

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
JUVENILE PROBATION COMMISSION**



FULL COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, April 9, 2025,

5:30 pm

**Meeting held hybrid with public
comment at:**

**City Hall, #1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place,
Hearing Room 408 San Francisco, CA 94102**

Recording link:

<https://sfpublic.webex.com/sfpublic/jdr.php?RCID=d87e5d2790a0e005dd409abdae55782a>

Full Commission:

Margaret Brodtkin, President
Linda Martley-Jordan, Vice President
Johanna Lacoe
Allison Magee
Toye Moses
Manuel Rodriguez
James Spingola

Meeting Minutes

Hybrid meeting. Comments would have to be from the public sitting in the audience or by using the meeting link listed above.

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm.

1. Roll Call:

1. Margaret Brodtkin, President – Absent
2. Linda Martley-Jordan, Vice-President – Present
3. Johanna Lacoe – Present
4. Allison Magee – Present
5. Toye Moses – Present
6. Manuel Rodriguez – Present
7. James Spingola – Absent

2. Land Acknowledgement Reading

3. Future Agenda Items

- a. No public comment.

4. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda:

- a. **Dan Macallair (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice)** thanked the group for writing the letter and noted he was in New Zealand during the District Attorney's presentation. Based on community feedback and media coverage, he believes inaccurate information was shared. He emphasized that elected officials, particularly DAs, have a responsibility to present fact-based, evidence-supported information. He recommended that the body issue a strong request that any future presentations be grounded in verified facts.
- b. **Molly Brown** thanked Commissioner Lacoë for questioning the District Attorney and emphasized the importance of factual accuracy. She praised JPD's data reports and urged the Commission to ensure that DA Jenkins is informed with accurate information. She expressed frustration over conflicting facts and encouraged the Commission to advocate firmly on behalf of the department when necessary.
- c. **Deonde Jackson** is a 16-year-old fellow with the Young Women's Freedom Center, spoke on behalf of system-impacted girls, trans youth, and gender-expansive individuals. She called for an end to charging youth as adults and incarcerating young people for survival-related offenses. She criticized the juvenile hall system for causing harm and lacking meaningful support, and advocated for community-led alternatives like peer mentorship and trauma-informed care. She urged the Commission to close San Francisco's juvenile hall and invest in care, not cages.
- d. **JuJu Pikes-Prince** is speaking on behalf of the Young Women's Freedom Center, called for an end to systems of harm rooted in policing and incarceration. She highlighted the disproportionate incarceration of Black girls and trans youth, emphasizing the need for care-based, community-led alternatives. Ms. Prince advocated for a future without youth incarceration—one focused on housing, education, healthcare, and opportunity—and shared her own story of thriving through support, not punishment.
- e. **Lucero Herrera**, interim site director at the Young Women's Freedom Center and member of multiple advocacy coalitions, spoke from her lived experience and professional work with youth impacted by the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC). She criticized ongoing reforms that continue cycles of punishment and called for transformative justice and community-led alternatives. Emphasizing prevention over incarceration, she advocated for a new ecosystem of care rooted in healing, not control. Ms. Reta urged immediate divestment from carceral systems and reinvestment in credible messengers, youth-centered services, and long-term community-driven solutions.

5. Journey to Justice Presentation – see attached [PowerPoint](#).

- a. **Key Highlights from Chief Miller:**
 - a. **Historical Context & Purpose of Trip:** Inspired by New Zealand's Family Group Conferencing model, which influenced San Francisco's "Make It Right" initiative. The trip, years in planning, was supported by philanthropic and community partners.
 - b. **New Zealand's Groundbreaking Reform (1989):**
 - 1. Enacted the *Oranga Tamariki Act* (Children and Young People's Wellbeing Act)
 - 2. Mandated **family-centered restorative practices**

3. Established arrest limitations, expanded youth court age, and prioritized **diversion over incarceration**
- c. **Family Group Conferences (FGCs):**
 1. A mandatory process before court proceedings
 2. Includes the young person, family (whānau), victim, youth aid police officer, social worker, and support team
 3. Consensus-based planning with deeply **collaborative and restorative structure**
- d. **Police as Gatekeepers:**
 1. New Zealand's Youth Aid Officers determine diversion or prosecution
 2. Police perform functions akin to law enforcement, probation, and prosecution
 3. **Over 70% of youth offenses resolved through verbal/written warnings or affirmative actions**
- e. **Cultural Integration:**
 1. Every justice process begins with Māori cultural ceremonies (pōwhiri, mihi mihi)
 2. Youth identify themselves through lineage and land, creating stronger community connections
 3. Emphasis on "**mana-enhancing**" (dignity-preserving) interactions throughout the system
- f. **Specialized Youth Courts:**
 1. Culturally specific courts for Māori and Pacific youth
 2. Held in community centers or marae (tribal spaces), with ceremonies, elders, and family presence
 3. Judges and community members provide holistic support and ongoing monitoring
- g. **Community-Based Services:**
 1. Organizations like Reconnect and MANA Inc. provide supervised release, non-secure placements, trauma-informed support, and reintegration services
 2. Youth advocates are **paid roles** (unlike CASA volunteers in the U.S.)
- h. **Confinement Limits:**
 1. Only 171 secure beds nationwide
 2. Max sentence is **six months**, even for serious offenses
 3. Emphasis on community homes and **non-secure placements**
- i. **Challenges Remain:**
 1. Persistent disproportionality for Māori youth
 2. Recidivism for court-involved youth remains high
 3. System still experiences tensions between intent and execution

j. **Reflections & Takeaways:**

1. **Ceremony and cultural relevance** make systems feel less alienating
2. Clear communication before and during justice proceedings is critical
3. Emphasized importance of building systems that **welcome and empower**, not alienate youth and families

b. **Comments & Questions from the Commissioners:**

1. **Vice President Martley-Jordan** commended the cohort for their visit to New Zealand and highlighted key takeaways: the central role of family and victim voice in healing; the cultural integration that catalyzed systemic change; and the need for policies with enforceable checks and balances. She emphasized that while similar efforts exist locally, they are not codified as comprehensively. She stressed the importance of lifting up unheard community voices and ensuring they have a seat at the table.
 - a. *Was the sharp decline in youth incarceration after 1989 driven primarily by the cultural shift in service delivery? And what role did legislation play in facilitating that?*
2. **Commissioner Moses:**
 - a. It appears that families are deeply involved with what's going on there. Could you explain to us what comprises a family? Does that include grandparents?
 - i. Chief Miller: It depends on the needs of the young person.
3. **Commissioner Magee** thanked Chief Miller for the comprehensive presentation and all participants for their reflections. She remarked on the profound intentionality embedded in New Zealand's justice system, particularly its grounding in Māori cultural practices. Magee observed how this cultural approach influenced even the delegation's own interactions, noting a shift from status-based introductions to more personal and relational ones. She emphasized that transformational change depends on strong, respectful relationships among stakeholders and acknowledged the collaborative spirit present in both San Francisco and Alameda counties.
 - a. She posed the following question to fellow delegation members:
 - i. *How are you now approaching this work differently? How are you thinking differently about your partnerships and your role in centering the needs of young people and their families, rather than operating from preconceived notions about stakeholder responsibilities?*
4. **Commissioner Lacoe** asked about the importance of comprehensive legislative change in New Zealand's youth justice reform, as opposed to smaller, piecemeal efforts.

- a. *How important was it that New Zealand enacted a sweeping law to change the system universally, rather than relying on incremental reforms? And how should we think about prioritizing our time and efforts accordingly?*
 - b. Can you speak to the \$1.6 million increase? What is the source, and where is it allocated?
 - i. Veronica Martinez: It does show an increase from the base what we had loaded. The proposed budget includes the latest estimates that we have received. In the box, in the center box below, that's where we list all of the actual estimated allocations, so we can see that and compare it with the prior year. I am not sure of the source of the increase, but she will find out.
- 5. **Commissioner Rodriguez** asked about implementation: *"What are the next steps for putting these learnings into action?"* He acknowledged key takeaways around cultural integration and human-centered practices and emphasized the need for follow-through.
 - a. He also posed two technical questions:
 - i. Clarified that the reported decline in youth court cases post-legislation was due to a shift in how adults responded to youth behavior—not necessarily a decrease in youth crime.
 - ii. Asked for clarification on the term "ram raids."
- 6. **Public Comment:**
 - a. **Violet Vasquez** expressed gratitude for the report-back on the New Zealand trip and emphasized the importance of sustained community engagement. She raised concerns about youth who lack adult representation and how that may affect their access to diversion programs. Vasquez highlighted that many community-driven alternatives and preventative models already exist in San Francisco and urged deeper cross-departmental collaboration. She encouraged recognizing the city's existing cultural districts and cautioned that while ceremony is powerful, it should be offered with sensitivity to San Francisco's diverse cultural realities. She concluded by advocating for continued radical and conscious transformation of systems not originally built to serve impacted communities.
 - b. **Dinky Enty** expressed enthusiasm for implementing lessons from New Zealand's youth justice model and urged swift, collaborative action. Quoting the late justice advocate James Bell, she emphasized the urgency of moving beyond excuses to enact meaningful change. She reflected on last month's commission meeting, where system stakeholders united to challenge inaccuracies in the District Attorney's presentation. On behalf of the Juvenile Justice Providers

Association, she urged the Commission to formally request that the DA retract or correct her statements to ensure the public receives accurate information about San Francisco's youth.

6. Chief's Report - Power points and written reports are [attached](#).

- a. Monthly data report highlights
- b. Workforce update
- c. Transformation update
- d. Public comment

1. **Violet Vasquez** thanked the team for the report and expressed hope for continued transformation. She supported Dinky's call to hold the District Attorney accountable, referencing momentum from the prior month's meeting. Violet urged the Commission to follow up with a formal plan to request retraction of the DA's previous presentation and to provide accurate, corrective information. She emphasized the need for the DA to commit to protecting youth, especially those from mixed-status families and unaccompanied minors, highlighting concerns about criminalization and the importance of prevention-focused efforts for both currently system-involved and at-risk youth.
2. **Doug Styles** expressed appreciation for Chief Miller's report, particularly the emphasis on strong collaboration with community-based organizations (CBOs), especially in a climate of increasing scrutiny toward CBO accountability. He also noted the importance of maintaining funding for these effective programs during a challenging budget year and thanked the Chief for highlighting their value.

7. Finance & Governance Committee Report

- a. Discussed budget and updates to orientation binders. J
- b. No public Comment:

8. Consent Calendar:

- a. Submit a request to enter into a new agreement with the San Francisco Unified School District/San Francisco County Office of Education for transportation services for eligible clients through the Ensure School Stability for Youths in Foster Care program, with a proposed 24-month term and a not-to-exceed amount of \$10,000.
- b. Submit a request to enter into a new agreement with Sharp Circle for reentry support services, with a proposed 12-month term and a not-to-exceed amount of \$360,044.
- c. Submit a request to enter into a new agreement with Sunset Youth Services for reentry support services, with a proposed 12-month term and a not-to-exceed amount of \$400,000.
 - a. Public comment:
 - i. No public comment
 - b. Motion:
 - Commissioner Lacoe moves to approve the consent calendar.
 - Commissioner Magee seconds the motion.
 - Votes: Yes: Lacoe, Magee, Martley-Jordan, Moses, and Rodriguez

- Motion passes.

9. Review and Approval of the Commission Retreat Meeting Minutes for January 8, 2025 and March 12, 2025:

- a. Minutes for March 12, 2025:
 - a. Commissioner Lacoe moves to accept minutes.
 - b. Commissioner Rodriguez seconds the motion.
 - c. Yes – Lacoe, Magee, Martley-Jordan, Moses, & Rodriguez
 - d. Minutes approved
- b. No public comments.

10. Adjournment:

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 pm.