

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CADDO PARISH COMMISSION'S
JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMITTEE
HELD ON THE 3rd DAY OF JUNE, 2019

The Caddo Parish Juvenile Justice Committee met in legal session on the above date, at 2:00 P.M., in the Government Chambers Conference Room, with Mrs. Stormy Gage-Watts, presiding, and the following members in attendance: Commissioners Dominick, Gage-Watts, Louis Johnson, and Middleton (4). ABSENT: Commissioners Bowman and Lyndon B. Johnson (2).

Also, in attendance were Parish Administrator Dr. Woody Wilson, Parish Attorney Donna Frazier, Juvenile Justice Director Clay Walker, and Ms. Laurie McGehee.

The invocation was given during the last meeting, and Mr. Dominick led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Gage-Watts opened the floor for public comments. There being no one to speak, Mrs. Gage-Watts closed the public comments.

Mrs. Gage-Watts welcomed everyone to the meeting, and stated that today's meeting is to discuss the following items:

- Juvenile Services Update
- Discuss "Raise the Age"

Mrs. Gage-Watts moved onto the first New Business item, *Juvenile Services Update*.

Mr. Walker announced that Juvenile Services will host a Health, Wellness & Information Fair on Saturday, June 8 from 9am—1 pm. The event will take place at the Ag Building at the State Fairgrounds, 3701 Hudson Avenue, Shreveport.

He also announced that there will be a Human Trafficking Conference from June 27—28 at LSU-Shreveport.

He also said that there will be a NWLA Early Childhood Policy Summit. He mentioned that they would like two Commissioners to attend this event, which will be held on September 20, October 18, and November 15 at The Port, Caddo-Bossier, 6000 Doug Attaway Blvd, Shreveport.

Mr. Walker mentioned that in 2021, all juveniles will be housed at the Juvenile Detention Center. He explained that the feds passed a mandate that all juveniles are to be held at the Juvenile Detention Center. Mr. Walker also said that the district judge could go through seven factors to determine if that juvenile could go to CCC. It goes before a review board, and it would have to be reviewed every 30 days for a maximum of 180 days.

The concern Mr. Walker has is that if a juvenile who is accused of murder comes to the Juvenile Detention Center, the other kids will emulate him/her because they are the "big kid on campus".

Answering a question from Mrs. Gage-Watts regarding 10-12 year old children, Mr. Walker said there are not many that come in, but if they do, it is a serious crime like rape, murder, armed robbery, etc. They normally do not stay at the detention center though.

Mrs. Gage-Watts asked Mr. Walker to describe a typical day for a juvenile in the detention center. The detention center is divided into pods, so the kids in each pod do everything together. They go have breakfast, go to school, and participate in rec time (basketball, exercise, yoga, CrossFit, etc.) Mr. Walker also said that civility in the detention center is due to programming.

Mrs. Gage-Watts talked about expunging juvenile records. Mr. Walker explained that expungement is not truly necessary in juvenile because you are not convicted, you are adjudicated. Mrs. Gage-Watts received a couple of phone calls regarding a person wanting to get a job, but their juvenile record showed up on the background check. Mr. Walker explained that if they were 17 years old, then they were considered an adult, so that record would show.

Attorney Frazier wanted to know why it would not satisfy the federal mandate if the transfer kids are kept separately at CCC. Mr. Walker explained that the sight and sound separation is not complete. He also explained that there is only one infirmary and one cafeteria at CCC, so if a juvenile gets sick, he/she would have to go to the same infirmary as the adult prisoners.

Attorney Frazier wanted to know if it would be feasible to completely separate the juveniles from the adults at CCC. Mr. Walker said that they are separated, aside from the medical and feed issues. Attorney Frazier pointed out that Mr. Walker may get "pushback" for trying to go to trial within 190 days.

Mrs. Bryant wanted to know the consequence for being non-compliant. Mr. Walker said that if all juveniles were not out of adult lockups, the State would lose their federal block grant monies. Mrs. Bryant mentioned that the State does not award Caddo Parish with much block grant money. She also pointed out that it would be cheaper for the Parish to lose their block grant money than to be in compliance with this mandate.

Dr. Wilson suggested that different times be scheduled for infirmary times for the juveniles and different times when they eat in the cafeteria. He also mentioned that it is time for another criminal justice reform meeting with the Sheriff, District Attorney, etc. to discuss options regarding this mandate.

Ms. McGehee wanted to know if it would affect the whole state if one parish was not in compliance. Mr. Walker stated that they could cut the block grant monies off for that one parish. He also believes that housing those children at CCC would not be in compliance, even though they are separate, because they are under the same roof.

Attorney Frazier cautioned if the Parish does not comply, they could have an equal protection argument that the kids in other parishes are getting more services than Caddo. She said, at minimum, keep them separate at CCC while still providing them the services that the other children are receiving.

Answering a question from Mrs. Bryant regarding the number of beds, Mr. Walker said that Baton Rouge has 52 and New Orleans has 48 beds.

Mrs. Gage-Watts wanted to know if Juvenile Services was using any bed space at RCC (Restoration Crisis Center). Mr. Walker said that the contract has not been completed just yet, but it should be done by the end of the week. He also said that the contract has been finished for Just Believe.

Mrs. Gage-Watts then talked about 10 year olds again. She said that some counties are not charging 10 years old. Mr. Walker pointed out that a child who commits a crime under the age of 10 is treated as a FINS (Family In Need of Services).

Dr. Wilson wanted to know if the children being held at CCC are receiving the same services as the children in Juvenile Services. Mr. Walker said that they do not receive the same programming as Juvenile Services, such as school, etc.

Mr. Walker said that he would not mind if they had a separate space at the detention center for the transition children, but with them being there for longer periods of time, they do not have the space for them.

Attorney Frazier suggested to keep the transfer kids where they're at, but provide them with the same services, i.e. school, as the children in the detention center. She suggested also to keep them separate from the general population at CCC during infirmary and lunch times. Mr. Walker pointed out that if they are going to consider that unit at CCC a juvenile unit, they would need to have the same staff ratio as the detention center and remove all of their weaponry. Mrs. Bryant said that the Sheriff more than likely will not unarm his deputies.

Mr. Walker then talked about the average daily census at the Juvenile Detention Center. He said they have not been at capacity since the Raise the Age Act was implemented in March, but they would still like to decrease the population. He also cautioned, when the violent offenders come to the detention center, they will not be able to divert them to the misdemeanor referral center or send them home. He suggested that the average daily census be at twelve.

Mr. Walker also said that SPD, Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office, School Resource Officers, Juvenile Services, and sometimes the FBI all meet once a month to discuss juveniles and juvenile crime. The next meeting will be June 12 at VYJ.

Mr. Middleton wanted to know what happens to the kids once they're picked up by law enforcement. Mr. Walker explained that the Sheriff's Office and Shreveport Police Department writes them a summons. If SPD cannot locate their parents, then the juveniles are brought to the misdemeanor referral center.

Mr. Walker mentioned that the detention center still has not reached capacity since the implementation of the Raise the Age Act.

Mr. Walker also pointed out that 59% of our children are not kindergarten ready. He said that the brain is 90% developed by the age of 5. The summit being held in October will help develop a plan of action to ensure the success of every child, thus decreasing juvenile crime.

At this time, there were no more discussion, the meeting adjourned.

____/s/Todd Hopkins

Todd A. Hopkins
Commission Clerk