

**ORANGE COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION
LAMOREAUX JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER
COMMISSION CONFERENCE ROOM – 2nd FLOOR
341 The City Drive, Orange, CA 92868
Wednesday January 7, 2026
9:00 a.m.**

AGENDA

- 1) CALL TO ORDER**
- 2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
- 3) NEW BUSINESS**
- 4) REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS**
- 5) REPORTS FROM LIAISON ACTIVITIES & WEBINARS**
- 6) MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- 7) COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**
- 8) ADJOURNMENT**

**MINUTES OF ORANGE COUNTY
JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION
Wednesday January 7, 2026**

The regular meeting of the Orange County Juvenile Justice Commission was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Winder. The meeting was held at the Betty Lou Lamoreaux Juvenile Justice Center, 341 The City Drive, Orange, California, in the second floor Commission Conference Room.

**COMMISSIONERS
PRESENT:**

Amy Crowley
Denise Churchill, Vice Chair (Teams)
Marcy Garfias
Judy Johnson
Connie Marshall
Joel Matson
Lynda Perring
Ryan Rising (Teams)
Dorothy Stafford
Mary Lou Vachet
Steve Winder, Chair

**COMMISSIONERS
ABSENT:**

Silvestre Lopez
Madelyn Rodriguez
Dolores Yost

STAFF: Lii Toelupe, Executive Administrative Assistant
Emily Sanchez, Legal Processing Specialist

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The December 10, 2025 corrected minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 2026 JJC Meeting Dates

Key Stakeholder meetings will be the first Wednesday of March, June and September 2026. Stakeholder meetings will be held in February, May, August and November 2026.

B. 2026 JJC Meeting Guest Speakers

The commissioners reviewed a tentative list of potential guest speakers and agreed that Dr. Watson is someone they would like to hear from in the near future.

C. 2026 Bylaws, Policies and Procedures review

Commissioner Winder recommended that all commissioners review and refresh their understanding of the bylaws they are required to follow.

D. 2026 Action Plan Review

Executive Administrative Assistant (EAA) Lii Toelupe to send a copy of last year's action plan to the commissioners for review and possible changes.

E. Liaison Activities / Standing Committees / Working Groups review

A list of current liaison activities, standing committees and working groups was distributed at the meeting. It was later decided EAA will email the list to commissioners to review.

F. Notice of Death (NOD) 12/30/2025

EAA read Social Services Agency's (SSA) notice of death for a non-minor dependent.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

A. Education

Commissioner Johnson shared that Dave Connor, Principal of Otto Fischer, will be taking a leave and subsequently retiring. Aja-Marie Cordova-Couso will oversee Otto Fischer along with her current assignments. The commissioners also noted plans to meet with Probation in March.

B. Non-Institutional Placements

No updates to report.

C. Law Enforcement Agency

No updates to report.

D. Legislation

Commissioner Johnson described the new law for students in California that will assist high schoolers with entry to colleges.

E. Essay and Art Contest

Commissioner Vachet shared she is working with Probation to finalize the details of the dinner for the 2025 Essay Contest winners.

F. Annual Report

Commissioner Johnson encouraged the commissioners to send any photos from 2025 to EAA Lii Toelupe for inclusion in the next annual report.

G. JJC/ Probation Book Club

Commissioner Crowley expressed her gratitude to the commission for their donations and continued support of the book club. She shared that the most recent book read was 'The Secret' by Rhonda Byrne, which focuses on creating positivity through manifestation. Commissioner Crowley noted the positive impact the book club has had on the youth's mindset, inspiring them to make improvements across many aspects of their lives. She also shared that the next book under consideration is 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People' by Stephen Covey.

H. Substance Use Treatment Programs/Services

No updates to report.

I. Away from Care

No updates to report

J. Educational/Vocational Programs and Services for Post-Graduate System-Involved Youth

No updates to report.

REPORTS FROM LIAISON ACTIVITIES & WEBINARS

A. CJJCC Monthly Meeting

Commissioner Winder stated that the meeting was very brief and included discussion on an increase in secure youth serving time in jail, a shift back toward charging juveniles in adult court, and re-entry efforts focused on supporting youth. Dr. Elliot Gann, who facilitates music programs in juvenile hall, also presented on his work, emphasizing relationship-building, identity development, and fostering self-confidence through music. He noted that the program is valuable and engaging for youth, particularly through hip-hop, a genre they care about.

B. Project Youth OC Annual Meeting

Commissioner Johnson reported that she attended the meeting, along with Commissioners Lopez and Rodriguez. She also noted that Juvenile Presiding Judge Arthur was in attendance and that the Juvenile Justice Commission was acknowledged.

C. CSEC Prevention & Awareness Subcommittee

Commissioner Vachet shared that the form for school districts is still in development and the commission will likely be able to view it soon.

D. JRC Graduation

Commissioner Marshall stated that the event was very uplifting, with the youth receiving strong support from friends and family. She also noted that this was her first time seeing Judge Mittal host the event and shared that he did an excellent job.

E. Juvenile Hall Book Club meeting w/ Ventura and Butte

Tabled to the next JJC meeting on January 21, 2026.

F. Sunburst Academy Graduation

Commissioner Marshall shared that the graduation was wonderful and highlighted how meaningful it was to see the youth's parents participate in the presentation. Commissioners Marshall and Vachet also noted seeing several teachers in attendance who previously worked at Juvenile Hall. Additionally, Commissioner Crowley shared a success story about a youth who attended Sunburst, describing the program as a pivotal turning point in the youth's life.

G. OYCR Youth Justice Action Webinar

Commissioner Johnson shared that she attended the webinar, which centered on the theme “Fewer Chutes and More Ladders.” The goal of the presentation was to keep youth in school as a means of preventing contact with the juvenile justice system. She noted that statistics were shared showing that, despite changes to expulsion rules aimed at keeping students in school, there has been little impact on youth incarceration numbers.

H. Cell Dogs Graduation

Commissioner Stafford attended the graduation and shared that it was a successful event, during which four dogs graduated and were adopted. The youth showcased the dogs by demonstrating their training and tricks. Commissioner Johnson also shared that the Cell Dog program is being expanded to three additional facilities.

I. CAST Policy Board Meeting

Commissioner Johnson shared that CAST’s referrals have been higher recently. She also reported that there was an incident the day before the meeting in which a man entered a restricted area behind an employee and caused a disturbance.

J. Meeting with OCFC

Commissioner Churchill reported on concerns identified in Orangewood’s monthly reports, noting an increase in incident reports being written and forwarded to Probation, including instances involving law enforcement, restraints, and medical responses. To better understand these trends, Commissioners Churchill, Johnson and Winder met with Maureen Mutch, Senior Human Services Manager, and Kristy Fiskum, Deputy Director. During the meeting, it was shared that Orangewood has been experiencing a high population of youth, reaching approximately 80 youth in November of 2025. Of those, six youth are developmentally disabled, and restraints have been used in situations where trauma-informed care strategies were not effective. It was explained that Orangewood participates in weekly multidisciplinary meetings with the District Attorney, Probation, SSA, and Behavioral Health to discuss individual youth, develop strategies, and prevent escalation of behaviors that could lead to placement in Juvenile Hall. Staff explained that Special Incident Reports (SIRs) are written by staff as a form of documentation that is sent to Probation. These reports are considered more informal and are used as a deterrent for behavior, particularly to prevent escalation. Commissioner Johnson shared that Orangewood is launching a “Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) of the Day” initiative, where a CASA volunteer will spend the day onsite to provide additional support. Lastly, Commissioner Churchill shared that the commission will be receiving an invitation to the “Celebrating Families” event, which recognizes families who have successfully reunified through SSA.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/WEBINARS/INSPECTIONS

Commissioners Churchill and Perring are planning to attend the CWSIP meeting on January 8, 2026.

Commissioner Marshall is planning to attend the UCI Youth Adult Court Local Advisory Committee meeting on January 9, 2026.

Commissioners Crowley and Winder are planning to attend the CJJCC meeting on January 12, 2026.

Commissioner Vachet is planning to attend the ERDD meeting on January 14, 2026.

Commissioners Crowley, Marshall and Winder are planning to attend the Human Trafficking Awareness Event on January 17, 2026.

Commissioners Churchill, Johnson & Winder are planning on attending the JJC Executive Committee meeting on January 21, 2026

Commissioners Garfias, Johnson, Rodriguez, Vachet and Yost are planning to attend the Ward Death Review meeting on January 21, 2026.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioners Crowley, Vachet, Johnson and Winder expressed their interest in meeting with the youth counsel.

Commissioner Johnson shared an article regarding a funding freeze for SSA, and it was discussed how this would affect the youth.

CLOSED SESSION

The executive session was convened from 10:28 am. – 10:35 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Steve Winder

Steve Winder, Chair