

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

Meeting via Zoom

Committee Members Present

Alex Stepanski, Chairman

Eve Ann Shwartz, Town of Hamilton

Loren Corbin, Town of Brookfield

James Goldstein, Vice-Chairman, Town of Lebanon

Others Present

Tina Louis, Director, Madison County Youth Bureau

Eric Faisst, Director, Public Health Services

Ron Raymer, Director, Veterans Agency

Tina Wayland Smith, County Attorney

Teisha Cook, Director, Mental Health Services

Mike Fitzgerald, Commissioner, Department of Social Services

Kathryn Scheirer, Mental Health Clinic Treatment Program Coordinator

Cindy Edick, County Treasurer

Antara Mitra, Executive Director Community Action Partnership

Beth Piersall, Confidential Secretary, Mental Health Services

Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Alex Stepanski called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m., indicating that there was a quorum for the Health and Human Services Committee.

Approve Minutes

The Health and Human Services Committee reviewed the meeting minutes for December 15, 2020. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Vice Chairman Goldstein seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Mental Health

Director Teisha Cook discussed the new agenda process that includes having resolutions, contracts and waivers for Committee members to approve. The Mental Health resolutions presented today are all existing contracts. Director Cook reviewed 2020 Clinic statistics, which include providing 2206 video visits, 726 new client intakes and 3500 additional visits from 2019 to 2020. Director Cook reports staff will gradually return to the office, due to having 35 staff in the Department and 200 client appointments each day. Director Cook, Frank McFall and Liberty Resources have discussed a new joint effort with the 911 Center to have mobile crisis dispatched directly to mental health calls. This is in preliminary stages. Liberty Resources is the agency that provides mobile crisis services, Mental Health Department staff triage mobile crisis if they feel it is appropriate.

Director Cook presented the following resolutions to the Committee:

Authorizing the Chairman to renew an Agreement with Onondaga-Cortland-Madison Board of Cooperative Educational Services (OCM BOCES)

A motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Authorizing the Chairman to renew an Agreement for Sign Language Interpreting Services (dba Interpretex)

A motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Authorizing the Chairman to renew an Agreement with Madison County Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (dba BRiDGES)

A motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Authorizing the Chairman to renew an Agreement with Coordinated Care Services, Inc.

A motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Authorizing the Chairman to renew an Agreement with Consumer Services of Madison County, Inc.

A motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Authorizing the Chairman to renew an Agreement for Psychiatric Services

A motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Authorizing the Chairman to renew an Agreement with Madison-Cortland ARC Inc.

A motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Authorizing the Chairman to renew an Agreement with Family Counseling Services of Cortland County, Inc.

A motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Authorizing the Chairman to renew an Agreement with Heritage Farm, Inc.

A motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Authorizing the Chairman to Enter into an Agreement with Liberty Resources, Inc.

A motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Public Health

Director Eric Faisst provided an update regarding COVID-19. On an optimistic note, the number of positive cases has decreased. As of January 25th, we had 31 new cases and 212 active cases. The positivity rate in Madison County is 3.9%. Oneida Health and Community Memorial Hospitals currently have a total 17 people hospitalized due to COVID-19. The inpatient capacity is 23% and the ICU capacity is 33% at this time. SUNY Upstate mobile testing will continue on Thursdays through February at the County in the DMV lobby. The number of people getting tested has decreased. The Office of Emergency Management recently offered rapid testing for employees and 52 employees were tested, with no positive cases reported. If a positive test is noted, the person will then schedule an appointment the following day with SUNY Upstate mobile testing to have a PCR test. A vaccine clinic will be offered on January 27th for essential workers. The Health Department has 100 doses of vaccine, this clinic will not be publicized as we have contact lists for the 1B groups. On Thursday, January 28th they will administer 2nd doses for people who received their 1st vaccine on December 31st. They are anticipating 1000 vaccine doses from the State to provide 2nd vaccines the week of February 1st at the Sullivan Parks and Recreation Center in Chittenango. They have not received confirmation regarding the delivery of the vaccine. A 2nd vaccine POD may be opened at SUNY Morrisville based on the amount of vaccine received. Director Faisst reported that individuals residing in an IRA were unable to come out to a vaccine site. The Health Department is making arrangements to go to the IRA to provide the vaccinations. If this works well, this approach will be used to provide the vaccine to other individuals who are unable to come to a vaccine location. The Office for the Aging is providing assistance for people 65 and over to register for the vaccine. Governor Cuomo has announced that high risk sports can resume beginning February 1st. This includes schools and recreational sports for children and adults. The Board of Health is very concerned about this announcement. The decision on whether to allow this is up to the local Health Departments. Director Faisst noted that the COVID-19 pandemic is mirroring the 1918 pandemic with the same waves. The new UK strain is more transmittable and will be the dominant strain by March. The Board of Health is discussing what controls can be put in place to limit the spread. Some of the potential controls are 1) High risk sports will be allowed if the positivity rate is below 5%, 2) If the positivity rate is above 5%, teams may only practice. 3) If it continues to rise above 5%, high risk sports will be suspended. Surrounding County Health Directors concur that allowing high risk sports to resume is a poor decision. Some school athletic directors are in favor of allowing high risk sports to resume.

Director Faisst presented the following resolutions to the Committee:

Authorizing an Agreement with Oneida Healthcare

A motion was made by Vice Chairman Goldstein to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Authorizing the Modification of the 2020 Adopted County Budget

A motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the resolution, seconded by Chairman Stepanski and carried unanimously.

Social Services

Commissioner Fitzgerald presented the Expenditure and Refund Summary. The Children Services line currently exceeds the budgeted amount. They will have a final accounting of the figures in February or

March. In other areas, Social Services is below budget. Individuals that were not receiving the maximum SNAP benefit will now be eligible to receive it. The eviction moratorium continues. The proposed State budget will return 15% of the 20% that was withheld during the 2020 budget. Much of this will be contingent on a federal relief package. Commissioner Fitzgerald noted that Department of Social Services staff that are included in Phase 1B are registering to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Youth Bureau

Director Tina Louis presented the following resolutions to the Committee:

Authorizing the Chairman to Enter into an Agreement with New York State Office of Children and Family Services

A motion was made by Chairman Stepanski to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Shwartz and carried unanimously.

Appointing Members to the Madison County Youth Board

A motion was made by Supervisor Corbin to approve the resolution, seconded by Supervisor Shwartz and carried unanimously.

Veterans Agency

Director Ron Raymer provided an update on the Veterans Service Agency. The Veterans Agency is staffed 50% in the office and 50% of staff are working remotely following Madison County operational guidelines. They plan to return to 100% in office operations beginning February 8th. In person client contacts will be limited to emergency situations. Staff completed the following trainings/conferences - 12/16/2020 - Transition Assistance Program training "Managing Your (MY) Transition." 12/17/2020 - "Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Overview." 01/05/2021 - Dept. Of Veterans Affairs training "Records Management: Everyone's Responsibility. 01/21/2021 - The American Legion virtual Mid-Winter Conference for Veterans Service Officers. Upcoming Trainings - 02/04/2021 - Joseph Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Project - "Veteran Peer Mentor training". Part 1, 02/11/2021 - Joseph Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Project - "Veteran Peer Mentor training". Part 2. All of the trainings are completed virtually at no cost to the county. Office statistics - December 2020, the Veterans Service Agency reported 317 client contacts. Through January 25th, there have been 293 contacts. The Madison county Veterans Agency is also assisting with COVID-19 response operations providing staff for assistance with contact tracing, call center, and upcoming vaccination PODS.

Preferred Agenda

The Committee unanimously agreed to include all resolutions in their Preferred Agenda, upon motion by Vice Chairman Goldstein and seconded by Supervisor Shwartz.

Motion to Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Supervisor Shwartz to adjourn the meeting at 11:25 a.m., seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Next meeting: February 23, 2021 at 10:30am - via Zoom

Respectfully submitted by Beth Piersall for Chairman Alexander R. Stepanski