



COUNTY OF HUNTERDON NEW JERSEY

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE

YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION

MENTAL HEALTH BOARD



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REFERENCE:

- ☒ Council
- ☐ Mental Health
- ☐ Youth
- ☐ Disability Services
- ☐ Substance
- ☐ Use Disorder
- ☐ Transportation

Approved July 27, 2022

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, June 22, 2022, 3:30 p.m.

Call In and Webex Only

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

J. Gorman	R. Horoschak
R. Cooper	J. Collevchio
F. Leddy	J. Cassano

EX- OFFICIO

M. Scherer
N. Troche

SUPPORT STAFF

M. O'Reilly
L. Nauman
E. Neukum

GUESTS

C. Kirk
T. Shepherd
C. Sagona
B. Mastrianni
D. Prisco
S. Freedman
R. Hager
L. Zimmermann

COUNTY DIV. REPS.

S. Nekola
K. Burghardt

***Designees**

I. CONVENE: OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT:

"This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21. Notice of this meeting has been published in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Courier News. A public notice announcing this meeting has also been placed in the lobbies of the Hunterdon County Department of Human Services, the first floor of the Main Street County Complex, 71 Main Street Building #1, Flemington, NJ; the first floor of the Route 12 County Complex, Building #3, 314 State Route 12, Flemington, NJ and County Clerk's Office."

The Council allows time for comments from the public at the end of each meeting. Public comments are limited to three (3) minutes per person per meeting, in order to ensure that all attendees have an opportunity to be heard. Brief written comments may also be submitted for distribution during the meeting.

J. Gorman opened the regular monthly meeting of the Council at 3:32 p.m. with a quorum

present.

J. Gorman read HSAC's Statement of Purpose.

Due to the recent public health crisis, COVID-19, this meeting was call in and Webex ONLY

- II. ***APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** J. Gorman asked for a motion to approve the May 25, 2022 minutes. A motion was made by R. Horoschak and J. Gorman seconded to approve the meeting minutes. There were no abstentions. All members were in favor. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.
- III. **NOMINATIONS FOR CHAIR AND CO-CHAIR:** M. O'Reilly stated the Nominations Committee is recommending J. Gorman to be Chair and J. Collevecchio to be the Co-Chair. A motion is necessary to complete this recommendation.

A motion was made by F. Leddy and seconded R. Horoschak to elect J. Gorman to be Chair of the Human Services Advisory Council. There are no abstentions and no objections. All were in favor. The motion passed.

A motion was made by R. Horoschak and seconded by J. Gorman to elect J. Collevecchio to be Co-Chair of the Human Services Advisory Council. There were no abstentions and no objections. All were in favor. The motion passed.

IV. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. **LINK Transportation Update:** E. Neukum advised the group that the LINK is working with Transpo Group USA which is a transportation analysis company. Transpo Group USA is looking at two gaps that are in the Coordinated Human Services Plan. The Coordinated Human Services Plan is the plan that was developed by goHunterdon and it has to do with the transportation available in Hunterdon County. Two of the gaps identified in the plan have been targeted and the team is trying to essentially solve them or at least how they can be solved. After a meeting, Transpo Group USA met with a few of stakeholders to discuss the needs of residents and different groups within Hunterdon County. Some great feedback was received by three of the stakeholders and they are waiting for additional feedback by two more. E. Neukum noted Transpo Group USA asked her to petition at this meeting for either a consumer of the LINK service or an agency who uses the service who would like to speak with Transpo about the needs and the gaps within the service for their clients. The two gaps are the hours of operation and the days of the week that the LINK operates.

The LINK itself is running with all seven shuffles in full operation. Additionally, about four to six Demand Response runs are operating at this time. For example, today so far, the LINK completed 301 trips. Prior to COVID, the LINK completed between 500 and 600 trips a day. She pointed out that service has not been fulfilled for the day, therefore there is potential for at least 50 more clients to ride the vehicles. The ridership numbers are increasing, which is wonderful. The driver pool is not increasing as they want it and need it to be. The State of New Jersey has changed the regulations and increased the hours necessary for drivers to receive a CDL. Essentially, it has become more challenging to obtain a CDL. E. Neukum conveyed there is a link located on the website offering information to people interested in becoming a driver. The LINK provider is Easton Coach. Easton Coach is doing the best they can in lobbying for new drivers.

E. Neukum stated that new vehicles have been very difficult to obtain, due to part shortages. It is hopeful that there will be some vehicle production soon. NJ Transit also has Hunterdon County slotted to receive six NJ Transit 5310 vehicles. She is hoping to receive a couple of those by first quarter next year.

The public hearing for the Senior Citizens and Disabled Residents Transportation Assistance Program (SCDRTAP) will be held on Wednesday, July 13, 2022 at 1:30 pm. All are welcome as it is open to the public. These program funds provide transportation for seniors to medical appointments, recreational trips, shopping, and transportation for a person with a disability. The LINK itself is open to the public and anyone in Hunterdon County can utilize the service. The monies that are received via SCDRTAP specifically helps offset the cost of the transportation itself and is specified for seniors and persons with disabilities. She noted that many other grants are received to help cover the costs incurred.

R. Horoschak offered that he saw a LINK bus successfully drop-off a passenger in a wheelchair. E. Neukum echoed that all the vehicles are equipped with a wheelchair securement area and an outside elevator. All the drivers must be trained and frequently re-trained on transporting people using a mobility device, how to properly secure them and ensure they are comfortable at all times. Discussion ensued. J. Gorman inquired if the coaching is offered through goHunterdon. She explained a conversation she had with a client who used a taxi instead of the LINK. T. Shepherd stated that she will look into providing this information in Spanish. E. Neukum added a few drivers are fluent in Spanish. J. Gorman and E. Neukum will catch-up offline to further discuss.

- B. HSAC Project Submission Review:** J. Gorman reminded this topic was up for discussion at two meetings ago. Anyone who is a member or a participant, this may be a good opportunity to submit a project for the council to review and suggest which ones they would like to champion and bring to the Commissioners. This would be something that the council had helped to achieve. She stated she spoke with T. Shepherd and E. Neukum regarding transportation and since they are working with Transpo Group USA, it does not make sense to include transportation into this project. She noted the only project that was received was submitted by K. Burghardt, Division Head of the Division of Housing. This proposal submission had been distributed to the HSAC email distribution list. She asked the group to review and provide any input or may have any questions. K. Burghardt gave a brief overview of his submission specific to case management through Hunterdon County. This proposal includes hiring an individual for a one-year trial to see if this would be a worthwhile position through the Division of Social Work Services; intensive case management in-house. K. Burghardt addressed the questions submitted. This included transportation, job-specifications, in-house vs. consultant and salary suggestions. Additionally, he answered the clients that would be receiving this specific case management would have to be connected to Human Services. There are other agencies possibly offering similar services, but these agencies also have specific criteria where clients must fit into specific programs. He is looking to fill any gaps in the case management servicing. He continued to answer the submitted questions by this group. J. Gorman provided her strong opinion for the need of case management for many individuals requiring assistance. R. Horoschak offered his feedback and supports the idea. K. Burghardt did an awesome job coming up with a very good idea with extensive detail. R. Cooper echoes that this is a great idea. J. Collevchio offered her input and thanked K. Burghardt. A question was asked about salary, fringe benefits and grant funding. M. O'Reilly will find out more information and circle back to the group. Discussion ensued. Overall, the council is good with this idea.

It is targeted that at the next meeting feedback about funding this position will be discussed.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Needs Assessment Update: M. O'Reilly stated the Department of Children & Families held a meeting a few weeks ago with the Human Services Directors and the County HSAC Administrators. During that meeting, they were informed that the expectation to have a DCF Needs Assessment completed in 2022 is not required. The DCF staff are still collecting data from some of the counties as to all of the different plans that are already underway, i.e. substance use plan, mental health plan, etc. DCF is collating and reviewing all of the plans and surveys and are expected to meet again with the Human Services Directors and County HSAC Administrators some time over the summer and through the fall to figure out, as a state, what can be done to move forward. In every county when the 2019-2020 Needs Assessment was conducted, one of the biggest things and the most feedback that had been received by clients is that not everyone had been aware of all of the services that either the county or the state provides to people in the community. The DCF staff are brainstorming for the best means of collecting all of the data and have it accessible in one location to be able to access the resources that are available. They are in the beginning stages at this point. She will provide updates as she receives them from the state.

M. O'Reilly conveyed a Planning & Integration Committee Meeting was held a few weeks ago. With the understanding that the DCF Needs Assessment (no surveys or focus groups) does not need to be completed at this time, a draft of the HSAC survey is available and will be sent out to the P&I Committee shortly. She would like to vote on it at the July meeting. M. O'Reilly noted that after proofreading the prior survey (pre-pandemic), certain questions that did not get a lot of feedback on were removed. This current draft HSAC survey is being targeted to release to the public in September with a return date of the end of December. This will allow time to build the RFP for the next cycle of county funding. DCF did announce that in 2023-2024 that something will have to be done...to be continued. DCF has been a good partner by reviewing the data that had been sent by the county and recognizing the hard work all the counties put into the Needs Assessment. It is hopeful to make a difference in between each assessment throughout the years to make some changes specific to housing and transportation that have been identified.

VI. REPORTS:

A. County Department of Human Services (CDHS): M. O'Reilly explained what happened during the May 2022 HSAC meeting that caused the meeting to be shortened.

M. O'Reilly reported the County Administrator, Kevin Davis announced his retirement from the County and will be leaving Friday, July 8, 2022. His replacement, Brad Myhre was appointed at the June 21, 2022 Commissioner's Meeting. Mr. Davis has served as the County Administrator for the last five years and was commended for his efforts in Hunterdon County during his tenure here.

A new Commissioner, Jeff Kuhl has joined the Commissioner Board replacing former Commissioner Matt Holt that had resigned from the Board in May. Commissioner Kuhl will also serve as the liaison to the Department of Human Services. M. O'Reilly noted she had forwarded all of the meeting information including this meeting to Commissioner Kuhl, however he was unable to attend today.

At the June 21, 2022 Commissioner's Meeting, the County Commissioner's allocated \$300,000.00 of the American Rescue Plan Funding to the Department of Human Services. This is for the Department of Human Services to release an RFP for housing, mental health, substance use and domestic violence. These are all applicable uses under the American Rescue Plan. M. O'Reilly conveyed that HSAC will be included on the release of this opportunity.

An in-person Senior Art Show will take place on Saturday, June 25, 2022 at 1:30 pm in Building 1 in the auditorium.

The county operated COVID-19 testing site at Reaville Avenue will be close at the end of this month. The Department of Health announced they will be distributing at-home tests on both July 13, 2022 and July 20, 2022 from 2:00 pm – 7:00 pm.

M. O'Reilly stated the Department of Community Affairs will open their State Rental Assistance Program (SRAP) waiting list for Section 8 on July 11, 2022. This information had been shared via email. If anyone does not have this information, please advise.

- B. NJ Department of Human Services (DHS):** N. Troche reminded a few years prior, a large Narcan distribution process had taken place. Behind the scenes of the coordination was a bit of a challenge. Staff members would physically drive to various locations in New Jersey and hand-deliver. Now the process had been streamlined and a coordinated distribution is in place. Because legislation came through, the state will be supplying Narcan to first responders, law enforcement officers, county prosecutor's offices, family support centers, libraries, and mobile outreach programs. A website in which folks can ask for Narcan directly and can have it shipped directly to the requested sites. This program, The Narcan Distribution Program, will run as long as the funding is available. The state is committed to getting the kits to the folks who need it the most. N. Troche will forward the website address to this group. Any questions can be directed naloxone@dhs.nj.gov.

N. Troche stated there have been leadership personnel changes.

- C. NJ Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P):** M. Scherer stated the Hunterdon local office is currently working with 255 children with 16 youth in placement. For the month of May, they received 37 referrals (which is lower than usual). The local officer manager, Brandi had accepted another position and the covering manager is Alyssa Guarino. The office is in the process of hiring a new manager.

D. HSAC Committee Reports:

Housing Committee: R. Cooper stated the flyers had been distributed and a questionnaire is underway with ideas of joining the Needs Assessment survey. K. Burghardt stated he is starting to get information on the low-income housing credit programs. There are two: one through the state and the other through HUD. He is gathering the data and will make a report to HSAC. He is sifting through national data which will take some time. This is to help understand what affordable housing is in Hunterdon County and surrounding counties.

By-laws Committee: R. Horoschak stated that the committee had a Zoom meeting within the last week and made some necessary language changes. Additionally, there are some issues that involve other committees and entities that they need to get through before the new proposed by-laws, but these groups do not meet until September. The new by-laws should be ready by the September meeting and to be voted on at the October meeting. R.

Horoschak reminded the group that the voting of chairs should take place at the May meeting.

VII. GOALS & ACTION:

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT AND QUESTIONS PERIOD:

Public comments are limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes per person. Brief written comments may be submitted prior to the meeting for distribution during the meeting.

IX.* MOTION TO ADJOURN:

The meeting closed at 4:33 pm. The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 28, 2022.

***= Item Requires Action**

Note to Council Members: If members are unable to attend the meeting, please notify the Hunterdon County Department of Human Services.