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County Opens Discussion on Structure of Juvenile Hall Advisory Board

SAN JOSE, CALIF.—Today, the County Executive presented to the Board of Supervisors a proposal for implementing the Juvenile Hall Advisory Board as provided for in Measure A, approved by voters in March. The Measure amended Section 504 of the County Charter to allow the County Executive to appoint the Chief Probation Officer and have the authority to supervise, direct, and oversee the activities of the Chief Probation Officer and Juvenile Hall, effectively giving the County Board of Supervisors oversight and policymaking authority for Juvenile Hall.

The Measure called for the creation of a Juvenile Hall Advisory Board and identified 13 categories of representation on the Board. It also gave the Board of Supervisors the authority to appoint other representatives. The Measure’s proposed make up of the Board includes one judge from Juvenile Court, District Attorney or designee, Public Defender or designee, Sheriff or designee, two health professionals with expertise in child psychiatry and child development, a member from each of the three employee bargaining organizations, two persons who were incarcerated at juvenile hall, two parents of persons incarcerated, and others as determined by the Board of Supervisors.
The County Executive’s current proposal is to add four additional representatives, for a total of 17 members, including: a social services professional, a representative from the County Office of Education, a representative from a community based organization with expertise in children and family services, and a person who was a victim of juvenile crime to advocate on behalf of victims.

“We want to have a clear and open discussion with public feedback on the creation of this Board,” said County Executive Pete Kutras. “The Juvenile Hall Advisory Board’s role will be to assist the Board of Supervisors to effectively direct and supervise the operations at Juvenile Hall and to implement changes.”

The Juvenile Hall Advisory Board would co-exist with Juvenile Justice Commission, which reports to the Presiding Judge of Superior Court and whose State mandate is to inspect juvenile facilities and the operation of group homes and the Board of Corrections.

“We are committed to making changes at Juvenile Hall,” said Supervisor Blanca Alvarado, Chair of the Board’s Public Safety and Justice Committee. “It is important that members of the Juvenile Hall Advisory Board represent a broad spectrum of interests.”

The Board also reviewed membership qualifications and the proposed mission and duties of the Juvenile Hall Advisory Board. Staff will return to the Board on August 17 for public comment and to follow-up during the month of September advertising openings and accepting applications for membership. Appointments will be made later in the fall. The new Juvenile Hall Advisory Board would be expected to report out its action plan within three months of its creation.

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