

STEUBEN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES, HEALTH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, June 7, 2023

9:00 a.m.

Legislative Chambers, 3rd Floor, Annex Building
Bath, New York

****MINUTES****

COMMITTEE: Carol A. Ferratella, Chair K. Michael Hanna, Vice Chair James Kuhl
 Aaron I. Mullen

STAFF: Jack K. Wheeler Christopher Brewer Jennifer Galvan
 Jennifer Galvan Lynn Lewis Auralee Jeffers
 Dr. Erica Verkleeren Heather Schneider Colleen Gelder
 Kim Jessup Nate Alderman Patty Barody
 Gary Smith Kathy Muller Jennifer DeMonstoy
 Darlene Smith Brenda Scotchmer Tammy Hurd-Harvey

LEGISLATORS: Scott J. Van Etten Kelly H. Fitzpatrick Jeffrey P. Horton
 Wendy Lozo Hilda T. Lando John V. Malter
 Nicholas D. Pelham Frederick G. Potter Gary D. Swackhamer

ABSENT: Paul E. Van Caeseele

OTHERS: Mary Perham
 Colleen Banik, Steuben Prevention Coalition

Secretary's Note: Paul Van Caeseele attended via Zoom, however, not under the Extraordinary Circumstance exemption.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Ferratella called the meeting to order and asked Mr. Hanna to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 3, 2023, AND MAY 22, 2023, MEETINGS MADE BY MR. KUHL. SECONDED BY MR. HANNA. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

III. DEPARTMENTAL REQUESTS

- A. Department of Social Services
 - 1. **Award Cost Allocation RFP** – Mrs. Ferratella stated this item will be held over to next month.
- B. Youth Bureau
 - 1. **2023 Youth Service Allocations** – Mr. Caudill requested authorization to allocate the Youth Sports Opportunity Funding to various contracts for the funding period of January 2023 through September 2023. These funds are being received because of legalized online wagering in New York State and 1 percent of funds collected are to be allocated toward youth sports across the State. This year we have received \$23,244 and he anticipates they will receive \$30,000 - \$35,000 next year. He noted they are moving all of the summer recreation programs from the Youth Development Program funding to this new funding which will then free up Youth Development Program funds to support youth centers. Mr. Caudill stated there is one new contract with Twin Tiers Track Club to provide a youth track and field program. Additionally, under the Youth Bureau, he has included Adventure-Based Youth Leadership Development. This is a proposed pilot program that is being

explored for the summer of 2023 for 10th through 12th graders. Through this program, they will learn leadership skills through rock climbing, ropes courses, canoeing, kayaking and hiking. We are hopeful to also be able to include youth that are in Foster Care or in the PINS program.

Mr. Mullen asked where is the Twin Tiers Track Club out of? Mr. Caudill replied they are based out of Campbell and now that they have a scholarship mechanism they were able to apply for funding.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE ALLOCATION OF YOUTH SPORTS OPPORTUNITY FUNDING FOR THE PROGRAM YEAR STARTING JANUARY 2023 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 2023 AS FOLLOWS: CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF STEUBEN/LIVINGSTON (JOHN SOUTHARD YOUTH RECREATION) - \$1,500; CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF STEUBEN (4-H OUTDOOR SPORTS) - \$3,000; CORNING RUGBY CLUB (YOUTH RUGBY PROGRAM) - \$2,500; STEUBEN YOUTH SERVICES FUND (SUMMER RECREATION PROGRAM) – \$6,000; TWIN TIERS TRACK CLUB (YOUTH TRACK & FIELD PROGRAM) - \$1,500; YMCA OF HORNELL (YOUTH SWIM PROGRAM) - \$3,000 AND YOUTH BUREAU (ADVENTURE-BASED YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT) - \$5,744 MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. KUHL.

Mrs. Ferratella thanked Mr. Caudill for showing the number of participants for each of these programs. Are the towns that are receiving allocations for their summer programs receiving the same amount? Mr. Caudill replied the amount for each town does vary. We look at a formula that considers the number of kids in the program, how many days a week the program runs and how many weeks they meet. Allocations are either \$500, \$750 or \$1,000. He noted the Village of Canisteo and the Town of Hornby are coming back into the summer recreation program this year. Mr. Malter asked how do the towns apply for this funding? Mr. Caudill replied that he had hoped to have an application this year and an RFP. We will be doing that for this coming year starting September 1st. He noted that this time around he did not reach out to the towns. The Town of Cohocton stopped operating their summer recreation program and we would love for them to come back as that is a huge resource for the northern portion of the County.

Mr. Kuhl stated he is supportive of the pilot program for adventure-based youth leadership development and that is a great extension of the programs offered. Mrs. Ferratella thanked Mr. Caudill for the Youth-In-Government Program as well. This past simulated session was phenomenal and that was one of the most encouraging and engaged groups we have seen. Mr. Hanna commented that was excellent and everyone did a great job.

VOTE ON PREVIOUS MOTION: ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

C. Community Services

1. **New Contract** – Ms. Lewis requested authorization to enter into a new contract with Jennifer Hollenbeck, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, at a rate of \$125.00 per hour, not to exceed \$97,500 annually. Ms. Hollenbeck will be providing services for children, adults and MAT, at the Hornell and Corning clinics.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES TO ENTER INTO A NEW CONTRACT WITH JENNIFER HOLLENBECK, PSYCHIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONER TO PROVIDE 15 HOURS OF SERVICE PER WEEK AT THE CORNING AND HORNELL CLINICS AT A RATE OF \$125.00 PER HOUR, NOT TO EXCEED \$97,500 ANNUALLY MADE BY MR. KUHL. SECONDED BY MR. MULLEN. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

2. **RFP for New Collections Agency** – Ms. Lewis requested authorization to put out an RFP for a new collections agency. The agency that we are currently using was unable to meet IT standards for security and we ended the contract.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PURCHASING DIRECTOR, TO SOLICIT AN RFP FOR A COLLECTIONS AGENCY MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. KUHL. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

D. Personnel

1. **Community Services - 16B Waiver** – Mr. Alderman requested authorization to waive Rule 16B and create two Staff Social Worker positions, CSEA Grade L in the Department of Community Services. These positions will be paid for utilizing Opioid Settlement Funds.

Ms. Lewis explained both positions will be treating individuals that have been identified as being opioid dependent. These positions will be located in the Bath Mental Health Clinic and the Bath Substance Abuse Clinic. Mrs. Lando asked is the funding coming out of the Opioid Settlement Funds that have already been received? Ms. Lewis replied yes.

Ms. Fitzpatrick asked if we are funding this position out of the Opioid Settlement Funds, what is the long-term plan for funding the position? Mr. Wheeler replied the State portion of the Opioid Settlement Funds will continue at a higher rate than our portion. We will be able to fully fund this position for a number of years. Ms. Lewis stated these are also billable positions within the agency and should be self-sufficient.

Ms. Fitzpatrick stated these positions are doing the same thing within two different programs. How do you determine where the positions are going? Ms. Lewis explained with our clients we do a screening. For the one position, the client is technically coming in for mental health services, however, they have identified as using opioids. The second position is in the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Clinic and they are coming in specifically for that.

MOTION: WAIVING RULE 16B AND AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF TWO STAFF SOCIAL WORKER POSITIONS, CSEA GRADE L IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES MADE BY MR. KUHL. SECONDED BY MR. MULLEN.

Mr. Van Etten commented in my opinion, we will have to determine what to do when the funds dry up and that will be a hard decision that we will need to make. At this point it is clear that these positions are needed. Ms. Fitzpatrick commented it is important to have these positions and provide treatment. I believe it is important to keep funding these positions and it is important to understand the reasons for doing that now.

VOTE ON PREVIOUS MOTION: ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0. Resolution Required.

2. **Community Services – Reclassification** – Mr. Alderman requested authorization to reclassify one vacant Staff Psychologist position, CSEA Grade T to a Mental Health Coordinator position, CSEA Grade T. Ms. Lewis explained currently we do not have a Children & Youth Coordinator, and we have not had a Deputy Director of Community Services prior to me. She and Ms. Jefferds are covering five management positions in the clinic. She stated that she would like to shore things up at the clinic in order to meet client need and provide staff supervision. We have four Staff Psychologist positions, who are at the top of the grade and they do the same work as a Senior Social Worker. The Staff Psychologists are needed to do the 730 exams and she feels that two of those positions would be enough to cover that as well as carry a caseload. This reclassification will not negatively impact our ability to get psychological testing done. Ms. Lewis explained this reclassification will allow us to provide more oversight to our therapists and improve our ability to apply for grant funds.

Mr. Mullen stated he would like to see a chart of what your current staffing layout is and what you are proposing to go to. I want to understand the impact and would like to see what the positions in their entirety would look like and what you would like the positions to look like.

Mrs. Lando asked what is likelihood of filling these positions? Ms. Lewis replied the likelihood of filling the Mental Health Coordinator position is good. We recently had four applicants for therapy positions and we have hired one that will be starting Monday. Having interns has also helped us immensely.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE RECLASSIFICATION OF ONE VACANT STAFF PSYCHOLOGIST POSITION, CSEA GRADE T TO A MENTAL HEALTH COORDINATOR POSITION, CSEA GRADE T IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES MADE BY MR. HANNA. SECONDED BY MR. KUHL. MOTION CARRIES 3-1. (MR. MULLEN OPPOSED)

E. County Manager

1. **Opioid Settlement Discussion** – Mr. Wheeler stated at the last meeting we had talked about having the Community Services Board (CSB) meet to discuss the Opioid Settlement Funds. They have met and Ms. Lewis and Mrs. Smith have provided us with a snapshot of that meeting. Mr. Mullen asked what are the bolded areas on the handout? Ms. Lewis replied those are the more significant areas that were highlighted by the CSB as needs.

Ms. Lewis stated she met with the CSB and the Chemical Dependency subcommittee and there was representation from DSS, Public Health, the medical field and provider agencies. We discussed where the gaps are in opioid treatment in the categories of prevention, treatment and recovery. Most of the gaps were identified in the prevention category. We need to reduce the stigma and we do not see as many people voluntarily seeking treatment as we used to. We also need to increase education and training awareness. One of the discussion points was education in the schools and how they do not focus enough on opioids specifically. We would suggest perhaps having a separate curriculum specifically targeted to middle schoolers and high schoolers. We also identified that there is a gap in educating the 18-25 year old population and maybe that is something that could happen at local colleges. There also needs to be more education and training for law enforcement, community members and parents related to harm reduction, the extent of the opioid problem and resources that are available in the County. The third area is engagement; how we can engage the community in addressing the problem and for those that need treatment or services, getting them linked with the necessary resources.

Ms. Lewis stated the second category they discussed were the gaps in treatment. We do have a lot of treatment services in the County and we are very fortunate. We could use more MAT (Medicated Assisted Treatment) providers. We have MAT providers at the Jail, in our mental health clinic, in our Substance Abuse Clinic. However, not as many physicians provide this service. We also need more peer services. Peer services are a good way to engage with people in all areas of treatment, prevention and recovery. The other gap is with Emergency Department (ED) beds and detox beds as the number are limited in our area. Many people end up in the ED and we could use more beds.

Ms. Lewis stated one of the largest gaps in recovery is appropriate housing to foster and support sobriety which are important for individuals leaving treatment centers, for individuals leaving jail or prison and for those that are in treatment. There are a lot of housing options, however, they are not conducive to maintaining sobriety. There is also need of emergency housing for those individuals who are entering recovery. There is a lack of peer services. Additionally there are not a lot of recovery services aimed at youth.

Ms. Lewis stated other areas include equipment needs; Fentanyl strips and community Narcan kits. There is also a need for transportation. She noted that the group discussed some specific ideas for filling some of these gaps which include funding the COTI (Center of Treatment Innovation) van through Catholic Charities. This van drives to all neighborhoods with trained staff on board to provide outreach, engagement and links with services. Increase education by providing community forums for education and awareness, increasing the AIR (Adventures in Recovery) services in Steuben County. This engages individuals in recovery and their families in activities that are aimed at maintaining sobriety/recovery through social supports and connections.

Ms. Lewis commented it was noted that there are several school districts that do not permit the prevention education in their schools at all. The group had suggested that perhaps the Legislators in those districts could advocate with school officials. Mrs. Smith commented these schools were not allowing or wanting the education. Mr. Van Etten asked who would make that decision; the Superintendent or the school board? Mrs. Smith replied she would guess both. She stated that she would check with the School Superintendents about that. This education is at the pleasure of the district and not a state mandate. She stated about a month ago, by invitation of

a particular school district, she was presenting opioid data to a class of seniors and even they identified that education within the school in the younger grades would be helpful. She stated she does not understand why there is not more education in the school. That same district is only allowing the nurses to be trained in Narcan administration. They do not want the teachers, faculty or students to be trained. We are definitely hitting some barriers in the school districts. Mr. Van Etten stated that he would like a list of those school districts that do not provide this education.

Mr. Wheeler stated the question for you as a committee and Legislature; are there any other stakeholders you want to hear from? We do think an RFP is the appropriate way to distribute the opioid funds and we would suggest that be done under buckets for prevention, treatment and recovery. You will get a lot of information through the RFP.

Mrs. Ferratella stated I think it would be appropriate for CASA to give an update on their program. I would like to see where we are currently versus where we are going. Mrs. Lando stated I agree. We gave a lot of money to Mental Health and CASA and we haven't heard much since then. We know we have the money and we have to have a good plan on how to spend the money. It is important to make sure we are spending the money correctly. Mr. Van Etten asked isn't that what the RFP will do, identify providers and what they will do with the money? Mr. Wheeler replied yes. We certainly could get CASA to come in for your next meeting. It might also be interesting to hear from family practitioners and we have a few that are very engaged. Ms. Lewis stated we do have Dr. Verkleeren in attendance today.

Ms. Fitzpatrick stated with regard to the gap in peer services, she would be interested to see what organizations provide peer services and what areas are covered, along with demographic information. That would be helpful. Mrs. Lando stated we gave a lot of money to CASA to get those services going and I would like to hear if that is working.

Dr. Verkleeren stated I am a family medical doctor that has been practicing in Addison since 2006. She has been working with the Mental Health Clinic in Bath and Corning for the past eight years and has been providing MAT services for the past five years. In my community in Addison, I am doing a full family medicine practice. She stated she started working with addiction because people were asking for her help and she started prescribing Suboxone therapy. I still have patients that I work with in my clinic and that is a big part of my practice. In the Bath clinic my focus is on MAT therapy and that is part of my focus in the Corning clinic. Mrs. Lando asked how do people know about your services? Dr. Verkleeren replied there used to be a website that listed Suboxone providers and when I joined in 2007, my name was listed. I agree with the committee that it would be wonderful to get more providers to provide these services in their clinics. People are hesitant to seek treatment elsewhere, but they will go to their family doctor.

Mr. Kuhl commented when you go to the primary care physician, there are certain questions that are asked of patients every time they are in. What else can be done? If anyone can provide Suboxone now, do we need dedicated MATs providers or should the money be spent on getting primary care doctors more comfortable doing it? Dr. Verkleeren replied she would aim for both. We want people to come in to the clinic for mental health and substance abuse services as they do not always recognize what is available to them. There are barriers with primary care physicians providing therapy in their clinics; sometimes people don't recognize the problem they have in their own clinic, but there is also the issue of time. As a primary care physician, you cannot be a master of all trades.

Mr. Swackhamer asked in the primary care physician's office, what happens if a patient responds "yes" to any of those questions? Dr. Verkleeren replied it depends on the provider. In my personal opinion, there are too many questions that we have to ask. Mr. Van Etten asked if a patient answered that yes, they did have a problem, what would be the next step? Dr. Verkleeren stated for me, as a provider, I would be able to help them. Ideally, the provider should follow-up and that answer should be highlighted by staff. They should also use whatever resources are available and direct the patient to the services that are available.

Mr. Potter stated one of the things that you have to provide to a dentist or other physician is the name of your primary care physician. If the office is asking the patient questions and they are answering yes, then that office should be reaching out to the primary care physician. Mr. Wheeler stated I know that Dr. Chapman and now Ms. Lewis had tried to partner with the primary care physicians to try to co-locate with them to provide mental health and substance abuse services. We did try co-locating with a physician in Hornell for a while. Maybe there are other things we can do with other primary care providers in the area.

Mr. Van Etten asked Dr. Verkleeren if she would agree that education as early as possible would be a good use of the opioid funds? Dr. Verkleeren replied yes.

Mr. Van Etten stated it would be nice to hear from CASA, but he would not want to delay doing an RFP for another month. If you put out the RFP you would have the results of that to look at in conjunction with other information. Mrs. Ferratella stated she agrees. We want to make sure that the money we are spending is working.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY MANAGER, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PURCHASING DIRECTOR, TO ISSUE AN RFP TO SOLICIT RESPONSES FOR HOW BEST TO SPEND THE OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS TO ADDRESS THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC MADE BY MR. KUHL. SECONDED BY MR. HANNA.

Ms. Fitzpatrick asked with the RFP will you have them respond to each item individually or send them all out together? Mr. Mullen stated I think we should do both. Mr. Wheeler explained it will be done in one document but they may respond to one portion, or all. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated we all agree that the education component earlier should be a heavy focus and once we find out what school districts are not providing that education, we should be calling them. We want to inspire and educate.

Mr. Malter asked who is doing the RFP? I would like to review the RFP to see if there is anything else that we would want included. Mr. Wheeler replied that is no problem; we can send the RFP out to you before we publish it. The RFP will be written broadly enough and you will get a lot of different responses. Mr. Kuhl stated he would like to limit it to having the committee reviewing it first. Mrs. Lando commented we should have the CSB look at it. Mr. Wheeler replied they are an advisory board and having their input is great. Mr. Mullen stated we are just looking at the bigger picture and nobody wants to read the whole document. Mr. Wheeler stated we will work to draft the RFP and send it out to the board for review.

VOTE ON PREVIOUS MOTION: ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN REGULAR SESSION AND RECONVENE IN EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUAN TO PUBLIC OFFICERS' LAW, ARTICLE 7§ 105.1.F. THE MEDICAL, FINANCIAL, CREDIT OR EMPLOYMENT HISTORY OF A PARTICULAR PERSON OR CORPORATION, OR MATTERS LEADING TO THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, PROMOTION, DEMOTION, DISCIPLINE, SUSPENSION, DISMISSAL OR REMOVAL OF A PARTICULAR PERSON OR CORPORATION MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. KUHL. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION AND RECONVENE IN REGULAR SESSION MADE BY MR. KUHL. SECONDED BY MR. MULLEN. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 4-0.

**MOTION: TO ADJOURN MADE BY MR. KUHL. SECONDED BY MR. HANNA. ALL BEING IN FAVOR.
MOTION CARRIES 4-0.**

Respectfully Submitted by Amanda L. Chapman
Deputy Clerk
Steuben County Legislature

****NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR**
Wednesday, July 5, 2023
9:00 a.m.**

**Please send agenda items to the Clerk of the Legislature's Office
NO LATER THAN NOON
Wednesday, June 28, 2023**