



JUDGE MARIO E. RAMIREZ, JR. JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER

JUVENILE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 17, 2024.

Luis M. Singleterry
Judge, 92nd D.C.

Fernando Mancias
Judge, 93rd D.C.

J.R. "Bobby" Flores
Judge, 139th D.C.

Rose Guerra Reyna
Judge, 206th D.C.

Marla Cuellar
Judge, 275th D.C.

Mario E. Ramirez, Jr.
Juvenile Overseer
Judge, 332nd D.C.

Noe Gonzalez
Administrative
Judge, 370th D.C.

Letty Lopez
Judge, 389th D.C.

Keno Vasquez
Judge, 398th D.C.

Israel Ramon, Jr.
Judge, 430th D.C.

Renee Rodriguez-
Betancourt
Judge, 449th D.C.

Joe Ramirez
Judge, 464th D.C.

Ysmael D. Fonseca
Judge, 476th D.C.

Richard Cortez
County Judge

Maryann Denner, MSCJ
Director/Chief Juvenile
Probation Officer

Ricardo "Rick" Guerrero, Jr.
Budget Manager II

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A meeting of the Hidalgo County Juvenile Board was held on October 17, 2024, via video conferencing.

The following persons attended the meeting. As Juvenile Board Members.

Honorable Noe Gonzalez, 370th D.C.
Honorable Mario E. Ramirez, Jr., 332 D.C.
Honorable Joe Ramirez, 464th D.C.
Honorable Ysmael Fonseca, 476th D.C.
Honorable Keno Vasquez, 398th D.C.
Honorable Rene Betancourt, 449th D.C.
Honorable Israel Ramon, 430th D.C.
Honorable Luis M. Singleterry, 92nd D.C.
Honorable Marla Cuellar, 275th D.C.
Honorable Letty Lopez, 389th D.C.
Honorable Rose Guerra Reyna, 206th D.C.
Honorable Richard Cortez

I have, I have Judge Betancourt the 449th, myself out of the 370th, I have County Court 1 Judge here who's part of the---I have Judge Letty Lopez and that is the 389th, I have Arturo Guajardo our County Clerk, I have Mario Ramirez out the 332nd, Faustino Lopez he Adult Community Supervision, I have Letty Castaneda the Court Coordinator for Court 9, and by the way I want to remind, well actually the County Courts will not be part of the Executive Session when we go in to it, it will be only the District Courts. I have Denner, Maryann Denner, who is the Chief at the Juvenile, I have Judge Rose Guerra Reyna she's with the 206th, I have Judge Israel Ramon and he is with the 430th, I have Judge Joe Ramirez he is with the 464th, I have Daniel Salinas with IT, I have Mr Keno Vasquez Judge Vasquez with the 398th, I have Laura Hinojosa our elected District Clerk, Clarissa Longoria with IT, Isidro Sepulveda with Indigent Defense, Valde Guerra with the Powers it Be, the County Judge's Office I have the County Judge himself I saw him, I saw Fred Garza and he is the County Courts, I have Carlos Villalon he is our CPS Judge, Anette Muniz she is with the County Clerks Office, Judge Valdez which is with the County Courts, I have Larry



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Esparza our Magistrate, I have M. Cuellar Marla Cuellar she is with the District Courts that is the 275th, and let's see who else I have that I may have missed.

Judge Singleterry: Hide the best for last Judge, Luis Singleterry from the 92nd with my glamour shot there.

Judge Gonzalez: Luis Singleterry with the 92nd

Judge Fonseca: Sorry Judge but the best for last Ysmael Fonseca 476th

They all laugh

Judge Gonzalez: 476th I have Albert Garcia with the County Courts, we have the Master Court 1 Judge, we have Victor Garza with the District Attorney's Office who will be assisting us he will be joining us as counsel for the Executive Session at this time have I missed anybody if I haven't and no one else speaks up we're going to proceed. The first part of the agenda will cover quickly so that if anybody else needs to leave, that time on the juvenile side of the agenda they can leave after this. First thing I want to point out is that the County Court House is moving forward believe it or not, and I am not saying that sarcastically. I think that, I have been talking to the County Judge's Office and they are telling me that they've got the documentation and the reports to submit to the city for purposes of obtaining a certificate of occupancy as soon as possible. Once that occurs, my understanding is the next step would be to go to jail standards and have them do the final inspection of the holding areas at the county the new county Court House, once that occurs then we will have the ok to move in and use the facility is my understanding. Is that correct Mr. Guerra and Judge?

Valde Guerra: Yes Sir Judge, that is correct everything that you stated is correct we are in track and as an add on we commenced simultaneously phase 2 of the Court House project which is undertaking of the old Court House once everyone has transitioned over to the new Court House we have authorized the project manager for phase 2 and a committee has been set up procurement of a Seamar Construction Manager at risk gonna take everything that needs to be done with the old Court House.



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Judge Cortez: I just want to add that the meeting between the county and the city of Edinburg will be taking place this afternoon.

Judge Gonzalez: Fantastic, well thank you for that stuff, first time we've gotten a report that, that, that I am confident is moving everything forward I know that everyone is frustrated including the County Judge's Office with what's been happening we need to use the facility, the county is already paying for it so we need to start using it. Thank you very much for that report anybody have any comments about it, alright. Several things that are gonna, I'm just gonna bounce quickly and see if there's if there is any discussion about it, number 3 on the agenda is, I was contacted by, actually by one of the appellate court justices that Cornin's Office was going to contact me but they did not contact me however, I know they contacted members of the DA's office and they contacted some other people including Judge Banales cause I saw him on television, and they actually had a meeting. Corning is spearheading for some legislation to increase not only my understanding resources, that include monetary resources but also resources through the government at the state level to provide better security for judges in our state, and this is actually a national issue but, I just wanted to point that out if you hear anything or if you see anything come across your desk regarding that, that's what it's all about they're trying to increase the security that is provided for judge's. Has anybody heard anything else about it? Ok the other area which is not a popular area for most is and I was asked to put it on the agenda it's about marriage solicitation, and I just, the only thing I can say is this I'm talking about the performing of weddings, look judges already know what the rules are you can perform all the weddings you want that's not a concern to anyone and if you get a lot of wedding or if you get a few weddings that's, that's perfectly fine the problem that we are encountering is the questioning of whether or not county resources are being utilized for example county staff being utilized for purposed of solicitation, of marriages in the hallways or in addition to that which is of more concern, there was a concern that even other people were being utilized other than county staff to solicit weddings, and I, look I don't know how much of this is true and I'm not in big favor of taking action on rumor and ---I think if there is a problem we address it I'm giving y'all notice that I don't want it and I don't think any of us want it to be a problem so I'm throwing that out, out there to you just to make sure that if you know of any of this we put a stop to it so that we, we don't run in to these complaints anymore literally what's happened and the reason these complaints occur is because for example it happened to but it's happened to other judges that I've talked to a family will contact us and say hey can



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you do us a favor do a wedding for my son or my daughter or even a relative that says hey can I go by primo and you can perform a wedding, and I'll say sure and they come by here and instead of getting what they thought was going to be a freebie from a family member or a friend they get basically wrangled and taken over to another court and they end up having to pay for a wedding that they otherwise may not have been ready to pay for. That's what my experience has been. I, I am a big component of judges doing as independent as they want to be doing what they think they need to do but just watch out folks, watch your resources the resources that are utilized here in the county including the premises have to be respected. Ok anybody have any comment about that. I know it's unpopular nobody wants to talk about it but you have a comment this is the time to make it. Ok the other thing is there was ah, revocations adjudications of judgements as it relates to reimbursement fees, court costs, and fines. Folks, the forms that we're utilizing on our judgements have changed there are certain things that go in there and there have been questions as to whether or not when you have a motion to revoke or motion to adjudicate, if they don't properly document it whether the fees and court costs and fines remain the same. The judge's do not notify or note in the judgement that they are being modified to zero or to any number below what was originally ordered then the judgement must include the numbers that were included in the original judgement so be careful with that cause it's come back to us and it's bitten us in the back by by questioning the DA or the clerk will say hey these people are saying that these things are supposed to be resolved, if the court doesn't resolve it on the record or on the paper it stays the same folks we need to make sure we take care of those things has anybody had those experiences Judge Letty Lopez

Judge Lopez: I don't know, I don't remember when it was the last board of judges that we talked judgement being changed by OCA where we were using the wrong forms and it happened because of the capital murder that I had OCA notified us that were using the wrong forms and we had to use new forms. Well those new forms are in effect and you have to put specific language in those forms every time you do a motion to adjudicate or motion to revoke it has to have specific language whether you're waiving or you are keeping what you just said the fines and court cost from the original judgement your, your probation officers that help you with your judgements and the DA's office that helps with the judgements they're still learning the new judgements so it is incumbent upon all of us to look at those judgements and make sure that they're correct because you're gonna get them back if we don't do it correct and apparently the DA's office, I was just informed by my probation



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officer that the DA's office has two new forms that you prosecutors are going to have to use, and whether you are going to be waiving the original fine and court costs or whether you are going to be keeping and those forms need to be filled out by your probation officer, by your DA, Assistant DA, and those forms will be taken by your probation officer I believe to whoever is doing the judgement at the DA's office, but when you get those judgements you might want to look to see when you're signing off on them that they actually say what you wanted them to say when you make your pronouncements on the record and really that's all I have to say about that. These judgements are new and still a work in progress with the people at the DA's office and your old probation officers learning these, what is required with these new judgements.

Judge Gonzalez: And, and folks, these are, these things are very important also to the people were sending them to prison because when they get out they have a lot of, of hurdles they have to jump through to get back into society one of them is paying their fines and court costs cause they can't get drivers licenses, they can't get even titles to their vehicles renewed they can't do any of those things that the average person can do without paying this cause under the scoff law they're, they're forbidden so they have to go get on a payment plan. Judges have called and said hey can I modify a judgement after the fact. You cannot so once the judgement has, has resulted in incarceration that judgement is gone you can't modify it, the only thing you can do is ask that collections put them on a payment plan. So that's why it's important to deal with this while were doing the revo if you want to but you don't have to, but if you do you need to make sure that's it's clear ok. Anybody else have any commentary about that. We have implemented for the District courts the new criminal case distri, redistribution plan it was, it, it was kicked off and my understanding from IT we're still monitoring it I see the numbers on occasion when they give them to me and they appear to be working under the new system. Clarissa have we double checked lately is anything been out of the ordinary.

Clarissa Longoria: No, I did rerun the numbers probably last week and everything still seems to be, consistent amongst the courts.

Judge Gonzalez: Fantastic, and the County Courts I know have, had implemented some, some changes to assist them to make sure that they were getting you know at least a fair distribution, I think the County Clerk once he talks to the IT department if they're able to implement this new system in the County Clerk, county courts agree



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to it then I would invite them to do so along with that I'm announcing that as of December 13 of 2024, it's on a Friday the Odyssey 23 version will be implemented across the county and so starting at noon December 13 of 2024 we will now be on Odyssey 23 is that correct Clarissa and Mr. Salinas

Mr. Salinas: Yes, Judge, starting at noon on December 13 we will take Odyssey offline for the upgrade process the upgrade process will take the majority of the weekend so our target to go live on the new navigator system again version 23 will be Monday morning at 8 am

Judge Gonzalez: So, both just keep in mind December 23 that's the day no December 13, 2024 at noon don't jump up and down and say why is my Odyssey not working ok. They're taking it down and it's necessary so we can have enough time and, and it'll be ready by Monday to have the full implementation of the new Odyssey and by the way you may not see any changes initially other than I think what you should be learning or your staff should be learning already the differences in, in the different bells and whistles that are included in there is that correct.

Mr. Salinas: Judge there will be a new icon on the desktop to get into it so the old icon used today for Odyssey will, will cease to, to operate and cease to work. So there will, there will be a separate icon that be on, be placed on your computer and that will be your, your path to run the new navigator system

Judge Gonzalez: Is the icon going to be that different (laughs)

Mr Salinas: It, it, It's a technical situation sir I just want to make sure it is a different icon sir

Judge Gonzalez: No, I get it I just want to make sure that people will understand it's not going to be exactly the same it's going to be slightly different.

Laura Hinojosa: Texting Danny

Judge Lopez; Judge can I ask a question about that new situation, and it's for Clarissa. Clarissa is our task manager or our que going to change at all.



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Clarissa Longoria: So, we're, so as part of the process and as part of doing the upgrade IT we will have to rebuild all paths and que's, with the upgrade and that's part our goal life duties on our side. I know we are going to do a push in conjunction with the clerks offices to start having the court get more familiarized with the path task and que's so that way as we move over system all courts will be able to utilize the, the new functionality of the task and que's that will hur, that will help our District Clerks Office, our, our County Clerks Office, it'll be a more uniform way of sending documents to and from the clerks office, which will also help IT as part of configuration and troubleshooting, and so as we get closer probably starting in November we will start reaching back out to the different courts kinda getting a refresher training on the task and que's and the new navigator environment so that way that you know information will be fresh as we start doing the cut over in December.

Judge Lopez: Does that mean (laughs) after all that, I guess my question is. Is it gonna change Clarissa?

Clarissa Longoria: No, I mean what you, what you know today as far as right clicking and, and sending on its way to, through the work flow path or the task path that's gonna stay the same, the only difference now is what you know judge for your court since you utilize both work flow and task manager for and for any other courts out there it's now combined into one so the process what you do at the end of the day is still gonna be the same you'll just instead of, if you're on work flow instead of having one document you can have multiple documents which we see today in task manager. So it's kinda just putting it together but technically you're doing the same thing

Judge Lopez: Uha,

Clarissa Longoria: It's gonna be the same

Judge Lopez: Explain it to my staff I didn't understand

Clarissa Longoria: I will, I will but everything will be the same you'll still have the ability to additate like you do today you'll still be, have the ability to put on your electronic signature like you do today and so and, and like I said the means like how it gets from clerks to courts that's, and back that's still gonna stay the same



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Judge Gonzalez: Judge, Judge Lopez I, I learned quite a ways back that when it deals with IT I normally will say talk to my staff, because they then can give me a short cut on, on what my tasks are so I can give Justeen time, but thank you Clarissa.

Judge Lopez: Thank you Clarissa

Judge Gonzalez: My understanding is it is supposed to be easier there is going to be a few less steps ok so, as far as that is concerned the only thing would say is thank you Clarissa and Mr. Salinas and the IT department for what you're doing with Odyssey but thank you also with the issue we have with redistribution we're hoping that once we switch, by the way when we switch over to Odyssey 23 my understanding is that it, the, the phase distribution system on Odyssey 23 is already been tested and will work the same

Mr. Salinas: That's correct

Judge Gonzalez: Ok, there's nothing else on, on those things we are gonna go in to areas I think the rest of it has to do with Juvenile so if anybody is not in the Juvenile Board you are actually excused and am I gonna lose any District Judges or the County Judge for purposes of the, the closed session because then I'm gonna have after the closed session I wanted to do the juvenile agenda. If I am I not gonna lose

Judge Fonseca: Judge

Judge Gonzalez: If not gonna lose, Fonseca had to leave at noon but I have enough people Judge Fonseca so I really appreciate you joining us this morning

Judge Fonseca: ok, good

Judge Gonzalez: Alright so this what we're gonna do at this time Victor I don't see you on the camera where are you, you don't want to be seen. There he is, under the, the Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code section 551.074 Consultation with Attorney and 551.074 on (Personal Matters) we intend to discuss the and, and it's listed as appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of the Director/Chief JPO of Juvenile Probation Department. So what we're gonna do is I'm going to have to move well actually



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Judge Ramirez: Judge, can I, I've, I've asked Ms. Denner and it really not much of a duo agenda I think we can go through it like in less than five minutes if you just want to go ahead and do that first.

Judge Gonzalez: Well we, we can do that if you'd like what we can do is do the juvenile agenda and the we'll go in to the closed session and then come back to the open session if we need to

Judge Ramirez: Yea I don't think I will take very long at all I've talked to Ms. Denner about the agenda. Everything seems to be in order, every is out of the ordinary you all have had advance copies of the agenda and what's on it, yea I don't think there's any there shouldn't be any questions about it but of course if there are any questions Ms. Denner and I will be happy to discuss it with you all otherwise will move that we approve the minutes of the last meeting and move from there

Judge Betancourt: I'll second that motion

Judge Gonzalez: There's a motion to second that's number one of section two under, under the juvenile department all those in favor

All Judges: Aye

Judge Gonzalez: all those opposed that item has passed

Judge Ramirez: The rest of the agenda, I would move that we approve it unless there are any questions about any of the item in there

Judge Betancourt: I'll second that motion

Judge Gonzalez: There's a motion a second and that is from Judge Ramirez and Judge Betancourt and at this time if there isn't any discussion all those in favor

All Judges: Aye

Judge Gonzalez: All those opposed, those passed so that takes care of that



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Judge Ramirez: Ok

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Judge, 449th D.C.

Joe Ramirez
Judge, 464th D.C.

Ysmael D. Fonseca
Judge, 476th D.C.

Richard Cortez
County Judge

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Blanca I. Tijerina", written over a horizontal line.

Blanca I. Tijerina
Secretary of Minutes

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maryann Denner", written over a horizontal line.

Maryann Denner
Director/Chief Juvenile Probation Officer

Maryann Denner, MSCJ
Director/Chief Juvenile
Probation Officer

Ricardo "Rick" Guerrero, Jr.
Budget Manager II

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