

**Governor's Juvenile Corrections Review Committee
Minutes of the May 7, 2010 Meeting at Lincoln Hills School
W 4380 Copper Lake Avenue, Irma, WI
Open Meeting 2:00PM-3:00PM**

Attendance:

The following Committee members were present: Co-chairs Jim Moeser and Greg Lewis, Hon. Judge Wendell Askenette, Lori Vance, John Burmaster, John Solberg, Hon. Judge Nielsen, and Mark Mertens. Division of Juvenile Corrections staff present: Margaret Carpenter, Administrator, Silvia Jackson, Assistant Administrator, Jocelyn Schoeneck and Elaine Olson. Others in attendance at the meeting: Marty Beil, Mark Waddium, Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf, Susan McMurray, Kelly Bablitch, Jennifer Collins, Former Secretary of DHSS, Jerry Whitburn, Tomahawk Mayor, Robert Lee, and Merrill Mayor, Bill Bialecki.

I. Committee Discussion of the Lincoln Hills School Site Visit

Co-chairs, Jim Moeser and Greg Lewis, convened the meeting at 2:00PM. Attendees of the tour were asked to sign the confidentiality agreement if they had not done so previously.

Co-chair Moeser began the discussion by asking each Committee member to share their reaction to the tour. Committee member Burmaster said he looked for engagement of youth by staff and their relationships with youth. He liked what he saw and felt the tour was amazing. Committee member Solberg was impressed with he saw and noted the benefit of seeing quality staff. Judge Nielsen thought the tour was thorough and on-time with a tight agenda. He also thanked the staff for their work. Committee member Vance echoed the views of others and added that she was impressed with the treatment programs. She also said there was a feeling of comfort and safety for the kids, and safety for staff too. Mr. Mertens agreed with views expressed by others. Judge Askenette liked the CAP program and the emphasis on education. He stated that it appears that the youth have goals and the resources to reach them. He also thought the foster grandparents were very precious.

Co-chair Lewis said the meaning of corrections is seen differently here, and that it took corrections to another level. He found the staff to be professional and he was proud of what was going on. He added that he was impressed with both institutions, and that for some kids, it was the best thing that could happen to them.

II. Committee Discussion of Additional Information Needed

Co-chair Moeser noted the importance of the Committee's task and asked the group if they had thought of other information they would like to see. DJC Administrator Carpenter noted that several questions have been asked and that staff is gathering information. She referred to a question at a previous meeting from Committee member Solberg regarding the Missouri model. She indicated the preliminary answer is both "yes" and "no". Private facilities are running non-secure models now. But, corrections has to operate state facilities.

Members Solberg and Judge Nielsen talked about counties' use of detention beds at Lincoln Hills School. Options for detention are limited in Northern Wisconsin. Judge Nielson noted that the cost of detention at Lincoln Hills School is a deterrent as the cost is the same as the institution daily rate. He also noted that historically, the institutions were used for placement of truant but that is not the case now. The institutions are used as a last resort after all possible options have been explored. Moeser requested a map of the detention facilities and a report of usage, by county, of the detention beds at Lincoln Hills.

Co-chair Lewis noted that cost is critical and wondered what it would cost if this place wasn't here. He said the group needs to look at costs and benefits and challenges with the deficit. Co-chair Moeser also noted the group would need to look at implications of closure on detention use and costs in general. Fiscal issues will need to be addressed in upcoming meetings.

Committee member Mertens asked for information on the population of 10-17 year olds, and wondered about the floor for the corrections population and what will the institutions look like in 10 years. He added that we are in the business of putting ourselves out of a job. Administrator Carpenter said staff would get the population information. She noted the population of 0-17 year olds has decreased in Wisconsin, and that juvenile crime is down both within the state and across the country.

Committee member Mertens asked for information on revocations: how many are returned for technical violations and new offenses, how many are returned for AODA relapse, what is the length of stay of returnees and what was the youth's committing offense. Administrator Carpenter indicated that staff would compile the information over the past five years.

Committee member Vance asked about recidivism information, and inquired about how far are youth tracked on once they leave an institution. She also asked for information about where youth go when they are released. Administrator Carpenter indicated that youth are tracked until the expiration of their supervision order. Recidivism information will be available under both the old definition and the new definition which is aligned with the adult

system. Administrator Carpenter noted that information is tracked based on failures.

Committee member Solberg asked for information on family visits at both institutions, data on security stays, and assaults in the institutions.

Co-chair Lewis asked about the issue of cost. He wondered about the Committee's recommendation being tied to cost, and how much emphasis will be put on cost and quality. He said the quality is great, and he told the Committee the question of cost cannot be avoided. Committee member Burmaster said that the group's charge has more to do with what is in the best interest of youth. He noted that DOC and the Governor will have to look at all of the economic issues. Co-chair Lewis asked how costs would be affected if one of the institutions were closed. If you close an institution, will that decrease the cost? How does it affect the bottom line?

Co-chair Moeser asked about reducing costs at the institutions. Administrator Carpenter said that information was collected on the costs of each institution, and that costs will not go down if an institution is closed. This is because a deficit exists now. She also said that staff looked at what it would take to reduce the daily rate. This information will be shared with the Committee. Judge Askenette inquired about the impact on programming. Administrator Carpenter indicated that the quality of programming has not been reduced in this deficit.

III. Committee Discussion of Agenda Items/Information needed for May 14, 2010 Meeting

Co-chair Moeser moved the discussion to the agenda items for the next meeting and what data will be available at that time. Committee member Solberg indicated that he would like to look at data before the meeting.

There was discussion about hearing from other presenters such as union leaders and counties at the May 14th meeting, and also reserving time for the Committee to talk about what criteria will be used to develop recommendations for the Governor. Also, Co-chair Moeser suggested hearing from counties as purchasers of services, allowing for open public time and hearing from families too. Judge Nielsen asked if there was a way to get public input via e-mail.

Co-chair Lewis thought time should be used at the first part of the meeting to review the Committee's charge again to seek more clarity, and to narrow what the Committee is going to do. He noted that the group has now had the visits and observed the caretaking at the institutions.

Co-chair Moeser asked about getting input from the Department and that this option was mentioned early on. Administrator Carpenter stated for the record that the Department wants to be independent from this Committee, and to be fair and objective throughout the process. She noted her views in terms of education. The research shows that societies with high crime rates have high illiteracy rates.

Moeser talked about the Committee's timetable and noted the two upcoming meeting dates of May 14th and May 21st, 2010. He thought time should be spent on a draft report at the May 21st meeting, and that another date should be set in early June. The authorship of the report was raised by Judge Nielsen. Moeser indicated the Committee will have to figure this out.

Marty Beil, Executive Director, Council 24 asked to speak. He made a point about 100 kids being housed in the adult system at RYOC (Racine Youthful Offender Correctional) institution. He stated these kids need to be moved back to the juvenile institutions, and that the recidivism rates of those in the adult system should be compared to the rate in the juvenile facilities. He indicated that he represents all of Corrections, and that what people saw at Lincoln Hills is not available in the adult system.

Committee member Mertens asked how strict the OJJDP (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention) Act is regarding 17 year olds and if there is any flexibility. Senator Holperin addressed the group and indicated that the issue of returning 17 years to the jurisdiction of the juvenile system will be coming up in January when legislators come back into session.

The co-chairs recognized members in the audience and thanked them for coming to the meeting: The Mayors of Tomahawk and Merrill and Senator Holperin. Marty Beil also noted the presence of the former Secretary of the Department of Health & Social Services, Jerry Whitburn, and he was thanked for attending.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05PM.

Prepared by Elaine Olson and Jocelyn Schoeneck