidating. There are vocational programs there that a lot of the kids like. The kids want more of those, and they also really enjoyed the sports.

John Munoz: Kierra, when you talked about changing the feel of the facility, what would you do to change that?

Commissioner Kierra Bracken: I liked the feel of Caliente because it was much more open and didn't have barbed wire everywhere.

John Munoz: In visiting other facilities across the country and looking at some of the things that they do differently on of the things they would like to do is to create almost like a cool-off or almost like a time-out room where there's comfortable seating. There's a safe place for kids to de-escalate on their own. Right now, in the facilities, either you're in general programming with everybody or you're in room confinement or isolation. So, they're really trying to find in-between spaces. Spaces for them to exist, to cool down and help them self-regulate. We want to create some murals and have the kids buy into it by helping paint it and take some ownership and be proud of where they're living. Unfortunately, that contract fell through, and the artists had to move on. They were also exploring some other ways to maybe paint some things on the wall, instead of hanging some things initially, until they could get the culture where we needed it to be. There are a lot of just esthetic things that they could possibly do to take away that prison, sterile environment and really make it homier. This is where the kids are going to be living for the next six to nine months. This committee, this team needs to put some thought into this and some consideration on what options are available and think outside the box and get creative.

Commissioner Kierra Bracken: I was very impressed with the Caliente Youth Center school. It actually felt like a school, and the kids weren't escorted from class to class. The classrooms seemed orderly and organized. However, the entire facility seemed very run-down. Windows were broken and the gym floor was torn up. The kids really liked the vocational programs. But they felt that if they were in a group and someone was doing something wrong, they would all get in trouble, and the youth didn't like that. They also complained that some of the staff was too rough with them.

John Munoz: Caliente and NYTC are some of their older facilities. Every session they go back in and ask for what they call capital improvements or maintenance projects where they ask for funding to maintain facilities. They don't always get what they ask for. Those two facilities, NYTC and CYC, when you walk in there, you see how run-down they are, but unfortunately, they don't get the funds needed to keep up with it. It's the same thing with staff. They have PREA-ratios that we have to keep up with, PREA stands for the Prison Rape Elimination Act. It is a nationwide standard of one staff to every eight youth during waking hours and one to every 16 youth during sleeping hours. An outside independent third-party consultant came in and did a staffing analysis of the facility at Caliente and they determined that at the budgeted capacity of 140 youth at CYC that they need an additional 54 staff to be at minimum with PREA standards. If they are down 54 staff, that means staff sometimes will get burned out through overtime. Which means that sometimes their patience and tolerance gets lowered, and if one kid acts out and there's not enough staff to cover, then unfortunately, sometimes kids get put in their rooms or get pulled from sports or programs. And that's not fair. But what it goes back to is if they want to do all the juvenile justice reform that they need to, then they need to have the staff and equipment and training and all that to get it done.

Commissioner Justice Nancy Saitta: The input Commissioner Kierra Bracken provided was invaluable. Putting that together with what John Munoz said puts the icing on the cake. The reality is the budget is never enough. The fiscal apportionment for Nevada's youth camps is too low. A part of the reason that they can't retain employees is because they're not being adequately compensated for, and it's the baseline of juvenile justice reform because if you can't make an environment one where there is adequate staffing so that you can have adequate programming, then all the reforms that you'd at the top will be for naught.

Commissioner Emmanuel Torres: As far as my tour of the Caliente Youth Center, the main thing that I liked was the school facility. I liked how involved the teachers seemed to be with the youth. It is a really run-down facility, with broken out windows covered with tape. Everything looked worn and tattered. As for Summit View, I liked that everybody knew who the Superintendent was. It did have a calmer vibe to it, and the school there was very good, and the kids were separated a little bit better. They had their own little graduation ceremonies, and they allowed the families to go out there. So, it gave the families an opportunity to take part in the youth's achievement. But the difference between the two would be that Caliente had a lot of funding issues.

Katie Brubaker: We were hoping to have some feedback about other committees that Youth Members are interested in so that we can get them connected to the Co-Chairs and get them caught up and just get them the appropriate background. So, if they wanted to participate as they'd like them to that they're not just left hanging without any kind of understanding about what's going on and why.

Commissioner Justice Nancy Saitta: I wonder if the Youth have enough foundation to even know what subsidies they want to be assigned to.

Emily Tiehm: I want to remind everyone at the meeting on February 22nd, there was an attachment and documents that gave a breakdown of each sub-committee and the members of the sub-committee. This was also one of the items they asked for the research back by March 8th and did not receive any feedback. But if they go to the JJOC website and look at the last meeting or the previous calendar invite, there's a document that has a breakdown of each sub-committee and the members within them.

Commissioner Justice Nancy Saitta: Can this assignment be added to the other two that are due on April 5th.

Commissioner Kierra Bracken: Emily and I will follow up and send out the breakdown of the committees again, complete with descriptions.

Commissioner Justice Nancy Saitta: I emphasize these are not random assignments. The most important voice that will form the basis of statewide reform will be that which they are able to gather from the youth. I want to expand the Youth Members in a more specialized way, but they first have to get the groundwork in place and get the committees off the ground.

Commissioner Kierra Bracken: I am currently Co-Chair of the SAG Committee, so it is highly unlikely that I will be able to add any more committee assignments to my workload at this time.

John Munoz: There are already three or four outstanding assignments due by April 5th. It would really be good to get those wrapped up before the next meeting. I would prefer if they can just follow-up on those before they add any more specific agenda items for the next meeting.

Commissioner Justice Nancy Saitta: I'm in complete agreement with Mr. Munoz. It would be best to wrap up those items that are still hanging out there.

Public Comment:

None

Adjourned:

Commissioner Justice Nancy Saitta: Move to adjourn.

Commissioner Kierra Bracken: I will second.