

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, July 27, 2021
Meeting Chambers/Zoom

Committee Members Present

Alex Stepanski, Chairman via Zoom
Loren Corbin, Town of Brookfield
Eve Ann Shwartz, Town of Hamilton via Zoom
James Goldstein, Vice-Chairman, Town of Lebanon, via Zoom

Others Present

Michael Fitzgerald, Commissioner, Social Services
Ron Raymer, Director, Veterans Agency
Eric Faisst, Director, Public Health
Teisha Cook, Director, Mental Health Services
Kathryn Hopkins, Mental Health Clinic Treatment Program Coordinator
Mathew Roosa, LCSW-R, Roosa Consulting LLC via Zoom
Tina Wayland Smith, County Attorney via Zoom
Noah Devaney, Intern from Syracuse University
Samantha Field, Public Information Officer
Cindy Edick, Treasurer
Michele Browell, Confidential Secretary, Social Services

Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Alex Stepanski called the meeting to order at 10:32 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 June 22, 2021. A motion by Supervisor Shwartz to approve the minutes, seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Mental Health

Director Teisha Cook gave an update on the Pathways transition. The transition took place on July 9th and everything is going well. They are currently looking for a new location and are talking to the Gorman Foundation for a site to rent in the Oneida Shopping Center Plaza.

Director Cook presented the following resolutions to the Committee:

Authorizing the Modification of the 2021 Adopted County Budget (Mental Health Office Equipment/Furniture).

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 Family Support in Central New York, Inc.

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

Mathew Roosa, LCSW-R from Roosa Consulting, LLC attended the meeting via Zoom to update the Committee on the progress of the Mental Health task force. Members of the task force and key stakeholders in the community have been interviewed to find the best way to engage for coping with stress and connecting with the community to find out what kind of stress they are dealing with. The population focused on are children, teens, parents, elderly, rural agricultural areas, people struggling with substance abuse, multi-generational Social Services recipients, COVID transition stressors and the County workforce. Surveys have been going out via social media, email to school districts, mailings to DSS clients, and paper copies at libraries, town halls and will also be going out to physicians' offices. The community is being asked to complete the short survey to help assess the mental health and issues within in the county. A gift card lottery is being offered to anyone that completes the survey to be entered into a drawing to win a grocery store gift card. To date 130 responses to the survey have been received and surveys will be accepted until August 20th.

Public Health

Director Eric Faisst presented the following resolution to the Committee:

Authorizing the Chairman to Enter into an Agreement for the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Grant & Modify the 2021 Budget

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

COVID-19 updated numbers; we are seeing a 2 ½ per seven-day average of new cases. There are currently 11 active cases, there have been no deaths since before May and no hospitalizations. There was an uptick two weeks following the 4th of July and another one is expected in the Fall. Colleges are starting to prepare for students returning to campus. Current vaccination for adults is 73% and children 12-15 years of age are at 50% being vaccinated. Clinics will continue at the Public Health Office and at the Oneida Shopping Center site. There will also be PODS at the Bouckville antique show and the DeRuyter fair for anyone that wishes to be vaccinated.

Social Services

Commissioner Michael Fitzgerald presented the Commissioners Report. These numbers are through the month of June. Almost all categories are where they should be at this point which is at or below 50%. Child Protective reports are up and there has been an increase in neglect petitions filed and safety plans made. Also discussed was a change that the Governor has made

in the ERAP online application process. The new process will reduce documentation requirements for both tenants and landlords.

Commissioner Fitzgerald also reminded the Committee that The Youth Bureau will be holding a Summer Gathering and Program Showcase on Wednesday, August 4th at the Great Swamp Conservancy in Canastota. Guests will be able to talk with youth and youth serving agencies, mingle with the Youth Board and explore the Great Swamp Conservancy.

Veterans Agency

Director Ron Raymer gave program updates and stated that the agency continues to meet client's needs. The agency continues with trainings. There were two trainings/events attended since last Committee meeting. All Madison County Veterans Service Agency staff are now dual accredited by both The American Legion and the New York State Division of Veteran Services. This will allow them to better serve the veteran community and assist veterans who have their Power of Attorney through NYS DVS without disruption. Total client contact for June was 329 and so far for July is 310. In person contacts are continuing to increase.

Preferred Agenda

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

Motion to Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Vice-Chairman Goldstein to adjourn the meeting at 11:12 a.m., seconded by Supervisor Corbin and carried unanimously.

Next meeting: August 24, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michele Browell for Chairman Alexander R. Stepanski