

Hancock County Youth Court Task Force

Meeting Date: January 5, 2015 | Time: 5pm - 7pm | Chairman: State Representative David Baria

Introduction

The meeting was called to order by the chairman at 5 pm and followed by introductory remarks by Senior Chancellor, Sandy Steckler. The members of the task force were then introduced.

Action I: Old Business

No Old Business

Action II: New Business

A. Adoption of Task Force Mission Statement

- a. Chairman Baria provided members with a copy of the Mississippi Code section creating the Youth Court system and opened the floor for suggestions regarding language for a mission statement.
- b. Per **Cindy Burney**: Protect the children and reorganize the reunification process for the children. Per **Brehm Bell**: There are lots of parents frustrated due to the process of termination of their parental rights. The idea is to reduce the number of children in custody through reunification or implement prompt terminations where it is appropriate.
- c. Discussion regarding all of the parties involved roles with the family. (DHS-Mark Smith, Youth Court-Judge Deano, GAL-Cindy Burney, Ag's Office-Tonya Blair, CASA-Cynthia Chauvin, DA's office, CFSSP-Shawna Pankonin, law enforcement-Ricky Adams, Board of Supervisors.

B. Robert's Rules of Order were adopted for task force meetings

C. Chairman Baria opened the floor for suggestions re: committees and 4 committees were adopted: Statistics, Coordination of Services, Parent Representative and Systems

D. A meeting schedule was adopted and the next task force meeting was set for 1/23/15 at 4 p.m.

E. Establishing a system for Public Comment was discussed and Chairman Baria agreed to have an announcement of the website prior to the next scheduled meeting

Action II: Public Comments

Chairman Baria opened the floor for public comments during the remaining time. A majority of parents and grandparents voiced concerns about some aspect of the Youth Court or DHS workers, such as: children not being placed with relatives, families not having a regular visitation schedule with the children, cost of drug tests and parents not being able to pay for them on limited income, concerns with how foster parents are chosen-(children being sexually abused in foster homes), foster parents feeling like they have to jump through hoops to get children placed with them, and concerns regarding not being able to get in touch with SW,

Action III: Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:00pm