

Allegheny County Juvenile Detention Board of Advisors

Meeting Minutes

Date: May 21, 2026 | 4:00 PM

Location: Human Services Building

Call to Order

Dr. Mulvey called the meeting to order.

Attendance

Board Members present: Dr. Edward Mulvey (Chair), Hon. Tiffany Sizemore (Vice Chair), Kristy Trautmann (Secretary), County Executive Sara Innamorato, Hon. Jennifer McCrady, Dr. Kathi Elliott, Cheyenne Tyler, Richard Garland, Starry Joy Ray (Controller's Office designee)

Board Members Not in Attendance: Dr. Terri Dilmore

County Representation: Interim Department of Human Services (DHS) Director, Alex Jutca; Senior Liaison Juvenile Detention, Raymond Robinson

Public Comment Agenda Items

No public comment on the agenda

Approval of Minutes

March 2026 meeting minutes were approved with corrections to names of board members Trautmann and Elliott.

Highland Detention Center- Governance and Operations

Interim DHS Director Jutca provided responses to board questions and requests from the March 2026 meeting

Request for more detailed monthly reports from Adelphoi:

- Per Adelphoi, Juvenile Probation Office (JPO) maintains the most accurate discharge information. Adelphoi staff are not always informed of discharge locations. Adelphoi will not add additional discharge data to its monthly report if it involves information that could possibly be used to identify adolescents or families individually.
- Per Adelphoi, staff complete HCSIS reports based on instructions from state reviewers, and the state has had no issue with the level of detail in the reports. Adelphoi will not

change their HCSIS reporting. DHS receives more information on these incidents and will continue sharing as part of the DHS share out.

However, DHS has updated the Highland Detention Center Dashboard:

- In response to requests by the JDBA, DHS has added functionality to the dashboard, including the ability to filter types of data by start and end date. This filter can be applied to the Highland facility census, entries, discharges, length of stay (LOS), and next location.
- Aggregate discharge data is available on the DHS Highland dashboard <https://analytics.alleghenycounty.us/2025/10/03/highland-detention-center-interactive-dashboard/>
- Additionally, as of today, there is a new chart showing the cumulative length of stay for youth who have resided at Highlands, which shows the length they have been at any detention setting. However, the chart includes no data for youth in juvenile detention who have never been at Highlands.
- Allegations of abuse by staff at Highland are investigated by the State Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF).

Per diem rate for bed nights- Per JPO, the FY 26/27 rate is \$921.80.

Adelphoi has added information about the Director's Action Line (DAL) during orientation and providing copies of the information at intake.

In addition to regular healthcare and education services, two partners meet with youth. Gerry Florida, a local artist, visits twice a week to lead art projects. And Crisis Center North leads regular trauma-informed care sessions with youth. Adelphoi reports the current limited space constrains ability to bring additional partners.

DHS's fiscal team would like to join with the proposed facility and finance committee to walk through invoicing.

A grant proposal has been submitted to fund a post-doc position.

Facility updates from March and April Adelphoi reports

Four staff vacancies as of April 30

Family visits have increased- 34 in April and 31 in March, compared to 12 in Feb. and 4 in Jan.

Two reportable incident reports (HCSIS) for incidents requiring fire or police:

- First report: Allegheny County police arrived to do a wellness check on a youth at the request of a parent.
- The second report stemmed from a 911 call due to youth alleging to have ingested more pills than prescribed. The youth was taken to a hospital where no signs of additional medication were found.

Adelphoi reports the disrepair of the driveway issue have been addressed by the county.

Senior Liaison Observation Summary

Raymond Robinson serves as the DHS Senior Liaison for Juvenile Detention. He conducts regular site-visits to ensure Adelphoi delivers high quality, trauma-informed services. Six site-visits were conducted since the last board meeting. Mr. Robinson reported that these visits provide an opportunity for DHS to identify emerging issues before they escalate. Visits usually last several hours and include all spaces in the facility and include observations of youth and staff in daily activities. These reviews have been pre-scheduled; Mr. Robinson noted that he will begin unannounced visits in the coming months.

A separate team at DHS is responsible for the financial reviews. Children Youth and Families (CYF) program officers provide case oversight for CYF involved youth at the facility. Inspectors from the state OCYF visit to measure compliance with 55 Pa. Code Chapter 3800 regulations.

Mr. Robinson noted that each visit there was sufficient staff available to safely manage youth. Staff have effectively intervened to keep altercations from escalating, and to deescalate combative youth. The common area and bedrooms have generally been clean. Some food items have been observed in rooms. Plumbing issues can arise when items are flushed down the toilet, so this will be addressed with Adelphoi staff.

He noted that the medical room is not conducive to therapeutic sessions as the only chair for youth is more suited for medical exams. New seating is needed. Additionally, Highland staff are positioned just outside the door as a safety measure, but this lack of privacy can limit youth willingness to discuss sensitive matters. As an interim solution, staff have moved out of direct sight of the exam room window when possible; this setup is temporary and will be resolved with future renovations. Board members asked questions about this lack of privacy for behavioral health visits. Administration is working within the physical constraints of space and furniture to balance privacy concerns and safety concerns. He reiterated that the arrangement is temporary and will improve with future renovations.

Intake observations were positive: youth rights, grievance process, and Director's Action Line are reviewed; searches and showers are conducted respectfully.

The current unit includes only one small room, which limits family visitation to one visit at a time. Adelphoi offers flexible scheduling (typically 9–5) and will extend hours to accommodate families. Virtual video visits had been in place but were suspended due to the link being shared with others who were not authorized by Juvenile Probation. Limitations on family contact stem from the current facility space, and improvements are expected as renovations are completed.

Youth have access to free daily phone calls, and the frequency is often increased based on behavior.

Discussion and Questions

Staffing and safety-response roles: Clarification is needed on whether UPMC behavioral health staff receive safety-response training; currently, Adelphoi staff handle safety-related interventions.

Board members also expressed appreciation for the data transparency through the Highland dashboard. Clarifications were provided on which metrics are Highland-specific versus systemwide.

Dr. Mulvey noted the robust public attendance at the meeting and expressed appreciation for public participation.

In response to questions, DHS confirmed that notice of the JDBA meetings is shared online, on DHS display boards, and posted at the Highland Center. In the future it will be possible for the public to view the meetings via Teams. Dates, details and the link are posted at <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Government/Department-Directory/Commissions/Juvenile-Detention-Board-of-Advisors>.

Facility conditions: Plumbing and other building concerns reported in the Fall have improved, with further detail expected in the upcoming facilities report.

Community involvement and space limitations: Community providers visit occasionally, but routine engagement is limited by space. Adelphoi is open to expanding involvement (artists, mentors, support partners) as space and weather permit, including potential courtyard use. A clearer process is needed to connect community organizations with youth beyond ad-hoc arrangements.

Transfers and family communication: Questions surfaced about youth being moved to other facilities without clear notice to families. It was clarified that probation makes transfer decisions, not Highland staff, and families should be notified. The Director's Action Line is available for concerns about unclear or improper transfers.

Census interpretations and temporary conditions: Daily census numbers provide only a moment-in-time snapshot and may not reflect same-day admissions and releases. Many current limitations stem from temporary space and facility conditions. When the full Highland build-out is completed, it should significantly reduce out-of-county placements for juvenile detention.

Unfinished Business

The Bylaws Committee shared revised bylaws. Bylaws largely mirror the 2024 consent order between Allegheny County Council and the County Executive and Adelphoi.

- Board composition follows the consent order: county executive or designee, county controller or designee, and eight non-county-employee members, with appointment processes unchanged. Members serve three-year terms with no compensation; reimbursement is available for approved expenses.
- Annual elections will be held for board officers (chair, vice-chair, secretary).
- Committees may be formed, as needed, by majority vote. Community members can serve on committees provided board members remain the majority.
- Board will hold at least six meetings per year and review a range of statistical and operational data specified in the order.
 - Additionally, the board requests additional details about staffing: new hires, terminations, unfilled positions, OT shifts and training provided.
 - In addition to the reports from Adelphoi, the board is recommending additional reporting: DHS monitoring reports, total number of ChildLine reports, state licensing/monitoring reports, and building maintenance updates. These additional sources of information are intended to flag potential areas of concern.
- Board may take an annual tour of the facility, and committees may visit for specified purposes. The board has no onsite monitoring role.
- Official actions require a quorum; voting by proxy is permitted.
- Board meetings are public and must be advertised. Meeting minutes and reports will be posted on the county website. Informal consultation among board members and meetings of committees will not be considered official meetings, no votes will be taken. Committees will report back to the board.
- Bylaws and future amendments accepted by the board require separate approval by both the county executive and president judge.

Bylaws were adopted with amendments by unanimous vote.

New Business

Visit to Allegheny County Jail scheduled for June 10, 11:30-12:30. The tour will focus on adolescent facilities, services, intake processes, and operational issues.

Subcommittee Formation

Dr. Mulvey proposed formation of two committees: Data & Reporting and Facility & Finance.

- Both committees will be comprised of board members (majority) and community members and professionals; The purpose is to analyze issues and develop recommendations for the board.
- Board Chair will contact members individually to determine interest serving on committees.

Motion to establish two committees 1) Data & Reporting and 2) Facility & Finance was adopted by unanimous vote.

Public Comment on General Matters

A community advocate emphasized the importance of prevention and addressing the whole child, noting unmet needs in emotional support, stability, and family resources. She expressed interest in participating in committees and collaborating on holistic approaches for youth and families.

Board members acknowledged the need for stronger coordination with community organizations and highlighted the importance of continuity of support when youth return home. Emphasis was placed on supporting both youth and their families.

Suggestions included engaging community groups through education staff to provide presentations and resources for youth while detained.

Additional comments from community stakeholders raised two concerns:

- A community member expressed concern over youth being disenrolled from their home schools upon placement at Highland, which creates barriers to educational continuity upon their return home.
- A question was raised about how decisions are made to transfer youth from Highlands to other Adelphoi operated facilities, and whether there exists a potential conflict of interest. Court representatives clarified that detention decisions and transfers are made by probation and the courts, not by Adelphoi. The courts are committed to ensuring notification procedures for families are followed consistently.

Public commenters encouraged continued transparency and data review as additional facility beds come online.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned by unanimous vote.