

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Juvenile Committee  
10:00 a.m.  
December 4, 2024**

**Juvenile Justice Center (Children's Court)  
5100 2nd St NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107**

| Committee Members Present       | Committee Members Absent                       | Others Attending   | NMSC Staff     |
|---------------------------------|--|--|----------------|
| Cindy Aragon, Chair             | Ambrosio Castellano (Speaker)                  | Tom Swisstack (JJAC)   | Douglas Carver |
| Bob Cleavall, NMSC Chair        | Hubert "Troy" Gray (NMDAA)                     | Bronwyn Neeser (Hive Consulting)   | Grace Cairo    |
| Krista Lawrence (Governor)      | Sheriff Glenn Hamilton (ret'd.) (NM Counties)  | Kimberly McManus (Hive Consulting)   | Keri Thiel     |
| Scott Patterson-Alatorre (CYFD) | April Land (UNMSOL)                            | Hon. Angie Schneider (Chief Judge, 12 <sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court) |                |
| David Richter (LOPD)            | Ramona Martinez (Pro Tem)                      | Stephen Taylor (De-serving Life)   |                |
|                                 | Angela "Spence" Pacheco (Speaker)              | Eva Buchwald (LOPD)  |                |
|                                 | Hon. Alma Cristina Roberson (Children's Court) | Raoul Valencia (LOPD)  |                |
|                                 |  | Melanie Martinez (NMCD)  |                |
|                                 |  | Phoebe Lytle (De-serving Life)   |                |
|                                 |  | Catherine Begaye   |                |
|                                 |  |  |                |

**I. Welcome and Introductions.** Cindy Aragon, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:04 am.

**II. Approval of Minutes for the October 24, 2024 meeting.** The minutes for the October committee meeting could not be approved due to lack of a quorum.

**III. Staff Report.**

Douglas Carver, Acting Director, New Mexico Sentencing Commission (NMSC), informed the members of the committee that in the budget for the coming fiscal year the Commission was requesting two additional FTEs, a staff attorney and a grants administrator; the Commission was also requesting \$5 million for crime

reduction grants. Acting Director Carver also informed the members of the committee that the Grants Committee planned to open up applications for crime reduction grants to projects that work with juveniles.

Grace Cairo, Research Scientist, NMSC, discussed the online class offered by Rutgers University that she had taken, “Then and Now: Developments in Juvenile Justice Policy”. The class discussed the history and social movement behind how a different system of criminal justice was developed for juveniles. The coursework taught how racial disparities in the juvenile justice system mirrored those in the adult system; discussed Adverse Childhood Experiences and their connection to juvenile crime; and concepts around resolution, reinvestment, and realignment. A portion of the class focused on the experience of Kalief Browder, a Black youth from New York City who was arrested for stealing a backpack and imprisoned in Rikers Island for three years, over two years of which was spent in solitary confinement. In the end his case was dismissed, and he was released without any resources. The mental health impacts were lasting, and he ended up committing suicide. Ms. Cairo noted that many of her fellow students had lived experience working with juveniles who had been incarcerated.

Acting Director Carver informed the members of the committee that Ms. Cairo had taken this course as part of her growing interest in juvenile justice issues. He added that it was very welcome that a member of the research team on the Commission staff was taking a particular interest in juvenile justice.

#### **IV. CYFD’s New Family Services Division.**

Scott Patterson-Alatorre, Director, Family Services Division, Children, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD), gave a presentation concerning the new Family Services Division at CYFD. The Family Services Division brings together prevention and early intervention programs that had been spread across different divisions in CYFD. These programs include Community-Based Prevention, Intervention, and Reunification; Family Outreach; In-Home Services; Keeping Families Together; the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) Program; the Children’s Trust Fund; Domestic Violence Services; and Family Resource Centers. Director Patterson-Alatorre gave details on some of these programs. Keeping Families Together, for instance, works on case management and housing services, will help with first and last month’s rent, and works on skill building to help keep families in their homes. The Family Resource Centers are new to New Mexico, though not a new program nationally; they are a one-stop shop for needs for families, such as connecting families to Medicaid, WIC, and similar programs, assigning case managers to work with families. The Domestic Violence Services include survivor services and also services for those who cause harm.

Part of the idea governing the Family Services Division is that there is no wrong door – if a person comes to one program but needs to be served by another, that person is given a warm handoff to the proper program so that they can get the services they need rapidly, without having to start over again. The Family Services Division provides a multilevel response, working with families to navigate and overcome barriers. Almost everything in the division is done in concert with community partners. The goal is to get folks out of the system. All services are aimed at family preservation and making connections to available services.

Members of the committee and members of the public attending the meeting asked questions about and discussed how the Family Services Division gets community providers to work together to be more part of an umbrella so that someone is not bouncing around to different places; the referral process; getting information from CYFD; and what barriers existed.

In response to the questions, Director Patterson-Alatorre noted that referrals can come from the Family Services Division to multiple agencies. The contracting mechanism is designed so that referrals cannot be rejected but rather have to be considered. The division will have conversations with providers to see how

families can be made whole. Certain contracts do require work to be done cross-collaboratively. The expectation is that providers will share information. The division emphasizes warm hand offs, and works to ensure that someone is not referred to a program that does not have the capacity to take the person. The division is also working with providers and other entities to ensure that information about a person is shared, assessments are passed along, and the like. Director Patterson-Alatorre ended by noting that one of the biggest barriers was informing people what services exist, which is something that the division is working to rectify.

#### **V. Discussion of Juvenile Committee Priorities/Strategic Plan – Summary of Last Meeting Priority Points – Other Groups Working on Juvenile Justice Issues.**

Chair Aragon opened the discussion by noting that the mandate of the Sentencing Commission was to advise the three branches of government and be a source of information on criminal justice issues. She noted that at the committee's last meeting there was a discussion of the importance of data. It was also important to have an understanding of what other efforts were being undertaken in the area of juvenile justice so that the committee did not duplicate any efforts that were occurring elsewhere.

Members of the committee and members of the public in attendance discussed the work being done by reintegration centers; the placement process for juveniles who have been detained; the dollars for juveniles that the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) has available, and JJAC's work with Central New Mexico Community College to see what they can do to work with non-profits to get juveniles some kind of certificate or acknowledgement that they have been trained, and on strategies to help access college or jobs; that perhaps the committee should have a presentation on juvenile justice data; that the committee in the past has discussed examining the statutes around confidentiality of juvenile records; issues around competency proceedings for juveniles; the state of programming available statewide; and problems and concerns around the collection of data on children in the juvenile justice system.

#### **VI. Next Meeting**

The committee will schedule its next meeting for shortly after the post-Legislative Session bill signing deadline.

#### **VII. Public Comment.**

There was no public comment offered at the meeting.

#### **VIII. Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 11:59 a.m.