

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



FROM: Supervisor John J. Benoit

SUBMITTAL DATE:
May 1, 2014

SUBJECT: Adoption of Resolution No. 2014-113 Supporting the District Attorney's Office Grant Applications to Expand Youth Courts in the Coachella Valley [\$0]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors: Adopt Resolution No. 2014-113, Supporting the District Attorney's Office Grant Applications to Expand Youth Courts in the Coachella Valley.

BACKGROUND: The Riverside County District Attorney's Office is applying for grants with support from the Clinton Foundation and the Clinton Health Initiative to various funding sources to support the expansion of the youth court program in the Coachella Valley.

Youth court, also known as peer, teen or student court, is an alternative approach to the traditional juvenile justice system for non-violent, non-gang related, low-level, first-time juvenile offenders. Youth courts are a multi-agency, early intervention and prevention program involving the District Attorney's Office, the Probation Department, local law enforcement, the Superior Court, schools and volunteers from the community. Deputy district attorneys assigned to the Youth Accountability Team attend and assist in the administration of monthly youth court proceedings, and the police officer or sheriff's deputy assigned to Youth Court acts as the youth court coordinator.

John J. Benoit

John J. Benoit
Fourth District Supervisor

Departmental Concurrence

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost:	POLICY/CONSENT (per Exec. Office)
COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	
NET COUNTY COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/>
SOURCE OF FUNDS: Not applicable				Budget Adjustment: 0	
				For Fiscal Year: 0	

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

- A-30
- 4/5 Vote
- Positions Added
- Change Order

Prev. Agn. Ref.:

District:

Agenda Number:

3-29

SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FORM 11: Adoption of Resolution No. 2014-113 Supporting the District Attorney's Office Grant Application to
Expand Youth Courts in the Coachella Valley [\$0]

DATE: May 1, 2014

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BACKGROUND (continued):

At the discretion of the law enforcement officer and in consultation with the deputy district attorney, a youth charged with an infraction or a misdemeanor may have the matter handled in youth court. Those who participate in youth court can avoid a criminal record while still being held accountable for their actions.

Respondents who voluntarily choose to take part in youth court admit guilt and opt to avoid the hearing and sentencing procedures of the juvenile courts and agree to a sentencing forum. The case is heard by a judge in a courtroom. Peers act as both defense attorneys and prosecutors, with the guidance of deputy district attorneys. In addition, a jury of the youth's peers deliberates and decides the sentence to be imposed. The range of punishment may include community service, a letter of apology, a jail tour, drug testing, counseling and service as a juror in future youth court cases.

Youth courts allow teens to hold each other accountable for their illegal actions and prevent further delinquent behavior. Teens and parents, who are required to be involved in the youth court process, get exposure to the judicial process and are likely to realize the importance of making changes in their lives.

The Palm Desert High School Youth Court is currently the only youth court program in the Coachella Valley. It was started in the early 1990s, went dormant for a time and was reinstated in the 2013-14 school year. Riverside Superior Court Judge James Hawkins, who has participated in youth court throughout the years, reports that when fully operational, this program has provided more than 10,000 service hours to the community and resulted in a non-recidivism rate of over 90 percent for the hundreds of students involved in Youth Court.

The Clinton Foundation, and the Clinton Health Matters Initiative, has produced a 44-goal blueprint to improve health in the Coachella Valley. The Clinton Foundation supports the efforts to increase community safety by expanding youth court in the Coachella Valley by creating a permanent, self-sustaining program in the valley.

If successful in its application to the various funding sources, the District Attorney's Office will establish youth court programs at Indio and Palm Springs, and then will continue to expand Youth Court to the surrounding Coachella Valley schools during the next three years. The requested grant funds will be utilized to pay for the cost of maintaining and expanding the program.

All grant applications require the formal support of the local government. Approval of the attached resolution would establish the Board of Supervisors' support of the Clinton Foundation grant application, and future grant applications made to other funding sources. I respectfully request my colleagues' support of this effort.

Impact on Citizens and Businesses

If successful in its grant application, the District Attorney's Office could expand youth courts in the Coachella Valley, providing an alternative to the traditional juvenile justice system. This change could improve the likelihood that juvenile offenders accept responsibility for their actions and make changes that put their lives on a positive course.

SUPPLEMENTAL:

Additional Fiscal Information

Not applicable

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Contract History and Price Reasonableness

Not applicable

ATTACHMENTS (if needed, in this order):

A. BUDGET ADJUSTMENT

B. CHANGE ORDER REPORT

NUMBER	AMOUNT	PERCENT	DESCRIPTION

(Additional description and details of new change order(s) – one or two paragraphs for each.)

C. PERSONNEL CHANGE and ORDINANCE 440 REPORT

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-113

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE GRANT APPLICATIONS
TO EXPAND YOUTH COURTS IN THE COACHELLA VALLEY**

WHEREAS, youth courts are a multi-agency, early intervention and prevention program involving the District Attorney's Office, the Probation Department, local law enforcement, the Superior Court, schools and volunteers from the community; and

WHEREAS, youth court is an alternative approach to the traditional juvenile justice system for non-violent, non-gang related, low-level, first-time juvenile offenders that gives participants an opportunity to avoid a criminal record while still being held accountable for their actions; and

WHEREAS, teens and parents, who are required to be involved in the youth court process, get exposure to the judicial process and are likely to realize the importance of making changes in their lives; and

WHEREAS, the Palm Desert High School Youth Court is currently the only youth court program in the Coachella Valley and has operated since the early 1990s with a positive track record that has resulted in more than 10,000 service hours to the community and a non-recidivism rate of over 90 percent for the hundreds of students involved; and

WHEREAS, currently, there are grant funding opportunities that could support youth court as a permanent, self-sustaining and expanded program in the Coachella Valley; and

1 **WHEREAS**, if successful in its application to the Clinton Foundation and other available funding sources, the
2 District Attorney's Office will establish youth court programs at Indio and Palm Springs, and then will continue
3 to expand Youth Court to the surrounding Coachella Valley schools during the next three years;

4
5 **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, that we support the
6 District Attorney's Office's grant application to the Clinton Foundation and future grant applications made to
7 other funding sources to support the expansion of the youth court program in the Coachella Valley.

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10 **KEVIN JEFFRIES, Supervisor**
Frist District

JOHN TAVAGLIONE, Supervisor
Second District

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12 **JEFF STONE, Chairman**
Third District

JOHN J. BENOIT, Supervisor
Fourth District

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14 **MARION ASHLEY, Vice Chairman**
Fifth District

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