

Gloucester County Youth Services Commission
February 16, 2023
“Draft” Meeting Minutes
County Clayton Complex, Clayton

Call to Order – Co-Chair Ken Ridinger called the meeting to order at 3:06 PM and read the Open Public Records Act notice.

Attendance: Linda Bizelli, Lisa Cerny, Audrey Carter, Maxine K. Davis, Sonia DeCencio, Audrey Rigsbee, Dr. Becky DiLiasciandro, Linnie Elmore, LaJuan Gaines, Bridget Green, Gerald Hodges, Commissioner Jim Jefferson, Emily Kohri, Ashley Lasowski, Terry Miles, Julian Palladino, Sierra Parks, Ellyse Peterson, Kenneth Ridinger, Jennifer Rodriguez, James Sampson, and Kathy Seibert. **Staff:** Rudolph Aikens & Donna Pinto. **State:** Jessica Froba. **Guests:** Paul Bowen, Danielle Drinkwater, Danielle DuVerney, Aisha Laws, Natasha McCray, Anay Medina, Roger Nichols, James Pandolfo, Lydia Ramsey, Lillian Sanchez, Amy Swanson, and Danielle Ziegler.

“Round Robin” Introductions – Commissioner Jefferson welcomed everyone and thanked them for their service to the young people of Gloucester County. He asked for round robin introductions.

Rudolph Aikens is Youth Services Administrator with the Department of Human and Special Services to oversee JJC grant funding and some youth driven County contracts.

Linda Bizelli is Case Manager from Shelter of Hope (Ranch Hope in Williamstown) and wants to thank everybody for Christmas gifts to the shelter; they are much appreciated.

Maxine Davis is Acenda Integrated Health’s Juvenile Justice Programs supervisor.

Audrey Carter is Vicinage Juvenile Probation Supervisor of the Juvenile Unit.

Ellyse Pederson is Assistant Prosecutor and our Juvenile Prosecutor.

Bridget Greene just transferred to the Juvenile Public Defender.

Alisha Laws is owner and founder of All In Therapy Creative arts therapy.

Danielle Brickwater – Center for Family Services programming.

Rich Nickols is Director of the United Advocacy Group.

Natasha McCray is a family advocate with United Advocacy Group.

Lydia Ramsey is Program Director for United Advocacy Group.

LaJuan Gaines is from the DCP&P Gloucester East District Office.

Anay Medina is Volunteer Coordinator at the Evergreen Family Success Center.

Liliana Sanchez is also from Evergreen Family Success Center in Woodbury.

Dr. Becky DiLiasciandro is Mental Health Administrator for Gloucester County DHSS.

Amy Swanson is Commissioner Jefferson’s assistant.

Lisa Cerny is Division Director of the Gloucester County of Human and Special Services.

Sierra Parks is Program Director with the Center for Family Services for their Stationhouse Adjustments, ACE, and PASO.

James Sampson is Director of Community Resources with the Cumberland Gloucester Salem Case Management Organization (CGS CMO) / Family Services Organization.

Audrey Rigsby is Chief of Probation for Vicinage 15 Cumberland /Gloucester/Salem Counties.

Al Zowinski is representing the FCIU's Director Alisha Lasoski for the YSC.

Jennifer Rodriguez is Program Director of Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem Youth Advocate Program.

Sonnie DeCencio is a community volunteer and the retired Principal at the Camden County Youth Center.

Emily Kohri is the Team Leader for Gloucester County Family Intake.

Kathy Seibert is with Corrections' / the Sheriff and supervises the Juvenile Detention Unit.

Jillian Palladino is with the Department of Education / Superintendent of Schools.

Gerald Hodges is Director at the Gloucester County Boys and Girls Clubs.

Donna Pinto is from the DHSS.

Terry Miles – Assistant Chief for Gloucester Probation and Co-Chair of this organization.

Ken Ridinger is a community volunteer and also a Co-Chair of this organization.

Jim Jefferson is a County Commissioner and Liaison for the YSC. He is celebrating his ninth year as a Commissioner. He works with young people trying to turn their lives around for parole release plans and like many of you, deals with kids in unique circumstances. This is a passion and vocation and Commission Jefferson is so glad to be a part of YSC. He expressed appreciation to everyone here for all you do for the youth of Gloucester County.

Danielle DuVerney and Paul Bowen are from the PTAH Initiative (Professional Trainers Advancing Humanity) located in Woodbury.

Oath of Office – Commissioner Jefferson then administered the oath of office to all present.

Please pass them on to Donna. [If you were unable to attend, please have your oath conducted by an official or notary and send it on to either Donna or the Clerk of the Board.] If there is anything Jim can do to help you or your agency, please reach out and let us know.

Presentation: Juvenile Justice Certification – Jim discussed some personal business. Rudolph and Jim started together in leadership positions with the County. Rudolph works very hard every day to meet all the challenges that administering a government grants required. When he first met, Rudolph, he didn't have gray in his beard. Rudolph just recently completed the new Rutgers Juvenile Justice certification. Jim presented the Certificate of Completion from the program to Rudolph for his studies in youth development.

Adoption of Agenda & Minutes – Co-Chair Terry distributed minutes, which were previously emailed. After a minute to review them, Emily moved, James seconded, and all were in favor of accepting both the agenda for today and approval of the minutes of the December, 2022 meeting. (Ellyse abstained, as she was not in attendance).

Administrator's Report - Rudolph also expressed appreciation to the volunteer committee members. We are working on closing out the fourth and final quarter of 2022. Billing is almost complete. We are trying to be sure everything is accountable. There has been some difficulty with JAMS but the contracts should be finalized by Friday for 2023. Working together, we are making a difference in Gloucester County for our youth. We continue to look to expand programming. We are happy to see faces and new providers who are here. It has been three years since we had an in-person meeting and it is good to see everyone.

JDAI – Emily said the Council and subcommittees meet again in April. The Risk Screening Tool is officially running well.

JJC – Jessica Froba couldn't make it but is excited about going into a new comprehensive planning year.

PROVIDER REPORTS

ACENDA –

Cognitive Life Skills - the probationers' life skills counseling group will have two cycles and the ropes course. They have contracts for up to 30 for the year. Spring starts March 8th and they just received nine referrals for the session.

True Colors – the in-home counselling / coaching program for JCC / ISC has 24 slots for clients but few referrals. They have three active youth and will accept three additional youth.

FCIU/Mobile – Al reported for Ashley and said the MRSS / FCIU had 293 January dispatched with the majority from Gloucester County. Contact her at alamoski@acendahealth.org. No trends noted were noted.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS – Gerald said the summer camp program doesn't start for quite some time. His email address is ghodges@gcbgc.org

CENTER FOR FAMILY SERVICES – Sierra may be reached at sierra.parks@centerffs.org

ACE – Sierra said coaching has one open youth carried over and one pending intake. Their LOS is 24 for the year. They had two discharges this year. Six youth are for transportation and 19 incentive referrals (no super incentives). ACE needs referrals for coaching services.

Multi Systemic Therapy – eight families contracted have one open this week. Seven slots remain. Challenges are that referrals are slow. They are hiring too.

Stationhouse Adjustment – Sierra said their yearly LOS is 48 youth. They had nine open active cases. Five of these cases were opened in 2022 with three new cases this year. There are three referrals pending intake. There are 42 remaining slots for the year. For Stationhouse, they are offering teleconference or in person.

PASO – Sierra said they have nine slots. One pending evaluation is set for March 14 and five youth are open and receiving counseling services with two carry overs and three awaiting start. They have eight remaining slots for evaluations. In 2022, they exceeded their LOS for evaluations and the contract was modified for additional clients. They recently resumed in-person meetings again.

PROBATION – Audrey said **Parent Orientation** was held January 9th with four youth and four parents attending. This service provides youth and parents an overview about what services are available through probation and what expectations are. They recently started holding family dinners again and gave the youth book bags with assorted needed items. If there is any agency who would like to give an overview of their services, please let Audrey know at audrey.carter@njcourts.gov.

Truancy Prevention - PTAH Initiative – Danielle said the program is contracted for 20 families and youth. They have four referrals from Woodbury Schools. PTAH reached out to two parents

and set up meetings with the parents and families. They Continue to follow up with additional family members.

SCHOOLS:

Glassboro – Rudy reported the program started out to provide services for 20 intermediate youth and that's transitioned to younger kids. Right now, they split into grade levels depending on the kids' schedule and grade level. The majority of the students in the program are on behavior contracts or involved in credit recovery. They need additional staff support.

Paulsboro – Jim Pandolfo said the high school dropout prevention program has 19 students enrolled. A highlight is report cards were issued with three students making honor roll one on the principal honor roll. Two sophomores took Health II for drivers' education and two took the written test successfully. That's exciting for them. The challenge is keeping the kids coming to school every day. In a smaller setting, these students can be successful.

Woodbury – Dr. Jeff Adams sent a report as they are holding a black history event now. They have 110 elementary school students attending gender specific afterschool programming from three elementary schools from 3:00 to 4:30 PM. All students are involved in a yearly service project. They are trying to raise money for the PTO. Blues Brothers is involved in a student-led car wash. The GALS continue to partner with "The Fearless Movement" for motivational speakers and mentors for the girls for empowerment and leadership.

HopeLoft / United Advocacy Group –

Family Assistance Home Supervision - Lydia said they have started eight kids in the final quarter. Seven were positively discharged and 100% were compliant with the conditions of their court orders. Each family got an average of six community resource referrals each. **Career Job and Education Assistance** had three youth from last year and acquired three additional intakes so far in 2023. Of the six, one received his high school diploma, 83% created a resume, ten attended a job interview, 83% of the kids went on a college tour, received job training, or took a trade school tour. Three of the six acquired jobs and two got a more appropriate school placement.

Youth Advocate Program- Jennifer said **Mentoring** has eight clients with potential discharges pending. They've had positive success with their individual goals, probation requirements, and the clients are doing better in school. They are working with JJC on placement challenges for one youth.

All In Therapy - Alisha Laws said Creative Arts Therapy utilizes painting, drawing, music, writing and movement therapy to help youths express their concerns. They will hold workshops to youth experiencing juvenile justice system involvement at any level. Visit

<https://allintherapyllc.org/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Boys and Girls Club – Rudolph said last year, Glassboro and Paulsboro Boys and Girls Clubs serviced 25 youth under the YSC funding. It went from 15 to 25 kids serviced so they are making a huge difference. We need to fill their free time during the summer especially. Gerald

appreciates everything the YSC does to support the kids and congratulated Rudolph on his certification.

Juvenile Justice Certification - Rudolph said the Rutgers program allowed him the opportunity to create the curriculum via. committee meeting in Cherry Hill. They talked about what they were planning to do and it was piloted through Rutgers continuing education. Rudolph has worked in the field for eight years. There were 15-18 classes that allowed them to network with judges, police officers, lawyers and other court personnel. It is a worthwhile experience; call him if you are interested or visit [Program Overview \(rutgers.edu\)](https://rutgers.edu).

Youth Group Worker – Gerald said the Boys and Girls Clubs will need a new Youth Group Worker as their current one is leaving March 21st. There is a hiring committee involved. Please let Gerald know at ghodges@gcbgc.org .

Summer Camp - Lydia said United Advocacy Group wants to have a summer camp for Woodbury, Williamstown and Paulsboro kids ages 12-18. They really would love to provide transportation as it can be quite a barrier to these youth. We want to empower them to make better life choices. A lot of our kids make trouble when they don't have things to do in the summer. If you want to help present or have ideas, contact her at lydia@unitedadvocacygroup.org .

Job Fair – Terry said on March 24th Rowan College of South Jersey is holding a Mega Job Fair. For more info, visit [Job Fair & Resource Event | Gloucester County, NJ \(gloucestercountynj.gov\)](https://gloucestercountynj.gov)

PTAH – Danielle said the community youth organization is working out of Woodbury for afterschool recreation, jobs, and educational assistance. They would like to connect with all the organizations here. Her email is dduverney@gmail.com .

Crisis Intervention Training – Dr. Becky said the week of March 20th. we will be hosting an event for law enforcement to teach about interacting with citizens who have mental illness. The focus is on children services and de-escalation skills. Sierra comes out every year to talk about MST and other programs. The point of the event is to have officers aware of the services available in the community. If you interface with law enforcement, please talk to Becky or Rudy. Community resource presentations are about 15 minutes or so. Email bdilisciandro@co.gloucester.nj.us .

Woodbury Antibullying 5K Event - Rudy said the Woodbury Police Department and the YSC will be working together to hold the second annual 5K/1mile run, walk and roll event on May 13th from 9 AM to 2 PM. It will be at Lot 323 from 9 AM to 2 PM. There will be tables for community resources so please let Rudolph know if you are interested in the walk or a table.

Adjourn – Kathy moved, Emily seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 3:56 PM. The next plenary meeting should be “virtual” at 3 PM on April 19, 2023.