

***What's New for the
Division of Juvenile Justice Services
March 2015 – Legislative Budget Wrap-up***

At midnight on March 12, 2015 the 2015 Session of the Utah State Legislature came to a close concluding nearly seven weeks of legislative decision making regarding State agency budgets and policy decisions. Despite slowly improving economic factors, entering the session, policy makers were concerned about a possible return to the "Great Recession." As a result, all State agencies were required to submit two percent budget cut scenarios for FY 2016. For JJS the amount of a potential two percent cut in on-going General Fund dollars was approximately \$1.75 million. In order to meet such a large cut, JJS management proposed closing the Wasatch Youth Center, JJS' oldest secure care facility, located in the Salt Lake area. While not something that JJS felt was in the best interest of JJS custody youth or their families, it was the most prudent possibility given excess capacity in other JJS secure care facilities and the need to maintain facility presence in the major metropolitan areas along the Wasatch Front. Fortunately, S.B. 6 passed funding JJS at 100% of its bases budget negating the need for closure of the facility.

Entering the session JJS, in conjunction with the Governor's Office, submitted two incremental budget increase requests to the Legislature. The first was to provide FY 2016 funding for the Weber Valley Detention facility which was funded with one-time dollars in FY 2015. The request was a mix of on-going General Funds (\$500,000) and one-time General Funds (\$1,140,000). The second request was for an increase in on-going General Funds to offset a small projected loss of Federal Funds in the amount of \$17,200 in FY 2016. As the session progressed and revenue projections were finalized, new funds became available for appropriation and S.B. 2 was passed appropriating the requested amounts.

In addition, several other requests that were made by other parties were appropriated in S.B. 2. For FY 2016 JJS received additional funds to (1) perform STI Testing and Treatment in its facilities (\$80,000); (2) re-open Receiving Centers closed in previous sessions (\$442,100); and (3) funds to increase the rates that community private providers can bill Medicaid to the Medicaid billable amounts.

For FY 2016 State agencies also received funding for employees to receive a generous compensation package as passed in H.B. 8. A 2.25% salary increase was appropriated along with funding to (1) cover increased health care premiums of 4.9%, (2) an additional .75% for agencies to address identified market comparability concerns, and (3) funding for the 401K matching program. The total compensation package increase appropriated to JJS for FY 2016 was \$1,941,000.

Additional appropriations were also received to offset increases to State Internal Service Funds (DHRM, DTS, Risk Management, and Fuel Network) and to the fiscal note attached to H.B. 145, Vulnerable Adult Worker Amendments. Total appropriations to JJS for FY 2016 totaled \$97,318,000

including \$90,427,400 in on-going General Funds and \$1,486,700 in one-time General Funds. The balance was made up of appropriated Federal Funds, Dedicated Credits, and Revenue Transfers.

Another piece of great news was the funding of the new Weber Valley Multi-Use facility in Weber County. The Legislature appropriated \$19,380,000 to construct a new facility in Ogden that will replace the 50-year old Weber Valley Detention facility, the Ogden O&A facility, Case Management Offices, and create space for a new regionally-based work camp. This new facility has been requested for many years and we are very excited to finally see it underway.

A big thanks goes to all of those who made the 2015 Legislative Session such a success.