



July 8, 2016

Dear Citizens:

The City of Corsicana and Navarro County have been presented with a very important opportunity. The Texas Department of Juvenile Justice Facility, the old TYC complex, has sat vacant for three years but is now being considered for a new project involving a private company. The company, Cayuga Centers is a private non-profit company that is looking to lease the TYC complex to temporarily house unaccompanied children pursuant to a grant from the federal government. The facility will provide temporary residential housing (and related services) to minor children who come from Central and South America. The children, whose ages range from usually 8 to 17 years of age, are from Honduras, El Salvador or Guatemala and who cross the border and enter the United States without a parent or guardian. Before they arrive in Navarro County the children will have received initial health screenings so that any medical issues are identified before a child arrives. Quarantine protocols are in place for children who may have communicable diseases or who are unvaccinated. The average length of stay in the facility for each youth is approximately 35 days. They will then be moved from Navarro County to be placed with sponsors, and then transported to those locations to await deportation and asylum proceedings. The vast majority (90%) of the children who pass through the facility in Corsicana will reside with sponsors in states other than Texas. Children from places other than Central and South America, including Mexico, Canada and the Middle East, will NOT be housed at this location.

The United States has entered into treaties with other countries to ensure the protection and safe passage of refugees. This program, in part, will fulfill the country's responsibilities under those treaties. This facility will be established somewhere in the United States, it is just a question of where. The TYC facility is attractive to Cayuga because it is close to two major airports and the facility is big enough to house up to 800 children. In addition, it is easier to attract bilingual, Spanish and English speaking, workers here than in West Virginia or Washington. Whether a specific child is entitled to asylum, or should be deported back to the home country are questions that will be answered by the legal system long after the child leaves Corsicana.

The children will not be allowed to enter the community, except for specialized medical care. That medical care will be paid for by insurance, so there will not be any uncompensated medical care given to the children. Cayuga will hire doctors and nurses to provide routine medical care inside the facility. The juveniles will not be enrolled in public schools. They will not be allowed to leave the facility, except for medical care, and then they will be accompanied by Cayuga staff.

The economic impact on the local economy will be very significant. When the center is fully staffed, it will create 1,100 jobs, with a yearly total salary of \$47,000,000, excluding benefits. The salaries for those jobs range from \$35,000 a year for maintenance and cleaning people to over \$100,000 for skilled workers. Cayuga will use local vendors, when possible, to purchase necessities to operate the facility, such as food, clothing, equipment, vehicles, services estimated at approximately \$30 million.

Finally, the TJJD will convey the facility to the City or the County at no cost. Cayuga through the Federal Grant process will provide all funding for all necessary improvements. They have agreed to make an initial capital investment of \$5 to \$10 million to improve the facility, and this will be something that benefits Navarro County long after the lease expires. If they receive the grant, it will be for a 3-year period in which time they can apply for a renewal. If not, after 3 years, the facility will remain in local control and the upgrades provided will be an asset to the community. If they are successful in obtaining another 3-year grant, we will be receiving rental income to be determined.

I am committed to the City to evaluate the details of this proposal and come to a conclusion of whether or not this is a positive program for the community. There will be additional information forthcoming as well as a public meeting on the subject. From what I know at this time, I feel this is a very significant opportunity. No matter how one personally feels about immigration and unaccompanied children entering the United States, the federal government will place these children in a facility such as Corsicana's somewhere within the United States.

Sincerely,

Chuck McClanahan  
Mayor