

St. Lucie Co. Juvenile Justice Council
Serving as the Delinquency Prevention Network for the Roundtable of St. Lucie County
Minutes of May Meeting
May 4, 2011

1. Welcome and Introductions

Attendees:

Miki McMurtry, Kristi Walsh, Wydee'a Wilson, Marcella Bianca, Dani Dreizehnter, Ruth DeStafney, Lt. Douglas Hardie, Shari Heisey, Henrieta Cook, Kim Thomas, Stephanie Vernot, Paula Friedrich, Alice Kenyon

In Jennifer Romelien's absence, Dani Dreizehnter chaired the meeting.

2. **Approval of Agenda and Minutes:**

Kristi Walsh made a motion to accept the minutes with the addition of Miki McMurtry to the attendance for the April meeting. Miki seconded the motion.

Kristi also moved to accept the agenda. Marcella Bianca seconded the motion. Both motions carried unanimously.

3. **Reports:**

Wydee'a Wilson reported that Marcia Miller has retired and that she herself (Wydee'a) is Acting Chief JPO until a Chief has been appointed. Former DJJ Secretary Rex Uberman has left the Department. Acting DJJ Secretary Michael McCaffrey is filling in temporarily while awaiting the appointment of Deputy Secretary Robert Woody who is currently Supervisor for Alachua County Jail. More information about cuts in Residential and Detention is expected next month. Assistant Chief of Probation positions are scheduled to be eliminated. DJJ does not expect to lose any Probation Officers or P.O. Supervisors. There are 6 vacancies including 2 in Martin Co. and 2 in St. Lucie. Circuit 19 has particularly high caseloads. For example a typical caseload in Miami and Palm Beach is 85, while Martin Co has about 90 youth per P.O. In our Circuit, Martin Co. currently has the highest caseloads as they have staff covering for the 2 open positions, with St. Lucie in the middle and Indian River with the most manageable caseload.

Ruth DeStafney reported for Jennifer Romelien that Circuit 19 is still awaiting the budget.

Lt. Hardie reported that there are currently 21 SRDs that he hopes to maintain. He asked how the various diversions were funded, & is interested in learning more about each of the diversions. Both pre-arrest diversions, PSL PD and FP PD, are available to Sheriff Deputies to use within city jurisdiction. Although the new statute dictates that all first time juvenile misdemeanor offenders must go to Civil Citation, Paula pointed out that the purpose of the statute is to divert away from the circuit, so cases can be diverted to any of the diversions within the circuit. Officers should continue to use their discretion as to which diversion to use.

Paula Friedrich clarified that although Florida Statute allows counties to collect \$3 for each traffic violation to support Teen Court, it is the County who collects & maintains the funds. The State has provided grants for Teen Court in the past, but they have not administered the actual funds collected at the county level. Paula reported that this Friday's legislative update conference call should provide an update on the budget. Needless to say, County Councils are interested to hear about the budget. There are some questions being asked by Juvenile Justice Councils statewide about the *Invest in Children* dollars collected via sales of the Invest In Children license tags.

4. **New Business:**

Bullying Prevention

The group watched the 17 minute Bystander DVD which focuses on the role of bystander as the significant role to curtail bullying. Then we discussed what the Youth Leadership class was doing next: Presenting to the Roundtable.

Dani urged the group to clarify what our Action Plan is. Robert O'Neill stated that the Schools have been doing various things for the past 6 years about bullying. There is a curriculum on the website. He feels caught between the many demands of Federal government as well as local expectation in view of the time available.

Stephanie Vernot, founder of STANCE, introduced her work in educating kids about social and emotional empowerment.

Kristi Walsh mentioned that national Safe Place avenues where kids can Text for Help. There is help available through Teen Life Choices as well. She believes we should be reaching out to parents, Pastors, Parents' Academy and others.

Elections for DPN Chair and Vice-Chair & recording secretary will be held at next meeting, June 7, 2011. In addition, 2 members of the DPN will be chosen to attend 19th Circuit Juvenile Justice Board Meetings on third Wednesday of each month.

There was a question about the policy/statute and procedure for a youth to have their JJIS record sealed and expunged. We understand that 60 days after completion of a diversion the family can submit forms to FDLE with a fee of \$75. When FDLE approves this is sent to DJJ and Clerk of Court with directions to either seal or expunge a certain record. Sealed files are kept and marked SEALED. Expunged records are shredded and hopefully removed from all computers. The actual process seems to be unclear to many.

5. **Announcements:**

Marcella Bianca informed the group that the SWAT youth will present to the County Commissioners tonight. They are asking that a resolution to restrict vendors from selling candy flavored tobacco products to youth be considered. Marcella believes that the resolution will pass. An ordinance is expected to be put in place.

Shari Heisey reported that the MODEL Mentoring grant will end in September. So Mentors are being referred to Children's Home Society.

Miki moved to adjourn. Kristi seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 am.