

Office of the Commissioner
State of Louisiana
Division of Administration

JEFF LANDRY
GOVERNOR



TAYLOR F. BARRAS
COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION

Criminal Justice Priority Funding Commission

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 16, 2025

8:00 A.M.

House of Representatives Committee Room 6

Louisiana State Capitol

- I. The meeting of the Criminal Justice Priority Funding Commission was called to order at 8:17 AM.
- II. Chairman Barras requested the secretary to call the roll; the following members were present:
 - Taylor F. Barras, Commissioner of Administration
 - Representative Tony Bacala, House Retirement Chair
 - Mr. Christopher Walters, Governor Appointee
 - Senator John C. "Jay" Morris III, Judiciary C Chair
 - Ms. Tammy Grant, Department of Corrections
 - Representative Muscarello, Chair, Civil Law and Procedure
- III. Project Updates
 - a. Chairman Barras invited Roger Husser, Assistant Commissioner in the Division of Administration, and Mr. Matthew Baker, Director of Facility Planning and Control, to provide a broad description of the program and processes, as well as a fiscal update of each project. The commission was then made aware that entity

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representatives of each of the projects receiving funds from the program would come forward to give-brief updates as to the status of their respective projects-

- b. As a part of his fiscal update, Mr. Baker explained that most projects are still in design, and that spending activity is, as anticipated, modest. Expenditures are anticipated to increase significantly in 2026-27 when construction starts on the projects.
- c. The New Jetson Center for Youth, with a current budget of \$68,715,440, is progressing well. \$16,000,000 has been provided through the program, with the remainder of its funding provided through other means such as Capital Outlay. The project is currently in the design phase, is on schedule, and has expended \$1,114,262.45 to date, which is for the encumbrance of contracts-for a designer and construction manager at risk.
- d. Central Louisiana Juvenile Detention Center has a current budget of \$38,978,880, of which \$37,978,880 has been provided through the program. The remaining funds are being provided through other means of finance, primarily Capital Outlay. The project is currently in the design phase, with contracts totaling \$2,195,812.78 concurred to date. FPC has reimbursed \$0 to date.

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- e. River Parishes Regional Juvenile Detention Center has an amount of \$36,615,100, with the entirety of its funding provided through the program. To date, FPC has concurred in \$0 of contracts and has reimbursed \$0.
- f. Concordia Parish Sheriff's Office Juvenile Detention Center has a budget of \$3,000,000 with the entirety of its funding provided through the program. To date, FPC has concurred in contracts totaling \$159,327, and has concurred in the project being advertised for bids. FPC has reimbursed a total of 103,562.55 to date.
- g. Tangipahoa Parish Work Release Dormitory Construction and Infrastructure Upgrades has a budget of \$1,312,700, with the entirety of its funding provided through the program. To date, FPC has concurred in contracts totaling \$69,513.00 and reimbursed \$0.
- h. Undersecretary Jason Starnes, representing The Office of Juvenile Justice, came forward to provide an update on the New Jetson Center for Youth. Mr. Starnes relayed that a CMaR Contractor has been selected and that a contract for Part A preconstruction services has been awarded. Since the awarding of the contract there have been regular meetings for the planning of the project. The facility will consist of a 72-bed facility on property currently owned by the state. Construction is anticipated to begin in March of 2026. Representative Muscarello inquired as to

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GOVERNOR



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COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION

how many pods will be in the facility. Mr. Starnes answered that there will be nine pods. Representative Muscarello further inquired as to a discussion from the meeting of the commission on 02/13/2025 where the possible utilization of a 16-bed pod was discussed and was requested to be considered, adding that this model has the potential for operational cost savings. Mr. Starnes responded that this model was considered, but that OJJ has a concern that this density of beds can become a security risk, and that this outweighs the potential operational benefits mentioned. Because of this, and for concerns of schedule slippage, OJJ has maintained the currently designed 8-bed pod model. Representative Muscarello responded that he continues to be concerned that the state will need to pay for double the guards during the nighttime shifts when occupants are confined to their rooms. There were no further questions for Mr. Starnes.

- i. Alex Deshotels of Grace Design Studios came forward to provide an update on the-Central Louisiana Juvenile Detention Center project. Currently, this project is in the design stage. FPC has concurred in the selection of a Construction Manager at risk (CMaR), and this selection process is anticipated to begin within the next month. Construction documents are anticipated to be completed in March 2026. Commissioner Barras inquired as to the capacity of the project. Mr. Deshotels responded that the facility would consist of 56 beds, a small office area, a

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State of Louisiana
Division of Administration

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GOVERNOR



TAYLOR F. BARRAS
COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION

visitation area, school, gym, and full-sized basketball court. Representative Muscarello inquired as to the number of pods in the facility Mr. Deshotels responded that there will be seven pods, adding that the entity prefers to utilize an eight-person pod model due to the separation this model imposes on the occupants. There were no further questions for Mr. Deshotels.

- j. Craig Weber, Lafourche Parish Sheriff, came forward to provide and update on the River Parishes Regional Juvenile Detention Center project. The entity is pursuing a construction manager at risk delivery method. On September 18, 2025, the entity held a meeting with the River Parishes Regional Commissioners to address creating a functional commission. The facility will be located on property owned by the Law Enforcement District, which will be donated to the commission. Commissioner Barras inquired as to the nature of the location of the facility and if it served multiple parishes. Sheriff Weber replied that six parishes comprise the district, with Lafourche Parish being central to those parishes. Commissioner Barras followed up by inquiring as to the capacity of the new facility. Sheriff Weber responded by saying that their goal is for the facility to have a capacity of 72 or 80 beds, depending on funding. There were no further questions for Sheriff Weber.

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- k. Jeffery Barthelemy with Tangipahoa Government came forward to present an update on Tangipahoa Parish Jail Work Release Dormitory Construction and Infrastructure Upgrades project. Mr. Barthelemy explains that the new facility would be located on property owned by Tangipahoa Parish. It is currently sized to house approximately 180 work release inmates. They have made considerable progress in the design-of the facility, which has the potential for expansion by using three-tier beds. Construction is expected in the first quarter of 2026. There were no further questions for Mr. Barthelemy.
- l. Mr. Walters provided an update on the Integrated Criminal Justice Information System Policy Board project. The project has a \$5,000,000 budget as allocated by the Commission. The program represents a cooperative effort amongst various criminal justice partners throughout the state. The goal of the program is to fully integrate all criminal justice data statewide in order to create an integrated, comprehensive criminal record database. Senator Morris voiced concern about access to and transparency of the criminal record database by entities statewide. He inquired as to if Mr. Walters is being met with full cooperation with all stakeholders. Mr. Walters replied that the transparency of the system is of the utmost importance and that any new system will have to meet the standards set forth by ICJIS. There were no further questions for Mr. Walters.

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- m. Candice Sledge from the Concordia Parish Sheriff's Office came forward to provide an update on the Concordia Parish Sheriff's Office Detention Center project. She relayed that the Sheriff's Office is further along in the process because the building to be used for the facility currently exists. In February, they were already ready to get the design moving forward. They met with FPC to ensure they are in compliance for the funding. They accepted the contract in August. The facility is planned to consist of an 80-person open dormitory style housing unit that includes offices, classroom, and visitation center. It is anticipated that construction will begin in November, with completion slated to be complete in approximately 10 months.
- IV. Consideration of a budget adjustment for the Concordia Project
- a. Mr. Husser and Mr. Baker joined Ms. Sledge to provide additional information regarding the Concordia project. Mr. Husser explained that the commission appropriated \$3,000,000 for the project. The bids came in \$700,000 over budget and the entity, designer and contractor have worked together to reduce this budget overage to approximately \$500,000. The solution proposed by FPC is to reduce the fund allocation of the Jetson project by \$500,000 (from \$16,000,000 to \$15,000,000) and to supplement the Concordia project by \$500,000 (from \$3,000,000 to \$3,500,000) to allow that project to proceed to construction. The

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intent is to backfill money next session. Commissioner Barras agrees that this is the best way to proceed. Representative Muscarello commented that if the Concordia Project can reduce their budget by 6% via value engineering, perhaps the same reduction can be achieved on the Jetson project. Mr. Husser replied that FPC always endeavors to identify opportunities for cost savings in order to allow for project budgets to be their most effective and that, in particular, the team has worked to reduce the project costs of the Jetson Project considerably, by several million dollars. Representative Bacala motioned to approve Item IV. Mr. Walters seconded the motion. Without objection, the motion passed.

- V. Commissioner Barras motioned to Adjourn at 9:00 AM. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned.