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Robert Vilchez, Vice Chair
Dana G. Schrad, Secretary
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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Board of Juvenile Justice

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DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

December 1, 2020 ☞ Virtual Meeting

Pursuant to amendments to the Budget Bill approved on April 24, 2020, and set forth in Item 4.0-0.1 and in light of the Governor's declaration of a state emergency to curb the spread of COVID-19, the Board of Juvenile Justice met by virtual videoconference on December 1, 2020. The Board considered a virtual video meeting necessary due to concerns that the nature and continuing spread of the virus throughout the Commonwealth rendered meeting at a single location unsafe for Board members, Department of Juvenile Justice personnel, and members of the public.

Board Members Present: Tyren Frazier, Scott Kizner, Robyn McDougale, Dana Schrad, Gregory Underwood, and Robert Vilchez

Board Members Absent: David Hines and Quwanisha Roman

Department of Juvenile Justice (Department) Staff Present: Dhara Amin, Ken Bailey, Melinda Boone, Valerie Boykin, Patrick Bridge, Kecia Brothers-Hayes, Ken Davis, Mike Favale, Robert Foster, Stephanie Garrison, Stephanie Green, Regina Harris, Wendy Hoffman, Lesley Hull, Dee Kirk, Andrea McMahon, Linda McWilliams, Roy Mitchell, Mike Morton, Margaret O'Shea (Attorney General's Office), Shaun Parker, Jamie Patten, Kristen Peterson, Romilda Smith, Beth Stinnett, James Towey, and Angela Valentine

Registered Guests: Deja Braxton (dLCV), James Braxton (RISE), Ellen Harrison (Department of Education), Cory Jones (RISE), Ashley Moore (Legal Aid Justice Center), Ginger Ploeger (Tidewater Youth Services Commission), Ed Reed (CAP Consulting), Shawn Sawyer (Tidewater Youth Services Commission), Valerie Slater (RISE), Nancy Tubbs (ISNV), and William Wimbish (Tidewater Youth Services Commission)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Tyren Frazier called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Frazier welcomed those present and asked for Board member introductions. Director Valerie Boykin asked for staff introductions. Due to the media platform used for the meeting, guests were not able to make introductions.

APPROVAL OF September 16, 2020, MINUTES

The minutes of the September 16, 2020, Board meeting were presented for approval. On motion duly made by Robyn McDougle and seconded by Scott Kizner, the Board approved the minutes as presented. Roll Call: Tyren Frazier – Aye, Scott Kizner – Aye, Robyn McDougle – Aye, Dana Schrad – Aye, Greg Underwood – Aye, Robert Vilchez – Aye. The motion was carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no public comment.

CONSIDERATION OF THE VIRGINIA JUVENILE COMMUNITY CRIME CONTROL ACT (VJCCCA) PLAN

Beth Stinnett, Statewide Program Manager, Department

The Board approved the York County combined VJCCCA plan (Gloucester, James City, and Poquoson) in June for the two-year biennium. The Board received an update at its September meeting on York County's decision to close the group home and shelter care facility, and the Board approved the reduction of the local contribution to reduce their maintenance of effort consistent with the state allocation. At the time of the September meeting, York County convened their stakeholders of court service unit directors and the judiciary to determine how to spend the cost savings from the closure of the group home and shelter care facility.

As a result of the cost savings associated with the closure of the group home and shelter care facility, the York County combined plan proposed to reallocate funding to continue outreach detention/electronic monitoring programming, law-related education, and substance abuse education. They will also add new programming to include a community service program, a restorative justice program, and community Aggression Replacement Training. The proposed changes and history are detailed on page 30 of the Board packet. Ms. Stinnett and her staff reviewed the proposal, and Ms. Stinnett noted their support. York County has met the requirements for revising the plan, including having a balanced budget, reallocating funding, convening stakeholders, and providing required letters of support from court service unit directors and the judiciary. The recommendation is for the Board to approve the revised York County combined plan for the full two-year biennium through June 30, 2022.

On motion by Dana Schrad and seconded by Robyn McDougle, the Board of Juvenile Justice approved the revised proposed VJCCCA Plan for York County (Combined) through June 30, 2022. Roll Call: Tyren Frazier – Aye, Scott Kizner – Aye, Robyn McDougle – Aye, Dana Schrad – Aye, Greg Underwood – Aye, Robert Vilchez – Aye. The motion was carried.

FY2020 HUMAN RESEARCH REPORT

Dr. Dhara Amin, Senior Research Associate, Department

The Human Research Review Committee reviewed four new research proposals in the past fiscal year, and none were denied. Dr. Amin updated the Board on pending reports.

Dr. Amin reminded the Board of the meeting last year describing research protocol violations being investigated by the Department. The investigation found that communication difficulties contributed to the violation with the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and Westat. Westat assumed they were allowed to use Spanish forms with Bon Air youth; however, that was not approved by the Human Research Review Committee. Appendix B on page 45 of the Board packet includes a letter from BJS on improvement areas.

- BJS will appoint a single primary point of contact.
- BJS will establish a central repository of survey materials to provide the Department an easier way to request documentation.
- BJS will make changes to the consent and focus group forms to ensure the Department can gather information on youth needs, especially translation services for Spanish speaking youth. BJS will ask parents, staff, and youth, to ensure that a translator is available when necessary in their next wave of research interviews.

Dr. Amin recalled a problematic study the VERA Institute was doing with Bon Air youth and staff regarding the Community Treatment Model and its implications. Unfortunately, the Department received word that due to major changes at VERA, their team's final research report for this study would not be available. The research team recorded this in case the VERA Institute submitted future proposals.

Board Member Schrad asked whether the VERA Institute did not complete the research or the report.

Dr. Amin responded that the research team from VERA completed the agreed upon project, but before the final research report was completed, VERA underwent major organizational changes. After multiple attempts to contact, it was believed that the *original* VERA research team was not available to provide a cohesive and coherent report summarizing all the data collected.

Board Member Schrad asked if the data collected would be useful to the Department without VERA's continued services.

Dr. Amin answered that because the data collected was one and one-half fiscal years ago, it is not clear how useful the data may be now. The recommendations may be outdated and would not take into account the impact of COVID-19 and the changes to the juvenile correctional center with the Community Treatment Model. Director Boykin noted that the research team will review the information and make certain it would not be useful in another capacity.

REQUEST AUTHORIZATION TO EXTEND VARIANCE FOR TIDEWATER YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION, APARTMENT LIVING PROGRAM

Kristen Peterson, Policy and Regulatory Coordinator, Department

Ms. Peterson provided an overview of the Tidewater Youth Services Commission (TYSC) Apartment Living Program. TYSC operates the Apartment Living Program and is requesting an extension of its existing variance. The TYSC received a variance from the Board in 2016 exempting it from three specific regulatory requirements

in two different regulatory sections, 6VAC35-41-650, dealing with nutrition and 6VAC35-41-920, dealing with staff supervision of residents.

The Apartment Living Program is subject to the Regulation Governing Juvenile Group Homes and Halfway Houses in Chapter 41 of the Department's regulations. Residents are placed in apartment-style settings and taught independent living skills. For example, the residents are taught meal preparation and assistance with job placement and are given other tools needed to successfully live independently. Before TYSC opened the facility in 2016, they understood there would be difficulties with fulfilling some regulatory requirements, and therefore sought the initial variance before beginning operations. In 2016, the Board issued and approved the variance to the three regulatory requirements. Because the variance is set to expire on January 11, 2021, TYSC is seeking an extension.

The first variance request is from 6VAC35-41-650(C). The existing provision requires that menus of actual meals served be retained for six months. This is problematic for the Apartment Living Program because there is no food technician on the premises. . The residents are required to do their own grocery shopping and to prepare their own meals. They are educated on nutritional food choices, meal planning, and preparation. Frequently, the residents may have extended or unpredictable work schedules, which may make adhering to those menus challenging. As a result, it is difficult for staff to monitor meals served and to retain documentation of those meals. TYSC is asking for a variance to that regulatory provision.

In addition, Subsection E of Section 650, prohibits facilities from allowing more than 15 hours to pass between the evening meal and breakfast the next morning. The regulation allows the facility administrator to extend that requirement to 17 hours on weekends and holidays. This is also a difficult provision for the Apartment Living Program to meet based on the same reasons provided regarding the menu retention requirement. There is no food technician on the premises, residents are responsible for their own grocery shopping and meal planning, but resident schedules may make it difficult to track meals and determine when residents had various meals, and how many hours extended between the evening meal and breakfast the next morning.

6VAC35-41-920 requires at least one direct care staff member present and responsible for supervising residents when there is at least one resident on the premises. Occasionally, there may be only one staff member responsible for covering the facility. Residents are encouraged to be in the community taking advantage of job and educational opportunities. Those residents may encounter an emergency while in the community that necessitates staff leaving the facility to attend to that resident. The current variance allows that staff member, in emergency situations, to leave the facility for a period not longer than an hour to attend to that resident.

This variance has been in place since 2016, and the TYSC is requesting an extension. The variance has been used monthly and is necessary to ensure the safety of those residents out in the community. The rationale for the variance is that there may be a greater risk to the resident in the community facing an emergency than to those residents left unsupervised back at the facility. The variance provides that if a staff member should leave the facility to attend to an offsite resident, then that direct care staff must notify the facility administrator or other supervisor before leaving the facility and provide information to the residents remaining on campus, including an emergency telephone number where a staff member can be reached or some other means of immediate communication with a staff member.

6VAC35-20-92 requires the Board to identify the scope and duration of any variance issued. The TYSC respectfully requests the Board to extend this variance for a five-year period or until such time as the concepts of the variance are incorporated and endorsed in the Regulation Governing Juvenile Group Homes and Halfway Houses. Ms. Peterson reminded the Board that they approved the proposed amendments to the Regulation Governing Juvenile Group Homes and Halfway Houses in May 2019 and that part of that approval was a proposed amendment incorporating the variance's concepts.

Board Member Schrad responded that these variances have been in place for almost five-years, the TYSC is asking for another five-year extension and asked, in light of the group home regulation and proposed amendments, whether the variance would be required in the future after the regulation is updated.

Ms. Peterson answered that the Board has already approved the proposed amendments that include the concepts of this variance. This variance request is a formality because the regulation has taken a long time to move through the regulatory process.

Board Member Schrad asked for an update on the regulation process. Ms. Peterson responded that the group home regulation is still in the Proposed Stage of the regulatory process, is currently in the Governor's Office, and may be delayed due to the pandemic and other high priority issues.

Board Member McDougale commented that ultimately when the regulation is approved by the Governor's Office, the five-year variance the Board is considering will be obsolete because the variance, with the new concepts, would be incorporated in the regulation.

Ms. Peterson agreed, explaining that TYSC acknowledged in their request that the variance would apply for five-years or until the new regulation with the amended language takes effect.

Chairman Frazier asked for more information on the Apartment Living Program's process when staff need to leave the facility and go offsite.

Ginger Ploeger, Deputy Director of the TYSC, and William Wimbish, Director of the Apartment Living Program, were introduced to provide more details of the program. Ms. Ploeger explained that the program has eight residents, the maximum at any given time, with youth ranging from 18 to 20. Ms. Ploeger introduced Mr. Wimbish, who explained that when staff on duty need to leave the facility for these purposes, they take a portable cell phone with access to the facility ground's camera system. A clipboard attached to the door lists emergency contacts for the director, assistant director, and administrative staff in case of emergency. Residents rarely have emergencies in the community. Examples include medical appointments that went awry or inclement weather. The facility is close to the ocean and tropical storms develop. Residents may be unable to leave work in inclement weather, and staff would need to pick them up.

On motion by Robyn McDougale and seconded by Robert Vilchez, pursuant to 6VAC35-20-92, the Board of Juvenile Justice approved the Tidewater Youth Services Commission's Apartment Living Program's request to extend the variance to subsections (C) and (E) of 6VAC35-41-650 and 6VAC35-41-920 regarding menu retention,

periods between meals, and staff supervision of residents, as agreed upon at the December 1, 2020, meeting. The variance shall remain in effect for five years or until the approved variance is adopted into the Regulation Governing Juvenile Group Homes and Halfway Houses (6VAC35-41), whichever occurs first. Roll Call: Tyren Frazier – Aye, Scott Kizner – Aye, Robyn McDougale – Aye, Dana Schrad – Aye, Greg Underwood – Aye, Robert Vilchez – Aye. The motion carried.

REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION OF COMPULSORY MINIMUM TRAINING STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES FOR DIRECT CARE AND SECURITY EMPLOYEES

Kristen Peterson, Policy and Regulatory Coordinator, Department

Legislation passed during the 2019 and 2020 General Assembly sessions mandated that the Board adopt compulsory training standards for juvenile correctional officers. The language in the 2019 legislation directs the Board to establish entry level, in-service, and advanced training standards, as well as the time required to complete that training for juvenile correctional officers at juvenile correctional facilities.. During the 2020 legislative session, the General Assembly enhanced the requirement by mandating that the standards include training on the general care of pregnant residents. In order to carry out this legislative directive, the Department convened a workgroup to develop entry level, in-service, and advanced training standards.

The Department is seeking to use the fast-track regulatory process and to treat these standards as a separate regulatory chapter. Historically, when legislation directs the Board to develop standards, the Department has done so through regulations. The Department is asking to utilize the regulatory framework for these training standards, and to fast-track these regulations in order to have them take effect sooner.

Before 2012, the Board had the broad authority to adopt training requirements for juvenile correctional officers. At that time, the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) was responsible for providing oversight, with respect to training, of law enforcement agencies and correctional officer-type positions. It made sense for the Department to seek the same oversight from the DCJS. In 2012, the Department sought, and the General Assembly enacted, legislation that transferred the authority to adopt training standards to DCJS. In 2014, the Department began moving toward a more rehabilitative, therapeutic approach to juvenile justice. As part of this transformation, the Department adopted the Community Treatment Model and restructured what was then called the “juvenile correctional officer” position. In 2019, in order to align with the new roles given to direct care and security employees in the juvenile correctional centers, the Department sought legislation to transfer the authority to develop training standards back to the Board of Juvenile Justice. That legislation was approved, and the Department is presenting these standards for the Board’s consideration today.

The training standards consist of nine separate sections. The first section (Section 10) provides definitions for terms used in the standards. The definitions were borrowed from the current Regulation Governing Juvenile Correctional Center (JCC) regulation, as well as the proposed amendments to the regulations.

Section 20 sets out the applicability provisions that make it clear the regulation applies to juvenile correctional centers and not to local entities operating alternative direct care programs, such as juvenile detention centers or residential treatment centers. The training standards also will not apply to juvenile boot camps, which currently do not exist in the Commonwealth.

Section 30 requires that the training be provided by agency-approved instructors to ensure individuals are receiving Department-sanctioned training and not veering outside what is permissible by the Department.

Section 40 addresses the compulsory minimum training standards for entry level, in-service, and advanced standards. For the entry level standards, staff must receive a total of 180 hours of initial training , which includes the 120 hours of training required under the existing JCC regulation on specified topics. In addition, the standards require 24 hours of facility observation in the juvenile correctional center. There are provisions in the JCC regulation that mandate one direct care staff for every 10 or 8 residents in the facility. For purposes of determining staffing ratios, the individual participating in facility observation or staff observation cannot be counted in the ratios. An additional 36 hours of training is required in the juvenile correctional center housing unit, equivalent to field training. In addition, the standards require an unspecified volume of facility orientation hours. The initial 120 hours of training include specified training topics outlined in the JCC regulation including emergency preparedness, behavior management, mandatory reporting, and suicide prevention.

Legislation enacted during the 2020 General Assembly session imposed additional requirements on training dealing with pregnant residents. As part of that requirement, trainees shall receive training on the general care of pregnant residents, the impact restraints have on pregnant residents as well as on fetuses, the impact of room confinement and placement in restrictive housing on pregnant residents, and the impact of body cavity searches. The demographics of the Bon Air facility can evolve and change daily. In some instances, the facility may house female residents or pregnant residents. As the workgroup developed these standards, they wanted staff to be prepared, and so the requirement is for all staff to receive this training regardless of whether females reside in the juvenile correctional center. The standards require that such training be conducted by medical staff.

In addition to the entry-level training requirements, the standards mandate that applicable staff complete at least 40 hours of Department-approved annual training. This is refresher training typically conducted on an annual basis. A few training topics, such as first aid and CPR, are not required annually, but must be completed as often as necessary to maintain current certifications, which could mean every two years or every year depending on the program. In-service training topics are addressed in Section 170 of the JCC regulation.

The provisions for advanced or specialized training will only be required for direct care and security employees authorized to use mechanical restraints, the mechanical restraint chair, or protective devices. The Department wanted to ensure that advanced and specialized training is available to all staff, but that such training be mandated for those required to use mechanical restraints, the mechanical restraint chair, and protective devices because these items have specialized requirements with respect to their utilization. The Department will be required to make advanced training available to all staff to enhance their skills and expertise in given areas.

The legislation requires the Department to address the time required to complete the training. Per the standards, staff must complete the initial training before they may work directly with residents. An exception will allow trainees to work directly with residents if at least one other employee is present who has completed all applicable orientation and is supervising the resident. In-service training must be completed either on an annual or recurring basis as set out in Section 170 of the JCC regulation. Certain specified topics must be

completed annually or on a recurring basis. Advanced or specialized training is only required for the use of mechanical restraints, the mechanical restraint chair, and protective devices. Staff must complete that training before being authorized to use those items.

The workgroup also established provisions regarding testing and attendance. One provision requires staff to successfully pass all administered written and practical tests and to demonstrate mastery of physical restraint techniques. Staff also must achieve an acceptable level of attendance. This means staff may not miss 32 or more hours of training cumulatively during their first five weeks of initial training. If the trainees fail to meet these requirements, their service with the Department shall be terminated, and if they wish to be eligible for this position in the future, they must reapply.

In addition to the regulatory provisions, Section 80 requires the Department to establish performance outcomes. This is similar to what is done at DCJS. The workgroup tried to model what DCJS does and stay true to their foundation. The proposal requires the Department to develop performance outcomes of the knowledge and competencies staff must garner from the training. The regulation also assigns the Board responsibility for approving the performance outcomes. The performance outcomes are not regulations; rather, they are a separate stand-alone document that the Board will have authority to approve and amend at any time, and to set a timeline for implementation. The workgroup wanted to treat these performance outcomes as a guidance document rather than regulation. State law requires guidance documents to undergo a 30-day public comment period after being published in the *Virginia Register of Regulations*.

The last provision in Section 90 directs the Department to retain documentation of staff training for a three-year period.

Ms. Peterson then reviewed the performance outcomes and outlined some of the topics addressed as part of the Entry Level Outcomes, including *Professionalism, Law and Legal Issues, Communications, Security and Supervision, Safety, Conflict and Crisis Management, Emergency Response, and Pregnant Resident Issues*. Ms. Peterson also reviewed several topics addressed under Annual Outcomes, Recurring Outcomes, and Advanced or Specialized Outcomes.

Ms. Peterson introduced Patrick Bridge, the Director of Training for the Department. Mr. Bridge thanked Ms. Peterson and expressed that this was a big step forward for the Department. Prior to 2014, the Department did not have training standards, but instead had a list of training requirements. The Department's pace of transformation and the need to move quickly were at odds with relying on another agency for the administrative and regulatory process that accompanied establishing its own training regulations. The proposal allows the Department flexibility to make changes and deftly bring that to the Board for action as needed.

Board Member Kizner asked for more information about initiating a fast-track regulatory action. Ms. Peterson responded that there are a number of different ways for a regulation to come into effect in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The standard regulatory process involves three stages, the Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA), the Proposed Stage, and the Final Stage. Currently, each of the Department's residential regulations are moving through the standard regulatory process. It is a lengthy process involving executive level review at each stage; the regulation could be held up in various review stages throughout the process. If a state agency

believes a regulatory action is not controversial, then it can utilize the fast-track process, which is an expedited process available for noncontroversial regulations that allows the Department to bypass stages in the standard regulatory process.

On motion by Scott Kizner and seconded by Robert Vilchez, the Board of Juvenile Justice authorized the Department of Juvenile Justice to initiate a fast-track regulatory action to create a new regulatory chapter, 6VAC35-210, that establishes compulsory minimum, in-service, and advanced training standards for direct care and security employees in juvenile correctional centers in accordance with Chapters 366 of the 2019 Acts of Assembly and 526 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly, and as agreed upon by the Board at the December 1, 2020, meeting. Roll Call: Tyren Frazier – Aye, Scott Kizner – Aye, Robyn McDougale – Aye, Dana Schrad – Aye, Greg Underwood – Aye, Robert Vilchez – Aye. The motion was carried.

On motion by Tyren Frazier and seconded by Robyn McDougale, the Board of Juvenile Justice approved the Performance Outcomes Guidance Document, including any amendments agreed to at the December 1, 2020, meeting and authorized the Department to proceed with filing the Guidance Document in accordance with § 2.2-4002.1 of the *Code of Virginia*. Roll Call: Tyren Frazier – Aye, Scott Kizner – Aye, Robyn McDougale – Aye, Greg Underwood – Aye, Robert Vilchez – Aye. The motion was carried.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Valerie Boykin, Director, Department

Director Boykin updated the Board on the agency's response to the worldwide pandemic. Until the previous week, Bon Air had gone from July 26 without a positive case among its residents. A recent transfer from a local detention center, upon arriving at Bon Air, showed symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19. This youth was in Bon Air's infirmary and has had little contact with any other youth. Protocols are in place with local detention centers for screenings. In the Department's efforts to follow up with the detention center that transferred the resident, the detention center began testing other youth in their care and discovered an outbreak. They had five youth test positive in the past few days and five staff test positive in the last week.

Over the past eight months, Bon Air reported a total of 35 youth testing positive and 34 youth recovering with only one active case. Bon Air's COVID-19 numbers, along with numbers of committed youth and staff in alternative placements, are posted on the Department's website. There are no current active youth cases in specialized placements, and four youth recovered. There are seven active staff in the specialized placements and 85 recovered. Five active cases of staff assigned to Bon Air are out on sick leave, and 28 have recovered.

Director Boykin suspended transfers into Bon Air as the number of positive cases increased across the Commonwealth. The positivity rate for Chesterfield County, where Bon Air is located, was over 20% last week. Out of an abundance of caution, Bon Air will not admit any young people for at least two weeks. Director Boykin will reassess transfers in mid-December. The Department suspended transfers in the spring for a number of months, but the positivity rate is even greater now.

The Department suspended visitation in March. The Department lifted the suspension on a trial basis, and tried outdoor visitation in early October that was successful. Bon Air resumed limited visitation on a unit-by-unit basis

in early November using social distancing. However, with the increased concerns and positivity rate, Director Boykin suspended in-person visitation and will reassess in a few weeks.

Video visitation is available, although not to the extent the Department would like. Personnel continue to work with a vendor to obtain a camera on Bon Air's GTL phone system. In light of this unexpected delay, personnel are using the GoToMeeting platform during counselor sessions with youth and their family when possible for visitation.

This has been a challenging year, and the Department's leadership has tried to maintain communication with all levels of staff throughout the process. At the beginning of the pandemic, daily and weekly communication went out to staff, but the messages began to wane. Now, the executive leadership has decided to circle back with staff not only because of the pandemic, but the economic challenges and social justice issues that have been prevalent around the country. A series of listening sessions was scheduled for November and December to open dialogue and to check in with staff, hear concerns, and applaud them for their accomplishments and tenacity in the face of these challenges. Four of the nine listening sessions have been completed and five additional sessions are scheduled with court service unit staff. The Department is planning a virtual Leadership Summit in December to wrap up the year's activities, check in with managers, look at accomplishments, and discuss goals for 2021.

Bon Air held a parent town hall meeting in the spring, which gave facility personnel an opportunity to provide parents with a COVID-19 and facility operations update and hear concerns. The second parent town hall occurred during school re-opening, and parents were provided updates on the first semester. The third parent town hall is scheduled for next week to discuss changes resulting from the pandemic. This communication tool has been useful, and DJJ hopes to continue to expand the participation of parents and family members.

The Department received an award for excellence in Virginia government from the L. Douglas Wilder School at Virginia Commonwealth University in the spring. The celebration ceremony was postponed and rescheduled for April 15, 2021. Board Member McDougle mentioned that the event will be virtual, and the link can be sent to anyone who would like to attend. Board Member McDougle noted that she recused herself from the Department's application, but said it was a phenomenal application and a well-deserved award.

Director Boykin introduced Dr. Melinda Boone, Deputy Director of Education for the Department, who presented a distinguished award. Roy Mitchell, who began teaching the art of quilting to residents at the Department's Yvonne B. Miller High School on the campus of the Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center eight years ago, is one of 31 instructors in the Richmond metro area and surrounding counties of Chesterfield, Henrico and Hanover recognized in 2020 by the Community Foundation and the R.E.B. Foundation for teaching excellence. Mitchell fell in love with the art of quilting after seeing a display of quilts at a county fair and has since devoted himself to the craft and become one of the nation's premier quilt makers. He now teaches the art to students who never dreamed they would be interested in quilting and who become immediate devotees when they realized they are capable of creating beauty, along with experiencing a profound sense of accomplishment in the process. Considered among the best in their field, instructors honored by the Community Foundation and the R.E.B. Foundation demonstrate a sincere passion for teaching while also serving as mentors, coaches and champions for their students. They were selected from 109 nominees submitted by students,

parents, and colleagues. The R.E.B. Awards provide opportunities for area public school teachers to continue their own love of learning as they pursue adventures of a lifetime. Mr. Mitchell will use his \$11,200 share of the nearly \$200,000 in grant funds to learn more about Kente Clothe and the similarities in culture between African American and Hispanic students through travel to Ghana. An enthusiastic Mr. Mitchell accepted the award and showed a few of the youth's beautiful quilts.

NEXT MEETING DATE

April 7, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.