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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA BOARD OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

MEETING MINUTES January 11, 2022

As the purpose of this meeting was informational and not to discuss or transact public business, it was held electronically, in accordance with Virginia Code § 2.2-3607.

Board Members Present: Eric English, Tyren Frazier, William “Will” Johnson, Scott Kizner, Anita James Price, Gregory “Greg” Underwood, Robert “Tito” Vilchez, and Synethia White

Board Members Absent: Dana Schrad

Department of Juvenile Justice (Department) Staff Present: Dhara Amin, Ken Bailey, Melinda Boone, Valerie Boykin, Ken Davis, Jenna Easton, Mike Favale, Robert Foster, Stephanie Garrison, Regina Harris, Wendy Hoffman, Joyce Holmon, Dee Kirk, Andrea McMahon, Ashaki McNeil, Linda McWilliams, Michael Morton, Guillermo Novo, Margaret O’Shea (Attorney General’s Office), Jamie Patten, Beth Stinnett, James Towey, and Angela Valentine

Guests Present: Kerry Chilton (disAbility Law Center of Virginia), Will Egen (Virginia Commission on Youth), Greg Hopkins (Department of Criminal Justice Services), and Shelesha Taylor (disAbility Law Center of Virginia)

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson Tyren Frazier called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. Chairperson Frazier welcomed those present and asked for introductions from Board members. Director Valerie Boykin asked for staff introductions. Due to limitations with the media platform used for the meeting, guests were not able to introduce themselves.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

DIRECTOR’S CERTIFICATION ACTIONS

Ken Bailey, Certifications Manager, Department

Individual audit reports were included in the Board packet, together with a summary of the Director’s certification actions taken on August 26, 2021, and December 6, 2021.

The Henrico Juvenile Detention Home received 100% compliance on their audit and a letter of congratulations for their performance level. The program was certified until August 25, 2024.

The audit for the Lynchburg Regional Juvenile Detention Center and Post-dispositional Detention Program found one deficiency. The program's previous audit in 2017 found five areas of non-compliance, with four being critical requirements. They have shown significant improvement.

The Chaplin Youth Center in Fredericksburg received 100% compliance on their audit and a letter of congratulations for their performance level. The program was certified until June 10, 2024.

Mr. Bailey commented that, despite all the challenges, the Department's court service units continue to demonstrate exceptional compliance during the pandemic.

The 6th District Court Service Unit received 100% compliance on their audit and a letter of congratulations for their performance level. The program was certified until March 18, 2024.

The 19th District Court Service Unit received 100% compliance on their audit and a letter of congratulations for their performance level. The program was certified until March 18, 2024.

The 31st District Court Service Unit received 100% compliance on their audit and a letter of congratulations for their performance level. The program was certified until April 20, 2024.

Mr. Bailey reviewed the certification actions taken by the Director on December 6, 2021.

Anchor House Group Home in Martinsville cares for youth in post-dispositional and pre-dispositional shelter care status. The audit found two deficiencies for non-compliance related to the grievance procedure and emergency evacuation procedures. A follow-up review was conducted on November 1, 2021, by which time the two deficiencies had been corrected, and the program was certified until October 14, 2024.

Andrew B. Ferrari Argus House operates a group home for boys in Arlington that includes services for transitional independent living for the placement care of older youth. The home received 100% compliance on their audit and a letter of congratulations for their performance level. The program was certified until October 1, 2023. In their audit of 2017, they had seven areas of non-compliance, and have shown great improvement.

The audit for Fairfax Juvenile Detention Center and Post-dispositional Detention Program found one deficiency for missing a tuberculosis screening, which was a critical requirement. The follow-up review indicated the issue was corrected, and the program was certified until January 14, 2024.

Foundations Group Home is a group home for girls located in Fairfax. The audit found two documentation issues. The follow-up review indicated the two issues were resolved, and the program was certified until March 15, 2024.

The audit for Loudoun County Juvenile Detention Center and Post-dispositional Detention Program in Leesburg found one deficiency, which the Center took immediate action to correct. The program was certified until September 8, 2024.

The Lynchburg Group Home was certified until September 8, 2024. This was a significant result as the program's audit in 2018 found 11 deficiencies, with five being critical. The most recent audit found only two deficiencies, both minor and immediately corrected. The Department is proud of the hard work done by the Home, which is a pre-dispositional program.

Judge Patrick D. Molinari Juvenile Shelter is an emergency shelter program in Manassas. Their 2017 audit found five areas of deficiencies, and the most recent audit found only one missed area, which was immediately corrected.

The Virginia Beach Juvenile Detention Center and Post-dispositional Detention Program received 100% compliance on their audit and a letter of congratulations for their performance level. The program was certified until April 18, 2024.

Chairperson Frazier informed the new Board members that these actions are reviewed every meeting. Mr. Bailey outlined the certification process. The regulations promulgated by the Board require the Department's Certification Unit to assess compliance for all programs certified by the Board (including court service units, group homes, detention homes, and correctional centers). The Certification Unit is responsible for making sure these programs work within the required regulations. Mr. Bailey has a staff of four that conduct audits either virtually or in a combination of onsite and virtual formats to assess compliance with as many as 356 standards for a residential program. It is a time consuming process that requires a large amount of documentation that facilities must maintain.

HUMAN RESEARCH AND DE-IDENTIFIED CASE-SPECIFIC DATA REQUEST ANNUAL REPORT FY 2021

Dhara Amin, Senior Research Associate, Department

6 VAC 35-170, *Minimum Standards for Research Involving Human Subjects or Records of the Department of Juvenile Justice* is the regulation for human research and case-specific data requests for research purposes. The standards are to protect youth, their sensitive information, and their rights according to federal requirements, the Virginia Administrative Code, and the Department's guidance document outlining what is and is not allowed. The Human Research Review Committee, chaired by Dr. Amin, is responsible for the review of all submitted proposals, for voting on approval or not, and for proposal revisions. The committee provides a recommendation to the agency Director for final approval.

The annual report summarized the submitted and active projects in FY 2021. The report reflected some new regulation requirements implemented in June 2021 in the Administrative Code.

COVID-19 was the biggest challenge from the past few years, as all human research had been temporarily halted by federal guideline. Unfortunately, no clear cutoff date had been provided at the start, and many states' institutional review boards had little flexibility given their own COVID-19 trends and positivity rates. Overall, the Department saw a great decrease in the number of proposals received; however, the Department did receive more data requests requiring operational planning than in previous years.

This past year, there were 15 active cases or studies; nine were closed and six provided executive summaries found in Appendix A of the Board packet. The Research Unit is extremely proud of the number of cases and studies closed, and made an effort to wrap up long-term projects that took more time to complete than originally anticipated.

Board Member Anita James Price thanked Dr. Amin for her presentation, and noted it was a comprehensive report. Board Member Price asked if trauma-informed resilience training was considered. Dr. Amin referred to the executive summary in Appendix A on Vision 21 Linking System of Care for Children and Youth. This trauma assessment tool and victimization survey has been studied and piloted to use statewide for youth and families who overlap by the Department and other state stakeholders. Instead of repeatedly asking the youth the same questions, the tool compiled the questions in a centralized way so agencies can share data for case planning purposes.

REGULATORY UPDATE

Ken Davis, Regulatory Affairs Coordinator, Department

6VAC35-71 Regulation Governing Juvenile Correctional Centers

This regulation became effective on January 1, 2014, and work began with the publication of the Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA) in October 2016. Some Board members may recall the significant changes made to the proposed text after public comment ended on November 29, 2019, with the text being advanced through a revised Proposed Stage submitted in August 2021. Executive branch review of the revised Proposed Stage included the Governor's approval on January 4, 2022, and the Department is now preparing to submit the action to the Registrar's Office for publication in the *Virginia Register*, and a 60-day public comment period will follow. Based on the Register publication schedule, Mr. Davis anticipated this will get published in the February 14, 2022, of the Register.

6VAC35-101 Regulation Governing Juvenile Secure Detention Centers

This regulation became effective on January 1, 2014, and was under a comprehensive review. Public comment period for the proposed stage ended July 2021, and resulted in two public comments. Those comments concerned issues of room restriction and restraints that the Board discussed and voted on prior to advancing to the Proposed Stage. The comments did not raise any new concerns. The reconvened workgroup began meeting in June 2021 and concluded its session on December 6, 2021. The workgroup recommended a number of minor changes, and the Department is currently preparing the necessary documents for advancement to the final stage. The Department anticipates bringing the amended proposed language before the Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

In their recent report, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) recommended regulatory action regarding training at juvenile detention centers. The Department's plan is to move forward with the current regulatory action to avoid any further delays. The Department will work with the Board to advance separately any additional changes that might be necessary as a result of JLARC's recommendations.

6VAC35-150-335 Regulation for Nonresidential Services, Diversion

The action sought to remove the 90-day deadline for completing truancy diversions, consistent with Chapter 753 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly. The Department advanced this action through the fast-track process, with executive branch review concluding with the Governor's approval on July 22, 2021. Public comment ended on September 15, 2021 and, as there were no objections, the regulatory change took effect on October 1, 2021.

6VAC35-180 Regulations Governing Mental Health Services Transition Plans for Incarcerated Juveniles

This regulation is no longer pending, as the Governor's approval was received on January 4, 2022, and it is being prepared for publication in the *Virginia Register*. As with 6VAC35-71, Mr. Davis anticipated publication in the February 14 issue, followed by the required public comment period.

6VAC35-200 Regulations Governing Youth Detained Pursuant to Federal Contracts (*New)

This action seeks to establish new regulations applicable to youth detained in juvenile correctional facilities in programs pursuant to contracts with the federal government. The action carries out the legislative mandate in Chapter 599 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly. There was no public comment during the NOIRA stage. The workgroup completed its first series of meetings, and work continues on the proposed language. The workgroup will give the proposed text a final review before presenting to the Board for advancement to the Proposed Stage.

6VAC35-210 Compulsory Minimum Training Standards for Direct Care Employees

On track to be the next action to become effective, this is also a fast-track action that was submitted for Attorney General review on June 22, 2021. The Attorney General certified the action on September 14, 2021. The rest of the executive branch review proceeded quickly, with the Department of Planning and Budget and Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security giving approval in late November 2021, and the Governor signing off on December 29, 2021. The Department submitted this regulation and its associated guidance document, outlining performance outcomes, for publication in the *Virginia Register* on January 31, 2022. A 30-day public comment period will follow publication. If no objections are raised, the regulation and the guidance document will become effective on March 18, 2022.

ACTIONS PENDING

- 1. 6VAC35-30 Regulation Governing State Reimbursement of Local Juvenile Residential Facility Costs**
- 2. 6VAC35-35 Regulation Governing the Process for Planning, Designing, and Constructing Locally Funded Juvenile Residential Facilities (*New)**
- 3. 6VAC35-41 Regulation Governing Juvenile Group Homes and Halfway Houses**

The work continues on all three pending regulations. There have been no status changes since the Board last met.

SCREENING FOR EXPERIENCES AND STRENGTHS (SEAS): NEW TRAUMA SCREENING TOOL

Linda McWilliams, Deputy Director for Community Programs, Department

The current tool used in the Department for trauma is called Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE). The ACE was a good initial screen for trauma, but concerns have been raised that it has not fully captured all experiences of the youth such as exposure to violence. The agency's Research Unit was asked to review national tools used by other states and the level of expertise needed to administer those tools. Those results led to the work of the Department of Social Services (DSS) project known as Virginia HEALS (formerly Vision 21 and, later, Linking Systems of Care) and the SEAS trauma tool. This was a seven-year federally funded project that included training and assistance by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. Child trauma experts served on the national steering committee. The SEAS tool was piloted over a period of three and a half years, and the Department served as a pilot site during that evaluation period.

Ms. McWilliams introduced the next speakers from the Department. Regina Harris, the Regional Program Manager for the southern region and Jenna Easton, the Diversion Program Manager, were tasked to co-facilitate a workgroup to develop steps to implement the SEAS tool, to include a plan and procedures.

Ms. Regina Harris continued the briefing. The SEAS was developed in Virginia through a grant project originally called Vision 21 that brought together child serving agencies from across the state. The PowerPoint in the Board packet lists a link to their website to learn more information on the project as well as webinars on the SEAS and other trauma topics.

The SEAS tool is just one component of the Virginia HEALS trauma-informed model of service delivery for children, youth, and families. The Department has been an active partner since it began in 2015. The SEAS is a free screening tool that identifies trauma, victimization experiences, exposure to violence, and symptoms in youth. It is a comprehensive screen that encompasses the unique forms of trauma experienced and witnessed by youth. It gathers information on six different types of victimization, including physical and sexual abuse, trafficking, bullying, community violence, and domestic violence, along with identifying whether the perpetrator was a family member and the approximate date the trauma occurred.

The SEAS tool was finalized and made available to the Department for use with youth in 2020. As part of the development of the tool there were three separate rounds of a six-month pilot completed over the course of three and a half years. Multiple court service units and numerous child-serving entities such as schools

and community outreach programs in five localities volunteered as pilot sites. The data collected from these pilots was used to fine-tune the tool and screening process along with the accompanying trainings.

One notable piece of data that was collected on the pilot project was the length of time it took to administer the SEAS. It was determined to take an average of fifteen to thirty minutes depending upon the youth's responsiveness to questions. It may take agency staff a little longer to administer the tool in the beginning, while they are learning and becoming familiar with it. The SEAS must be conducted through an interview process, as the tool was not designed to be self-administered. Prior to administering the SEAS, frontline service workers are required to complete training which will be provided by the Department.

The SEAS is comprised of a series of 34 questions and is available in three age groups. The Department will be implementing two of those versions: the versions for 7 to 12 year olds and for ages 13-21. The language employed in each version varies slightly to reflect phrases that are age and developmentally appropriate. The overall structure and content is the same across the three versions with the three primary domain SEAS being defining victimization, possible reaction to trauma, and protective factors. A key point of this tool (and an important part of the SEAS suite more broadly) is identifying protective factors, so that the response can be targeted to utilize and build upon the youth's identified strengths and existing support.

In addition to developing a procedure that guides implementation and administration of the SEAS by staff, the Department has worked with Virginia HEALS and other subject matter experts to create a referral and response protocol that goes along with the procedure to provide clear and specific guidance to agency staff on how to respond to individual results from the SEAS. The ACE served a valuable purpose by providing the Department with an introduction to trauma, but the Department looks to move beyond being a trauma-informed agency to a trauma-responsive one. The agency needs to ensure that it recognizes and responds to all forms of trauma, so that appropriate services and interventions to promote healing are provided in an effort to prevent youth from further system involvement as a result of their trauma exposure.

Ms. Jenna Easton continued the briefing. The workgroup is currently finalizing the procedure and has incorporated the impact statements provided by the court service unit directors, as well as recommendations made through the equity assessment tool review. The procedure has been vetted by many, and the Department is excited to see this come to fruition.

Over the past few months, the agency has been introducing the tool to the staff and partner stakeholders. In addition to the information shared with staff during community listening sessions in October, an overview of the SEAS tool has also been presented at the Judicial Liaison Committee and the Commonwealth's Attorneys Liaison Committee.

A separate workgroup designed the training for SEAS. The training plan takes a triage approach; the priority is to train staff who will use the tool and then share the training with other staff who need to be informed, such as the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCCA) service providers and the regional service coordinators. They can take this journey along with the Department to becoming more than trauma-informed to trauma-responsive. The Department's goal is to begin training, as well as release a new social history template and procedure, later this month.

The ACE results have been provided in the social history report, and the SEAS results will be provided also in such reports. This will require changes to the social history. The procedure has been vetted and taken through due process. The social history report is typically a pre-dispositional report shared with the court on information about the young person, their background, and their family. It covers a wide variety of information from their school, community, peers, and family. The social history gives a clear picture to the

court about that young person standing in front of it, so when dispositional decisions are made by the court they have that information.

The Department plans to move forward with full implementation of the SEAS tool in April. This means that agency staff will be trained and the SEAS adopted as the Department's official trauma screening tool.

Director Boykin explained that the ACE has been used by the Department for seven years and was a valuable tool, but was originally designed many decades ago for adult women who experienced weight issues. The Department believed that by sharing the SEAS tool with other child-serving agencies, all will speak the same language and look at the same issues and concerns. The data show that at least 95% of all committed youth have at least one ACE trauma issue and at least 65% have at least three issues of trauma they have experienced prior to coming into the Department's care.

Board Member Anita Price was excited about this program and values the potential collaboration with others in addressing trauma in young people. Board Member Price was encouraged by the Department becoming a trauma-responsive agency. It is important to use the same language and implement these types of tools to help heal the youth.

Board Member Tito Vilchez applauded the Department and is excited to learn more about this trauma training tool. Board Member Vilchez was happy to hear the Department is exploring and seeking tools to assist youth and providing appropriate services.

Board Member Will Johnson asked if there was an additional cost to the Department to implement SEAS and expressed the hope that funding will be there to sustain the program and move it forward. Ms. Harris answered that the tool was free. The only cost that will be incurred is the training, which is being provided by Department staff. There is no external cost. Deputy Director McWilliams said that SEAS was developed in Virginia through a grant to support child-serving agencies.

Board Member Synethia White asked how the new program was being communicated to the community and the agency's external stakeholders. Many families and organizations have been vocal about the impact of trauma not being addressed. This trauma tool is progressive, thoughtful, and has taken a great deal of work, and in Ms. White's opinion should be communicated to a wider audience. Ms. McWilliams replied that the agency partnered with DSS, who were involved in the initial work to develop the tool and have communicated this program out to other DSS departments. The Department has been sharing SEAS with their partners such as the Judicial and Commonwealth's Attorneys liaison groups. The court service unit directors will be asked to share SEAS locally with all of their departments to include community service boards and other stakeholders. Director Boykin remarked that the agency has been invited to present the SEAS at the upcoming judicial conference this spring. Internal and system stakeholders have been notified about the program as well. One of the areas in the Department's draft strategic plan is to have broader communication and engagement with the community by sharing progress with the general public and other constituents. Director Boykin remarked that the agency does have a community engagement strategy going forward, but not all has been figured out. Director Boykin asked for the Board's experience to help with communication.

Board Member White said most of the "tators"--the agitators, the commentators, and the spectators—and the smaller, grass-roots organizations, have been more vocal about dysfunction in the systems and have an opportunity to be the checks and balances for these systems. Board Member White expressed her appreciation and assistance and is glad to see trauma addressed at assessment. Board Member White would like to see this information out in the community, especially those impacted by young people involved in the juvenile justice system.

Board Member Scott Kizner asked about implementation, and how many youth will actually be screened. Ms. Easton answered any youth placed on probation, where a social history report is ordered, will receive the SEAS. Trauma and victimization may happen while on supervision; just because youth are screened at the beginning, when the social history was ordered, does not mean something could not happen subsequently that could impact their stay. The procedure will allow the agency to rescreen for experiences not disclosed at the original screening. Ms. Easton said she is unable to provide an exact number of youth who will be screened. It will only be youth under supervision, not those who come through intake or are diverted out of the system. Director Boykin said that the Department has about 3,000 youth on some type of supervision at any time. That number is far less than it used to be, but youth will receive a screening going forward.

Board Member Kizner believed it is important to have the resources to train personnel in order to provide the youth with the services needed. As a former school psychologist, Board Member Kizner expressed his frustration at completing an intense evaluation, coming to a conclusion of what the child needed, and then finding that service was not available. Ms. Easton responded that through the vast range of services provided by the Department's regional service coordinators, the VJCCA service providers, and the other resources in the communities (whether public or private providers), those needs will be met. The agency anticipated collecting data in terms of what services were provided and whether the family took advantage of those services or not.

Chairperson Frazier thanked the presenters for sharing this information and for moving in the right direction for the state's most vulnerable youth. This is important work. Chairperson Frazier agreed with Ms. White's comments on sharing the program with the public. There seems to be a lot of communication happening within and between governmental agencies, but it would be helpful to share this good news with the public and other organizations through press releases or social media.

Ms. McWilliams stated that part of the plan is for the Department to share data with DSS as they continue to monitor the tool. Ms. Harris said that while the Department is sharing the overall data with DSS, that particular data set will not have identifying information on the youth; however, if the youth is involved with DSS, the Department is able to share the SEAS information. Any person the Department would normally share the social history report with would also receive the result of the SEAS. It will be part of the social history. Also, as part of the Department's referral response protocol, if a youth involved with the Department reports any allegation of abuse and it meets the criteria, a report will be made to DSS/Child Protective Services. Any child-serving agency in Virginia will have access to SEAS and can use it as long as they reach out to Virginia HEALS. Multiple child-serving agencies throughout the state are part of this project and aware of this tool. The hope is that they would all opt to adopt this tool so all child-serving agencies can speak the same language and screen the same way.

Director Boykin informed the Board about a study ordered by the Commission on Youth to look at crossover youth (young people involved with DSS, the juvenile justice system, and the mental health system). There is a possibility of legislation coming out of that study, that would allow for greater sharing across those agencies. Protocols are being reviewed and will require memoranda of understanding at the local level about how the sharing of information can occur. The Department recommended use of a longitudinal database to see the number of crossover youth, to learn from their backgrounds, and see what services are provided across systems.

Chairperson Frazier noted that trauma happens at different points and times, and youth should not be poked and prodded with the same questions over and over again, but agencies should build off what is already learned. Chairperson Frazier recommended the Department not leave out the schools. Schools are the biggest holder of youth in the state, and it is important to include them in the conversation.

Board Member White thanked Chairperson Frazier for mentioning schools and their role. There should also be an effort to make connection to local offices of violence prevention so they can develop their plans for prevention, intervention, or early intervention to support the successes of the young people and their families.

Director Boykin said the Commission on Youth will be completing a second study on the school issue because schools were not in the original resolution for the crossover study. The Department is a recipient of a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to look at the front end of juvenile justice in Virginia. The Department will work with stakeholders, community-based groups, law enforcement, and others to take a comprehensive look at the front-end systems and, in particular, look at the diversion capacity and opportunities to grow in the prevention and diversion areas. The grant is for \$1 million, and Chairman Frazier had provided a letter of support for the application.

JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE: REPORT ON VIRGINIA'S JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM
Valerie Boykin, Director, Department

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) was asked to review Virginia's Juvenile Justice System in November 2020. The lengthy report is located in the Board packet. The report and the presentation included a large amount of information. Director Boykin provided a detailed PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the report's findings and recommendations. The presentation can be found on the Department's website.

Board Member Price thanked Director Boykin for a thorough presentation but noted that the good news of fewer youth in the system seemed to be overshadowed with what is wrong with our young people and the system. For instance, there are, unfortunately, proportionally more black youth in the juvenile justice system. It is a reminder of the barriers these young people face. There is a lot to digest in this report. Board Member Price is concerned that Virginia does not expunge the records of some of the youth offenders. What could be done, possibly lobbying the general assembly to take a look at these kinds of issues? Board Member Price asked Director Boykin what the Board could do to help.

Director Boykin said the Board could continue to help educate the public about the agency and its areas of responsibility. Director Boykin reaffirmed that the Department still wants to work on responsive programming that makes a difference. When the Department started transformation in 2014, there were 600 youth in state care, today there are fewer than 200. Those 200 youth have serious charges and great needs and have experienced trauma, so finding the right programs to address their needs is difficult. It is not just a problem in Virginia, but a national problem. The report did not highlight how public safety has been improved because of fewer young people getting into trouble.

Before the pandemic, the Department was planning regional meetings to hear from the community on their needs and to address issues. Director Boykin noted that the Department would like to continue with that dialogue.

Chief Deputy Director Angela Valentine said that the agency is not able to lobby for any of the recommendations made by JLARC. In order to adopt a recommendation, it would need to come from a legislator who wanted to take up a cause or from the general assembly at large. The Department staff are limited in what they can and cannot do with regard to General Assembly recommendations.

Chairperson Frazier noted that even though staff cannot lobby or advocate does not mean Board members are not able to talk with local or state elected officials to make requests.

Board Member Vilchez said that the JLARC report calls for more accountability in the juvenile justice system and at local and state facilities. Board Member Vilchez noted the challenges of the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Home located near him, and expressed the hope that those matters can be revisited in the near future. Board Member Vilchez is glad the Department is giving the JLARC study careful consideration.

Chairman Frazier thanked Director Boykin for the summary and expressed appreciation for the study. Chairman Frazier thinks these types of studies are important for improvement, not only for the Department but as Board members, how members are perceived, and what actions members need to take to improve the system. This is a study of the juvenile justice system, and the Department plays a single part in that system, but are influential and do mighty work for the young people across the state. It was interesting to note that the Board does not have much oversight over juvenile detention centers (JDCs), and it should possibly take a look at that in the future, with a view to improving uniformity so youth are receiving similar care, services, and programs as they would at a state facility.

Chairman Frazier and the Board discussed an opportunity to communicate to JLARC the Board's views on the Department's transformation, support of the youth in the juvenile justice system, and their wish to collaborate on adjustments needed based on recommendations. After discussion, the Board members agreed and supported a letter from Chairman Frazier to JLARC.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Valerie P. Boykin, Director, Department

Director Boykin welcomed the new Board members, Chief Eric English, Synethia White, and Will Johnson.

The latest COVID-19 surge has impacted the Department like the rest of the Commonwealth and the nation. The Department experienced staffing issues across most of its divisions, with more than fifty vacancies in the court service units and forty at the Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center. Thankfully, only a few staff have been significantly ill. A few residents tested positive, and all but one has cleared treatment protocols with no major illnesses or hospitalization.

Governor-elect Youngkin selected Sheriff Bob Mosier from Fauquier County as the next Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security.

BOARD COMMENTS

There were no Board comments.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled to be in person at a location to be determined on April 20, 2022, at 9:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Frazier adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.