



**ILLINOIS
CRIMINAL JUSTICE
INFORMATION AUTHORITY**

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MINUTES

**Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
Budget Committee Meeting**

March 7, 2014

9:00 a.m.

300 West Adams

Main Building Conference Room, 2nd Floor

Chicago, Illinois 60606

Call to Order and Roll Call

The Budget Committee of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority met during the Authority Regular Meeting on Friday, March 7, 2014, at 300 West Adams, Main Building Conference Room (2nd Floor), Chicago, Illinois. Budget Committee Chair Clerk Dorothy Brown called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Authority Acting Deputy General Counsel Junaid Afeef called the roll. Other Authority members and designees present were Jennifer Greene for State's Attorney Anita Alvarez, Dania Sanchez-Bass for Abishi Cunningham, Kathryn Dunne for Sheriff Tom Dart, Authority Chair Peter M. Ellis, Gladyse Taylor for Director S. A. Godinez, Felix M. Gonzalez, Col. Marc Maton for Director Hiram Grau, Bobbie Gregg, John Harvey, Cynthia Hora for Attorney General Madigan, James Hickey for Superintendent Garry McCarthy, Sheriff Patrick B. Perez, Juliana Stratton for President Toni Preckwinkle, Randall Rosenbaum, Jennifer Vollen-Katz, and Angela Rudolph. Also in attendance were Authority Executive Director Jack Cutrone, Authority Program Supervisor Shai Hoffman, and other Authority staff members.

All Authority Board members and designees present were appointed by Chairman Ellis to the Budget Committee for the duration of the meeting. Clerk Brown chaired the Budget Committee portion of the meeting. The Budget Committee meeting began at 9:30 a.m.

1. Justice Assistance Grants (JAG) FFY11 Plan Adjustments

Recommended Designation

Storycatchers Theatre

Director Cutrone, referring to the memo in the meeting materials dated March 7, 2014 and regarding the FFY11 JAG Plan Adjustment, said that staff recommended a designation of \$101,000 in FFY11 JAG funds to Storycatchers Theatre (ST). He said that he was first introduced to ST at a meeting chaired by Justice Anne Burke of the Illinois Supreme Court. The programs were really impressive in terms of what they do for kids in the Juvenile Department of Corrections of the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ). A number of young people were assisted by graduates of the program who came back and volunteered with the program and got to write and direct and do all the things necessary to put on a production, but the unique feature was these kids were telling their own stories. He said that he was deeply affected by ST because the kids who have gone through the program and have moved on in their lives and avoided further involvement in the criminal justice system have gone on to not only help with ST, but also to get other gainful employment.

Meade Palidofsky, Logistics Director and founder of ST, said that ST's mission is to prepare young people to make more thoughtful life choices through the process of writing, producing, and performing original musical theater based on and inspired by personal experience. ST has been doing this since 1984 with high-risk youths in communities, and since 1990 with incarcerated youths. ST works at the Cook County Temporary Detention Center, Illinois Youth Center (IYC) Chicago, IYC St. Charles, and IYC Warrenville. ST recently received the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award awarded by the President's Committee on the National Arts and Humanities in November.

Ms. Palidofsky said that the proposed designation would support a long-time dream. ST has worked for a long time with the IDJJ and its aftercare specialists in developing a program. This would be a pilot program that would start with kids in a high-crime area and do the same thing that we have been doing for many years inside, which is work with the kids closely to tell their stories, to look at their lives, to look at their environments, to look at the choices that they're making and the consequences of those choices. This allows us to see that their futures are very broad and long and that the same way that they can put together the scenes, the environment, the relationships, in a play they can project successful relationships and jobs and environments and choices in the future. ST is very excited about this proposal. Eventually, this pilot program would become a statewide program in every judicial district, but it would start with a pilot of eight to 12 youths who

would meet for four months to create their stories. Their objective is to look at the process of staying out of the court system, of not continuing to be adjudicated, but to look at the issues and the obstacles of being out on the street and what it takes to get a job.

Ms. Palidofsky said that this would be a job training program because the theater that they do would eventually tour to other kids and judicial districts and schools, park districts, and they would be paid for the work that they're doing. There is currently a model for this in the community; ST works with the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) and the Chicago Park District to have kids write a play during the year and tour with it in the summer – they go out four times a week, twice each day, to park districts.

Director Cutrone said that the Authority is working this program into at least two of our Community Violence Prevention Program (CVPP) sites, although it's going to be headquartered in only one. The program will work with youths reentering as part of the generalized reentry services provided by CVPP. Not only will the participating kids benefit, but so will the kids in that same population who are exposed to experiences similar to these stories; the stories will be very meaningful to other youths and the focus will be on changing the way that these youths approach life and changing some of the choices that they make. This will be part of the Authority's CVPP, but it needed to be separately funded.

Nancy McCarty, ST Executive Director, said that community partners in the target area community development program have a reentry program for both juveniles and young adults so they have the wraparound services that these kids need; housing, education, health insurance, etc. ST would be part of their jobs training program and fulfill the employment requirement for kids who are in aftercare or on parole.

Ms. Palidofsky, in response to a question by Ms. Vollen-Katz, said that the pilot program would be for four months, with the hope that it would become on-going. Generally, ST's programs are year-round and youths take part in them for a year. The hope would be that it would continue after this because it was successful and that it would open up opportunities for at least some of the youths to continue as mentors and teachers because they would be trained on how to write, communicate, direct, act, and all backstage skills as well, thus gaining theater experience. Those who decide that theater is not the path that they want would still be learning valuable skills.

Ms. Hora said that this is a very worthwhile project and that she has seen some of these groups in other states. The only issue is that this seems like it would serve a small number of youths; about 12 at about \$8,500 per youth.

Ms. Palidofsky said that that is the number expected to complete the program; it would start with more youths. Eventually, there would be more of these, so there would be growth.

Ms. McCarty said that this is a lot of money for a four month program, but as it grows it takes advantages of economies of scale and the cost per participant goes down.

Ms. Palidofsky said that about 15 to 20 youths is the limit that a theater ensemble can handle, especially on tour.

Ms. Vollen-Katz said that she has seen several ST performances. They are wonderful. She said that she has had the opportunity to talk extensively, particularly with the young women at Warrenville, about their experiences in the ST program. This is very helpful for them. She asked if it would be an aftercare specialist who presents ST participation as an option for these youths or if there was another way that they would be selected to participate.

Ms. McCarty said that the youths have to choose to participate. Through the target area ST would be able to start recruiting both in Cook County Juvenile Detention Center and in the IDJJ facilities and in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) facilities for the young adults and present it as an option. It is very important that if someone chooses to do this that they make the commitment. This is not a drop-in program; it is not come-when-you-feel-like-it. This is a job and that's part of the deal; if your car has a flat tire, you take the bus, if your baby is sick or whatever, you have to find a way to get to work. So, all of the things that can get in the way, for a very confused life, of being successful help build a structure for the youths to develop skills to deal with them and be successful.

Ms. Palidofsky said that working and doing something positive makes the kids feel better about themselves and that they can achieve things and succeed. In the program, the kids fill out daily goals. They look to see if they achieve their goals from the beginning of a session to the end. They also measure their emotional state and see that they often come in angry, but leave calm, contented, happy, and satisfied with themselves. For many years, kids have expressed interest in being involved with ST on the outside, but there hasn't been a formal structure for that. This is the time to do it.

Director Cutrone said that the Authority would be involved in daily collections to get out the information. It takes many years to get a long-term outcome evaluation.

Ms. McCarty said that one of the things that's exciting is to finally be able to track the kids. They are tracked very informally because right now they're juveniles and we don't have a mechanism for tracking them.

Mr. Harvey said that he appreciated the background on the program. He asked if there is a place in the United States with community conditions similar to those in Chicago where a program like this one has helped kids make a transition.

Ms. Palidofsky said that ST belongs to a network of theater artists that work in prisons, but most people actually work in the adult system.

Ms. McCarty said that Rhode Island, which is a very small state, has a huge youth prison arts program and one of its successes is that because the state is so small, those same companies that work in the prison work on the outside; the kids can get at them and so they have shown some success in integrating kids moving from the program in the prison to the program on the outside. One of the things that ST creates is a safe social structure for these kids so that the social support that they now seek from the gangs or from the neighborhood they find in the ST ensemble and that's one of the things that's really important; that they have an alternative social structure.

Mr. Rosenbaum said that the performance measures listed are very broad, like engaging youths, but there has been some talk about diagnostic tools to determine a measure of success. He said that he assumed that some criteria to judge success such as the number of participants or recidivism rate over time would be established.

Ms. McCarty said that ST tracks the numbers of kids who start the program and who finish the program and attendance in between.

Director Cutrone said that there are assessment tools. Generally, people's ideas about factors that put youths either at risk for antisocial behavior or are protective tend to prevent the antisocial behavior and that's probably one of the assessments that will be done both before youths enter the program and after program completion.

Ms. Palidofsky said that ST is a trauma-informed company. ST works with psychologists and specialists who train ST staff in recognizing trauma in individuals because ST knows that most of the kids in the system have experienced extreme trauma.

Ms. Palidofsky said that ST has existed for 30 years and has worked in the juvenile justice system for 23 years.

Clerk Brown said that ST should have some statistics as to youths who were serviced while they were in and then whether or not those youths returned. That should be easy information to get.

Ms. McCarty said that ST has not been legally able to get such information.

Ms. Palidofsky said that ST is not supposed to follow kids who are in the juvenile system out. It is done informally, though; the kids call ST. A lot of kids can be found via Facebook. Many of them get in touch with ST to let us know what they're doing. ST has informal stories about kids who are out and successful. She said that she got a call over the summer from a former program participant who now has a job inspecting oil wells in Texas and making very good money. She said that ST does have statistics on the kids while they are in the program.

Director Cutrone said that if the Authority does a formal research project on long-term outcomes it will have to go through the review board so that the Authority would have access.

Ms. Palidofsky said that ST is excited by being part of the project this way because ST will have a formal evaluation tool.

Motion: Ms. Hora moved to approve the JAG FFY11 plan adjustment. The motion was seconded by Ms. Vollen-Katz and approved by unanimous voice vote, with an abstention by Ms. Rudolph.

Director Cutrone said that there is a chart in the JAG memo that shows the remaining balances for each federal fiscal year award.

2. Violence Prevention Grants (PV) SFY14 Plan Adjustments

Program Supervisor Shai Hoffman called attention to the memo in the meeting materials dated March 7, 2014 and regarding Violence Prevention Grants (PV) SFY14 plan adjustments.

Designation Reduction / Reallocation

Safe from the Start

Mr. Hoffman said that at the February 4, 2014 Budget Committee meeting \$4,500 in PV SFY14 funds was added to an existing designation to the University of Illinois at Chicago for its Safe from the Start program. Since that time, the grantee has requested that the \$4,500 increase be rescinded and reallocated to a new designation for the same program. Staff recommends making this reallocation.

Recommended Designation

Mr. Hoffman said that staff recommends designating \$22,748 in PV SFY14 funds to the Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago, which will act as a fiscal agent to the City of Chicago to do activities associated with Childhood Exposure to Violence Week. These funds will support outreach to 20,000 providers and consumers for a variety of activities and will pay for printing, advertising, parking and mileage costs, and a speaker's fee for a symposium.

Motion: Ms. Hora moved to approve the PV SFY14 plan adjustments. The motion was seconded by an unidentified speaker and approved by unanimous voice vote.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Adjourn

Motion: Ms. Hora moved to adjourn the meeting. An unidentified speaker seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m. The Authority Board then moved on to discuss other items on the Authority Regular Meeting agenda