

**Mecklenburg County  
Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Meeting  
February 22, 2011 – Minutes**

**Members Present:** Kimberly Best-Staton, Kimm Campbell, Keith Cradle, Sarah Crowder, Pete Davis, Tom Eberly, Douglas Edwards, D. Franklin Freeman, Gwen Hester-Cohen, Jeff Hood, Laura Johnson, Laura McFern, Susan McCarter, Pamela Morris, Steve Newman, Heather Taraska, Mary Wilson

**Guests Present:** Teresa Abernathy (Project Challenge); Jennifer Green & Lauren Walter (Youth Villages); Stacy Huss, Lucrea Jordan, & Lakitifah McWents (DJJDP); Kimberly Nesbitt (AYN/MST); Sharon Plummer (YFS/FACET); Becky Smith (Barium Springs Home for Children)

**Staff Present:** Brandi Weathers and Tangela White

**Members Absent:** (# of Unexcused/Excused absences since 01/01/11): Deborah Jackson (1E), Lola Massad (1U), Simona Mitchell-Kelly (2E), Lopa Thakkar (2E), Marc Thompkins (2U), Richard Zaleskie (2E)

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m. by the chair, Jeff Hood.

Jeff introduced new member, Douglas Edwards, representing the community.

**Review and Approval of January 25, 2011 Minutes:** January minutes were approved unanimously by the council.

**Selection of Vice-Chair for JCPC:** Steve Newman and Laura McFern will oversee the selection process for the JCPC Vice-Chair. Keith Cradle volunteered to serve on the Nominations Committee.

**Committee Assignments and Conflict of Interest:** Jeff noted that at the January meeting Mary Wilson had volunteered to chair the Funding Committee. In her role as the Director of the Department of Social Services (DSS) and with some program funding coming through DSS, it was raised whether there is a conflict of interest for Mary to serve in this capacity. Jeff suggested that Paul Risk, the previous DSS representative to JCPC had served somewhat in that capacity. Captain Pete Davis asked if there is a distinction for committee chairs and/or if a committee's chair has any additional influence. Jeff felt there is no distinction and noted that each vote still comes before the entire JCPC and is not "rubber-stamped." Mary added that she and Kimm Campbell have been working to develop a scoring tool which will make the funding process more objective. Mary offered to step down if there's a conflict of interest. Jeff suggested that most of us have knowledge of or connection to some of the programs and that it is up to each of us to recuse ourselves if there is indeed a conflict of interest. So, Mary will continue to chair the Funding Committee. Brandi Weathers asked if we needed to vote, Jeff indicated that we did not have a motion.

Laura stated that she feels there might be the appearance of a conflict of interest in her role as Chief Court Counselor and chair of the Monitoring Committee, so she is stepping down from chair of the Monitoring Committee. Jeff asked that she remain in this post until the last round of monitoring occurs. She agreed.

At the new-member orientation (earlier in the day), Brandi had distributed hard copies of the Year at a Glance and the Committee Descriptions. Susan McCarter asked if new members are filling a vacancy, do they have to serve on the committee of their predecessor? They do not; they are able to select a committee of their choice. Brandi will get electronic copies of the committee descriptions to Tangela for distribution to new members and Jeff asked that new members indicate their committee preferences at the March meeting.

LIFT Academy has submitted a budget revision. This came to Jeff and he passed it to Mary. Kimm explained that typically for the programs she administers, if the budget revision is less than 10% and does not create a new line item, it does not require formal approval.

**Monitoring/Auditing Update:** Laura reported that she has all of the monitoring reports except for DASH. Heather Taraska will follow-up with Greg McCall for this outstanding report. Pam Morris spoke regarding her monitoring visits with Laura Johnson. Jeff suggested that this information should be presented in a document and should be distributed prior to the meeting. Mary asked when the final monitoring reports are due to the state. Brandi indicated that there is not a state deadline. Inasmuch as the monitoring reports can inform JCPC decisions, Mary asked that the JCPC members receive the final monitoring report by the March meeting. Brandi had asked for the financials from the programs which have not submitted them. She and Laura felt that they could get the information out to the JCPC by the next meeting.

Tom Eberly presented a proposal for hiring a temporary employee to conduct JCPC quarterly reviews using JCPC administrative funds (see attached). The position would be as an employee of Mecklenburg County under Criminal Justice Services in the County Manager's Office. S/he would be responsible for coordinating the monitoring activities of JCPC-funded programs including: scheduling site visits, enlisting JCPC members for site reviews, leading program reviews, preparing review documents, submitting the documents to JCPC, County, and State, and presenting findings to JCPC and the County.

Judge Kimberly Best-Staton asked if JCPC would have the final say in the hiring for this position. Tom suggested that in that it would be an employee within the County Manager's office, the County Manager's office would most likely have the final say. Kimm suggested using a university professor/MBA students to conduct this process. Tom noted that that idea was not supported at the November meeting. Susan apologized for not having November's minutes. Mary mentioned she has connections at Queen's University MBA, Susan volunteered to check UNCC – but suggested that we also include other area universities: JCSU, CPCC, Pfeifer, etc. Mary asked why the total figure wasn't \$15,500. Tangela White noted the cost of running the RFP ads and the meeting snacks. Laura Johnson asked if the number of reviews was variable and Susan asked if the number of programs was variable – Tom indicated that both numbers are flexible. Mary asked if the funds must be expended this year. Brandi will check on when the funds have to be expended.

Kimm asked about hiring authority and sponsoring agencies. Tom asked about criteria to be used to select “the monitor.” Mary suggested the criterion is price. Brandi suggested that given the situation, she is happy to assist with the monitoring function as much as she can. Jeff iterated that this should be someone who actually does this. Tom will collect the information/referrals. Mary has a staff person who could assist Tom.

Kimm stated that at each of the meetings she has attended, she has recommended that the JCPC not fund programs which have access to Medicaid Funds. She therefore made a formal motion to that effect and was seconded. Tom asked if this would affect programs which are currently funded. The motion pertains to next year’s funded programs. Several members indicated that they did not know enough about the topic and would like additional information before voting. The result was 8 Yeas; 2 Nays; and 7 Abstentions.

**Risk and Needs Committee Update:** Susan referred members to the minutes and the RFP that Tangela had sent earlier (see attached). The Risk and Needs committee met to review the Risk and Needs Assessment data presented by DJJDP. Based on these data, the committee identified the following five areas as presenting the most significant need 1) School Behavior/Adjustment, 2) General Academic Functioning, 3) Mental Health, 4) Substance Abuse, and 5) Family Needs - Supervision Skills.

Working on the RFP in the areas which the JCPC is allowed to revise, the committee suggested listing the following as needed programs: (in alphabetical order) Community Service/Restitution, Counseling (Individual, Family, and Group), Mental Health Assessment/Treatment, Mentoring, Parenting Programs, Structured After School, Substance Abuse Assessment/Treatment, Tutoring/Academic Enhancement

For the paragraph draft, they suggest: Juvenile justice data for the last five years do not indicate any increase in the severity or frequency of delinquent offenses filed with DJJDP nor those approved for Court. The ‘09/’10 data do, however, reveal areas of concern around school behavior/adjustment, general academic functioning, mental health, substance abuse, and family needs: marginal parenting skills/supervision. These data are available from Brandi Weathers, Area Consultant (see contact information below).

And for the domains: Individual Domain: Substance use and mental health issues increase a youth's at risk behaviors and risk of delinquency; Peer Domain: Youth involved with juvenile court have a tendency to associate with others involved in the criminal justice system; Family Domain: Marginal parenting skills, increase in marital discord and domestic violence and family substance use and criminal involvement increases the youth risk of delinquency; School Domain: Youth performing below grade level and those who have dropped out, been expelled/suspended, or have excessive unexcused absences are at risk of delinquency.

Once through the 2011/12 RFP cycle, the committee would like to work on broadening the sources of data used to inform this process. This could include but is not limited to data from: Area Mental Health, CMS, SAPS, agencies working with homeless youth, DSS, MCSO, and of course, DJJDP.

Laura Johnson asked the number of youth represented in these data. Susan noted that the '09/10 figures are based on 484 youth although 1791 came through DJJDP in that year. Mary asked if the Risk and Needs Committee was able to drill down on these data at all. Susan responded that given the mechanics of how they get the data, they were not able to – but again, would like to be able to seek broader data sources which also allow more depth – for the future. Mary asked if these needs are currently unmet. Susan responded that because DJJDP presented them as needs data, and the committee identified the gaps within those data, it appears they are in fact, unmet.

Kimberly asked two of the court counselors in attendance to indicate the needs that they see. They suggested Emergency Placements, programs for girls who go AWOL, and truancy placements/programs.

Mary asked about Community Service/Restitution. Susan explained that the Risk and Needs Committee recognized the two education needs from the data and that the committee saw a link between allowing youth to make restitution in the community and stay in school. Laura McFern and Brandi echoed the importance of community restitution dollars and programming. Kimberly noted that in her work with Juvenile Justice Subcommittee they are finding a dearth of data. She hopes the Risk and Needs Committee will seek to broaden the data sources. Kimm suggested as the Risk and Needs Committee moves forward that they include not just needs assessment but also asset mapping – Susan agreed.

Mary suggested that if she reports from the Funding Committee, it may add to the RFP discussion. She reported that members of the Funding Committee met yesterday. They discussed creating an evaluation tool to be used for the funding process this year. This evaluation tool would accompany the RFP and would be explained thoroughly at the orientation for this RFP. Susan asked if minutes were taken at this meeting and Mary noted that a member of her staff did take minutes. Susan asked that either minutes or a written report from the Funding Committee meeting be sent to the JCPC.

Kimm suggested there are three options: 1) The Funding Committee reviews all RFPs, uses the evaluation tool to score them independently, meets to discuss them as a group to identify their strengths and weaknesses and identify any remaining questions, those receiving a score of “C” (70) or better would be brought to the entire JCPC, and then the Funding Committee would make recommendations to the JCPC. 2) The Funding Committee reviews all RFPs, uses the evaluation tool to score them independently, meets to discuss them as a group to identify their strengths and weaknesses and identify any remaining questions, and decides which programs to fund. 3) The Funding Committee reviews all RFPs, uses the evaluation tool to score them independently, meets to discuss them as a group to identify their strengths and weaknesses and identify any remaining questions, the entire JCPC also receives all RFPs, and the entire JCPC reviews the RFPs and makes the funding decisions.

Much discussion ensued. Steve Newman noted that he was concerned about not being allowed to review some RFPs. Susan made a friendly amendment and then retracted it. Jeff suggested that option 2 was not an option because the entire JCPC makes the final funding decision. He added that the JCPC members need to trust the committees to do their work.

Motion was made to vote on Kimm’s option 1, “The Funding Committee reviews all RFPs, uses the evaluation tool to score them independently, meets to discuss them as a group to identify their strengths and weaknesses and identify any remaining questions, those receiving a score of “C” (70) or better would be brought to the entire JCPC, and then the Funding Committee would make recommendations to the JCPC.” The motion passed with 10 Yeas and 2 Nays.

Kimm noted that there needs to be an overview meeting with all interested programs after the RFP goes out and before they are funded. Brandi indicated that she has already met with currently funded programs. Kimm described other funding processes she’s had experience with and suggested that the evaluation tool be included with the RFP and discussed thoroughly at the overview meeting. Mary added that multiple sites should be targeted for advertising the RFP.

**RFP Discussion and April Council Meeting Date:** The RFP was not voted on and there was no discussion regarding the April council meeting.

**Budget Update:** Brandi indicated that the budget cut is an anticipated 5% over the 10% cut of last year’s budget for a total reduction of 15%.

D. Franklin Freeman inquired about a roster of JCPC members. Mary asked about how vacancies on the JCPC are filled. Brandi noted that the Nominating Committee needs to work on these topics and asked Tangela to email everyone an updated JCPC roster with the constituency that each member represents.

There were no **Updates and Announcements**.

**New Business:** No new business.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

**Next meeting is Tuesday, March 22, 2011 at 4:30 p.m.**

*Minutes submitted by Susan McCarter*