

**Tidewater Youth Services Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
May 1, 2023**

**Attending:** Mr. Harry Cromer, Mr. Kevin Curling, Mr. Carl Faison, Ms. Kimberly Jennings, Mr. Rusty Jordan, Mr. Gregory Smith, Mr. Al Steward, and Dr. Cynthia Blakeslee.

**Not attending:** Ms. Deanna Valentine

**Staff:** Ms. Jenny Hodge, Vicky Hubbard, and Mr. William Wimbish

**Guests:** None

1. **Call to Order:** Kim Jennings, acting Chairman, due to the recent retirement of Katherine Grimm, called the May 1, 2023 meeting of the Tidewater Youth Services Commission to order at 11:32 a.m.
2. **Review of the previous meeting minutes:**  
The minutes of February 6, 2023 and March 6, 2023 meetings were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Faison. The motion to accept the minutes was voted on and carried unanimously.
3. **Items Carried Forward:**

**A. Tidewater Youth Services Foundation:**

Ms. Hodge updated progress on the interviews for the position of executive director of the Tidewater Youth Services Foundation. The interview panel interviewed for the executive director position this past Friday and one more interview will be conducted virtually this afternoon.

The Second Chances Renovation Campaign is waiting to hear from the Blocker Foundation. This grant for \$50,000 is written for the roofing needs at Crisis and Lynnhaven group homes. If we receive the grant, we will be \$10,000 away from meeting the campaign goal of \$300,000. The outcome of the grant should come by early May.

**B. Tidewater Youth Services Commission Update:**

Mr. Wimbish reported on the progress on the reopening/recertification of Crisis. The Crisis building has been approved for opening by DJJ which allows the acceptance of referrals for this program. However, currently new hires for the program are providing notice of resignation to current employers, participating in new hire training at Westhaven Group Home, and preparing for their positions at the group home. Following training of new hires and the completion of the 40 hours mandated by DJJ, those Crisis residents who are currently housed at Westhaven will be sent to the Crisis Home on May 8. The anticipated date for accepting new court referred placements for both males and females at Crisis is May 22.

Ms. Hodge updated progress on the reopening of Lynnhaven Group Home which has been closed since April 2021. At this point the Commission is seeking approval by the City of Virginia Beach to have an extended longer term lease. Discussions relative to this will be pursued in an upcoming meeting on May 12 with Tim Copeland who is in charge of leasing for the City of Virginia Beach. While there are many items that will be necessary to address prior to reopening, DJJ is supportive of the goal of reopening this facility. Ms. Jennings asked for projections for reopening. Ms. Hubbard responded about the major projects that would have to be

updated including the boiler and roof. She further discussed the potential for expansion of programs at the site but added that this is speculative at this point. Mr. Smith discussed other needs that might be addressed with programming such as day and evening reporting and one stop shop services to include substance abuse assessment, individual and family counseling services, which would be aligned with the state position of not taking children out of their homes except for crisis situations and community safety concerns. Mr. Smith suggested that these services could be written into the VJCCCA plans. Ms. Jennings added that the additional facilities should also consider the needs for space for girls and the availability of programming for clients in the Suffolk and western Tidewater areas. Ms. Hubbard added that there is funding by the state and federal governments available for programming for education to employment services. Mr. Jordan discussed logistical issues that arise with providing programming for areas located further from Virginia Beach and the Lynnhaven Crisis Home. Possible solutions were discussed by Ms. Hodge indicating that the funding may be different in the various localities. This discussion reflects some of the concerns and views of the Board concerning possibilities and potentials for future programming to address changing conditions and needs of various localities.

#### **C. Items from Members or Staff:**

Mr. Smith announced the kickoff of Virginia Beach's Restorative Justice Program with a segment featured today on WAVY TV 10 with the deputy director and a supervisor discussing the program.

#### **4. New Business**

##### **A. Financials**

No budget report will be discussed today.

Ms. Hubbard provided an IT update related to the recent IT breach:

- Breach resulted from the firewall being unsecured.
- Breach requires public notification, which will be developed with the assistance of a lawyer.
- State recommended a new IT company called Layer 9 in Suffolk, which is currently working to rebuilding a new firewall system and cloud, cleaning computers and laptops, reconnecting copiers.
- Ms. Hodge was able to acquire a \$3500 credit for purchase of Microsoft software licenses necessary for the upgrades to the security.
- Updated system is about 95% complete on the monitors; 13 new smart phones have been acquired; and dual authentication will be included as security protocol.
- Separate server is required for the accounting program, which is still not running. All the accounting information will be put back into the system. Fiscal year 21 is in the system but years 22 and 23 will have to be keyed in, which will be time consuming.
- The budget should be available by the middle of the month.
- The new IT will result in greater expenses for fiscal year 2024. The rebuild will cost \$35,000 and the monthly services will be about \$14,000 per month for the current year.

Mr. Smith reported that Public Service Week begins May 7<sup>th</sup>. He suggested that the Commission should consider recognizing our employees at that time. Compensation and retention bonuses are being provided for state employees. While these options are not currently feasible to the Commission, Ms. Hodge will use discretionary funds budgeted through the Foundation to recognize staff during this upcoming week. Mr. Curling further emphasized the importance of honoring employees especially to encourage retention and recruitment which he suggested should be further discussed in subsequent Board meetings.

**B. Items from Members or Staff:**

Ms. Hodge discussed the By-Laws' requirement that election of officers shall occur annually at the first regular meeting of the Commission Board in July. She further stated that the by-laws describe a provision for a temporary chair in the absence of the elected officer of the Board. To address the retirement of Ms. Grimm and the resultant vacated chair position, Mr. Jordan proposed that our vice-chair, Kim Jennings, will serve as our acting chair until the July elections. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith. The motion was voted on and carried unanimously.

Mr. Curling discussed the provision described in Article 5§1.4 of the By-Laws which defines the executive director duties and powers: The executive director shall prepare and present the annual operating budget to the Commission in its April meeting unless an extension is approved by a majority vote of the Commission. Mr. Curling made a motion that the Board extends the deadline for the executive director to present a budget to our June 2023 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jordan. Ms. Jennings called for a vote. The motion was voted on and carried unanimously.

**C. Closed Session:**

There was no business necessary for closed session.

**D. Adjournment:** There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Jordan and seconded by Mr. Cromer. All Board members were in agreement and the meeting was adjourned at 1:19 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

***Cynthia D. Blakeslee***

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Secretary/Treasurer (Interim)

Tidewater Youth Services Commission Board