

**Minutes of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee**  
**June 1, 2018**  
**Holland & Knight, 50 N. Laura St., Jacksonville, Florida**

**Present**

Chairman Buddy Schulz, the Honorable Brian Davis, Pamela Davis, Rory Diamond, Kevin Gay, Dr. Jeff Goldhagen, Shelley Grant, Marcus Haile, Elder Lee Harris, Bill Hodges, Michael Meyers, Lara Nezami, Asst. Chief Deloris Patterson, the Honorable Jack Schemer, Vicki Waytowich, Tim Denton on behalf of Donna Webb

Committee is called to order at 9:08 a.m.

**Meeting**

SAO Juvenile Director Laura Lambert welcomes the room and thanks everyone for attending. Lambert reminds the room that is the last formal meeting before the committee begins meeting as subcommittees.

Cathy Burgos, LCSW, is the Division Director of Operations for the Miami-Dade Juvenile Assessment Center. Burgos provides a summary of Miami's large population and demographics, and relays the history of the Miami JAC. (Please see included PowerPoint for more information.) Burgos provides an overview of the JAC's operations and emphasizes the importance of partnerships and collaboration within the community. The JAC staff is comprised of social workers, licensed clinicians, nonprofits, law enforcement, and service providers. Screening tools used in the Miami JAC are the: PACT, MAYSI, GAIN-Q, YLS, and EARL B & G.

Kathryn Thomas, founder of Jacksonville nonprofit Yoga 4 Change presents about her experience with yoga, the Y4C program, and the program's results. (Please see included PowerPoint for more information.) Y4C serves the incarcerated, addicted, and vulnerable youth and military veterans by bringing the benefits of yoga to people who might not otherwise have access to it.

Tony Rodrigues, Arts and Program Instructor with the Cathedral Arts Project, presents about the jail juvenile arts program. (See included video link for more information.) This program teaches painting, techniques, art history, individual and group work skills, and other life skills to boys in the Duval Pre-Trial Detention Facility.

Ebony Payne-English, Managing Director of The Performers Academy (TPA), performs a spoken word testimony about the power of arts as therapy. (See included video link for more information about TPA summer camps.) TPA offers dance, creative writing,

acting, play writing, visual arts, green screen, photography, recording studio, and mobile recording studio resources and instruction to youth who might not otherwise have access to or experience the power of the arts.

Officer Eric Wesley, the former director of programming at the Pre-Trial Detention Facility, discusses his experience working with and guiding jailed juveniles during his career. He has met and worked with thousands of young people, and believes in the power of programming and services for these incarcerated youth. Officer Wesley firmly believes these programs help to break down stereotypes youth have been taught about themselves, the arts, and their passions, and that these programs inspire hope and show them that there is more to life.

Laura Lambert explains that subcommittees will begin meeting on their own timelines. They will set and notice meetings on the [sao4th.com](http://sao4th.com) dedicated JJAC webpage. She instructs the subcommittees to outline their findings related to their area, discuss what resources are currently available in our community and what areas are lacking, and to include data and research wherever possible. A dedicated Assistant State Attorney has been assigned to each subcommittee group and will help notice meetings, research, draft, and otherwise assist the members in their work.

### **Committee Discussion**

- Questions for Cathy Burgos about JAC operations, assessment, services, and programming:
  - Goldhagen states that the local challenge is not the availability of services, but rather follow-through in getting children involved in services, and asks if Miami encounters the same challenge. Burgos answers affirmatively, and says that the JAC's efforts lie in trying to engage parents and families in receiving services.
  - Asst. Chief Patterson asks if there is a high turnover in Miami JAC's social workers. Burgos replies there is no turnover, and that many JAC social workers enjoy long careers there.
  - Chair Schulz inquires about the JAC's situation within the county's organizational structure. Burgos answers that the Miami mayor's office encompasses 26 county departments. The JAC is one of those departments, which reports directly to the mayor.
  - Meyers asks about the JAC's budget. Burgos says The Miami JAC operates on a \$13 million budget, the majority of which comes from county-generated funds. About \$2 million stems from State funding.
  - The committee asks how the JAC's relationship with DJJ is. Burgos answers that the two organizations work very well together.

- Meyers inquires whether Jacksonville has any similar system as Miami's JAC. Laura Lambert and Tim Denton (representing DJJ) make the distinction that DJJ funds Miami's JAC while DJJ runs Jacksonville's JAC. Also that Miami's JAC is run by trained social workers and clinicians while Jacksonville's JAC is run by probation officers.
- Haile asks if the Jacksonville JAC receives any State funding. The answer is unknown.
- Gay points out that Jacksonville's funding sources are limited, especially compared to Miami's, and asks what funding of Miami's is recurring. Burgos answers that none of the funding the JAC receives goes into direct services. It is not the JAC's desire to compete with service providers. Rather, the JAC aims to leverage existing community-based resources.
- Judge Davis asks about the intersection of the juvenile justice system and the school system in Miami. Burgos says when there are issues, the JAC is quick to share their case information with the schools. Recently they have instituted monthly collaborative staffing meetings between the JAC, schools, and service providers to discuss imminent child concerns and to find out which organizations are serving which children.
- Gay asks if the JAC provides space for services in the facility. Burgos answers no, and offers two main reasons: 1) if space was offered for one provider, it would need to be offered to all providers, and that model would not be successful; and 2) the Miami JAC building is secure, and there would be a high cost associated with increasing the demands on the security personnel.
- Hodges asks if the State Attorney's Office in Miami-Dade runs in-house diversion. Burgos answers no, that the SAO is simply the gatekeeper. All of the diversion programs are run by the JAC. The JAC makes recommendations for diversion to the SAO, but the JAC only runs the programs and presents the end results to the SAO. Teen Court is the only diversion program run in-house by the SAO.
- Judge Davis offers information about a past partnership between JSO and DCPS to identify at-risk children who might need services, but that it ended due to community backlash since there was criticism that the program was labeling or targeting children. Burgos says in Miami, an organization runs middle school-aged student data through a program to examine performance in core math and reading classes, combined with truancy and incidence history. These four factors are cross referenced with arrest reports, and the final list is used to identify children in possible need of service. The community is supportive of the program since they were involved in its formation.

- Chair Schulz asks if the JAC is involved in direct filed cases in any way. Burgos responds that the JAC stays out of these cases, but that they are working with the Miami SAO to establish staffings for these children. She offers that a universal data or case management system would be ideal.
- Meyers asks Burgos in her opinion which areas of service or programming in Miami need improvement or have failed. Burgos responds that the biggest hurdle is accountability with service providers.
- Grant asks how the JAC measures recidivism. Burgos answers that DJJ tracks all of that information for them. (83% of children complete the diversion programs, and recidivism rates are calculated based off those completed cases.)
- Nezami asks how the JAC handles situations in which families do not follow up or desire services in their home. Burgos says the most important response is not to penalize the child, and to meet the clients where they are. Assessment tools are monumentally helpful in discerning appropriate services.

### **Public Comment**

No public comment.

State Attorney Nelson closes the meeting by thanking each of the committee members for their efforts and time. She expresses her gratitude for the committee members' interest and commitment to this endeavor, as well as her excitement to see the work and recommendations of the members.

Meeting is adjourned at 11:40 a.m.