

**ST. JOHNS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL  
(HHSAC)  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 21, 2019**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Charles Daly, Chair; Tara Haley, Vice Chair; William Cover; Shannon Nazworth; Eric Colon (tardy); Tina D'Alessandro (tardy);

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Vasco Valov

**STAFF PRESENT:** Shawna Novak, HHS Director; Tracy Dillon, Social Services Manager; Angie Cowling, HHS Staff Support; Mary Garcia, HHS Staff Support

**BCC LIASON:** Jeb S. Smith, County Commissioner

**VISITORS:** Judith Dembowski; Gayle Webb; Brittany Coronado; Cathy Taylor; Marissa Vetter; Debi Redding; Sandra Jackson; Cathy Rabino; Jim Norman; Patti Greenough; Kasey Ivey; DeAnna O'Flaherty; Nancy Eisele; Ellen Walden

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:** Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01p.m.

**MINUTES – January, 2019 Meeting:** Shannon Nazworth **motioned** to approve the minutes. Tara Haley seconded the motion; minutes were **approved unanimously** by the Council.

**REPORT FROM COMMISSIONER JEB SMITH:** Commissioner Smith shared Joy Andrew's regrets for being unable to attend today's meeting. Commissioner Smith explained Ms. Andrews is working on some time-sensitive matters related to the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Relief funds. Commissioner Smith commended the County Tax Appraiser, Eddie Creamer, for doing a wonderful job of steadfastly reporting the gross taxable value growth to the BCC. Commissioner Smith stated this year's growth is projected at 9% and will equate to approximately \$16.1 billion. Commissioner Smith went on to say the budget is being prepared, transitioning .15 mils from the General Fund to the Transportation Trust Fund. The Board of County Commissioners will also re-evaluate the Tourist Development tax allocation, as well as the additional 5<sup>th</sup> cent. Commissioner Smith also reported Sunshine Bus funding is being discussed since neither the City of St. Augustine nor the City of St. Augustine Beach currently assist the County with the funding. Commissioner Smith also reported there is a new unregulated drug with opioid and stimulant properties that is gaining in popularity called Kratom. He said it is derived from a plant from Southeast Asia that is

being propagated in the U.S. and the drug is available in St. Augustine in various ingestible forms. Commissioner Smith also stated Senator Debbie Mayfield has filed legislation to amend the definition of tobacco products in Florida Statute to include all recreational nicotine products, including electronic cigarettes and liquid nicotine. In addition, Commissioner Smith said there is another bill that, if passed, will ban electronic smoking devices in the workplace and state no one under the age of 18 can smoke within 1,000 feet of a school. Finally, Commissioner Smith said he and three other County Commissioners joined Colonel Bill Dudley at the County's Veterans Service Office to brief Senator Marco Rubio on the status of the VA's Community Based Outpatient Clinic in St. Augustine.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**a. Homeless Workgroup Update:**

- 1. Continuum of Care (CoC) Update:** Brittany Coronado reported the RFP for funding through DCF has been dropped. This funding includes Challenge, ESG and TANF. Ms. Coronado said this is a three year cycle so there is potential to receive approximately \$2,010,000 over that period. Ms. Coronado said the deadline for agency application is March 5, 2019.
- 2. HMIS Lead Agency Support/Point in Time Update (PIT Count):** Ms. Coronado said the use of technology this year made the process much more effective and she was able to see the numbers and communicate with all volunteers in real time. Ms. Coronado said the official count will be released at the annual meeting of the CoC in April but she was able to report there were 134 surveys completed the day of the count and 209 done post-count. Ms. Coronado did stipulate these were all unsheltered and therefore did not include Betty Griffin Center, St. Francis House and the Homeless Coalition, for example.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. Emergency Services Homeless Coalition (ESHC):** Debi Redding provided a handout reviewing the ESHC mission and explaining their transitional and permanent housing, as well as the number of families they assisted in 2018 with transitional housing. Ms. Redding explained the County's funding assists with permanent housing and in 2018 they assisted 7 households, comprised of 27 individuals and 100% of these families renewed their leases. Ms. Redding said they have 22 homes and they added 2 additional permanent homes in December of 2018; a 3 bedroom and a 4 bedroom and they charge \$850 per month for the families to live in one of these permanent homes, with a 12 month lease. Ms. Redding explained the price is the same whether it is a 2, 3 or 4 bedroom home. Ms. Redding said their 12 transitional homes are 100 years old and, naturally, are

in need of frequent repair. Ms. Redding said the majority of their permanent homes are newer but ESHC still has to spend a substantial amount of their funding on maintenance and repairs. Ms. Redding said they want to be able to turn their homes over quickly when a resident leaves, so maintenance is very important. Ms. Redding said ESHC is taking in the most vulnerable families and putting them in transitional housing and providing support services. Ms. Redding said they assist these families in finding work and learning to budget their money, so that they can become self-sufficient and graduate into permanent housing. Ms. Redding said as long as the families abide by the terms of their lease, they can continue to renew it, provided they still meet the income requirements. Ms. Redding said the goal is for the families to move out and into the community once they become self-sufficient and are able to afford to do so. Ms. Redding said two of their homes are leased to Epic Behavioral Healthcare as sober living homes – one for women and one for men. Ms. Redding said these sober living residents are also able to make use of the supportive services ESHC offers. Ms. Redding said all clients come by way of referrals, through the coordinated entry system, which she is a proponent of. Ms. Redding said all of their permanent housing residents have been there for at least a year and some as many as three years. Ms. Redding said their goal is to make more transitional homes into permanent homes. Ms. Redding said their residents are stable, they are all employed and their case managers work with them to try to advance them in their chosen job or career. Ms. Redding said she firmly believes these clients are as successful as they are because of the many supportive services provided, from after school child care, to help with benefit eligibility, job searches and resume writing. Ms. Redding said these services are available to transitional housing residents, as well as permanent.

Ms. Redding said she is always looking for funding opportunities and, unfortunately, because of the location of the homes, she was unable to receive funding under the County's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Ms. Redding said she also applied through the City of St. Augustine's small cities CDBG but missed the funding cycle and is unable to apply again until 2021. Ms. Redding said she is seeking funding to renovate her transitional housing into permanent housing. Shannon Nazworth asked if she couldn't apply for the Special Needs RFA and Ms. Redding said the majority of her families are simply the working poor, not special needs. Ms. Redding said ESHC is at 100% for all of their metrics for the first quarter of the new grant cycle.

- b. 2019 Goals:** Charles Daly said the Community Health Assessment has been distributed to Advisory Council members to look through and he said he believes it provides the structure for identification of goals for the Council. Mr. Cover said he would like to focus on pediatrics and specifically, drug abuse and mental health issues in children. Mr. Cover said he believes any improvement in children's lives can only help them grow up to be healthy and productive adults. Shannon Nazworth agreed and said she would like to achieve multiple objectives and objectives that other agencies and entities, such as the County and the St. Johns County Continuum of Care, share such as reducing risky behaviors and increasing

access to mental health. Tara Haley said she would like to increase the focus on prevention. Charles Daly said he would like to evaluate performance data for healthcare resources that address opioid overuse, including detoxification, treatment, care coordination and peer support. Mr. Daly said he would take ownership of this specific goal and asked that fellow Council members consider doing the same with their proposed goals. Shannon Nazworth asked if there were things the Advisory Council could do to help increase scoring on the NOFA to try to get more resources and Brittany Coronado agreed they could. Angie Cowling said the new NOFA will be dropping soon. Ms. Coronado agreed to let Ms. Nazworth know where the scoring could be higher on the community level, so that the Advisory Council might assist.

**REPORT FROM JOY ANDREWS, ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR:** Ms. Andrews was unable to attend.

### **FUNDED AGENCY UPDATES:**

**Betty Griffin Center:** No representative was able to attend meeting.

**Early Learning Coalition:** No representative was able to attend the meeting.

**Epic Behavioral Healthcare:** Patti Greenough reported their Prevention Unit has been very busy lately. Ms. Greenough said Epic has taken over the tobacco citation unit from Flagler Hospital and she said they have had nearly 100 referrals this month. Ms. Greenough said the use of vaping devices is becoming a true crisis and kids are able to use any oil-based product in the vaping devices so they are seeing use of cocaine, marijuana and other substances rise. Ms. Greenough said 3 young adults were sent to the ER recently, for using LSD at their high schools. Ms. Greenough went on to report their care coordination program has been started at the jail and they are working closely with Corrections staff on this. Ms. Greenough said it appears this will be a male dominated program. Ms. Greenough said Epic has also received funding from LSF to start a medication assisted clinic. Ms. Greenough said they have been offering Vivitrol and now they will also offer Buprenorphine, effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Greenough said they have been working closely with Gateway and modeling the program after theirs. Ms. Greenough reported two of their staff members have become certified peer support specialists and one more is on his way to being certified. Ms. Greenough said these individuals will be based in the ER department of Flagler Hospital and they will meet with any person coming in due to addiction issues. Finally, Ms. Greenough said they have an Appropriations Bill, sponsored by Cyndi Stevens and Travis Hutson, to grant 4 additional residential beds and 4 additional detox beds to Epic.

**St. Francis House:** Judy Dembowski distributed an article titled “The Role of Emergency Shelters in Addressing Homelessness” and she spoke about the difficulties St. Francis House is having with their changing role in the community and how their clients are responding to the changes they are making. Ms. Dembowski also distributed a blog titled “Interventions vs General Services” and said it really speaks to what her staff is dealing

with at this time. Ms. Dembowski said she and her staff are targeting smaller groups, more intensely, and focusing on getting people housed. Ms. Dembowski said there has been some restructuring of staff and they have added some housing-focused case managers, who will follow up with clients when they are housed, ensuring they are safely handed off to others in the community who can provide supportive services.

**St. Johns Housing Partnership:** DeAnne O'Flaherty reported they are offering housing counseling, in order to help first time home buyers avoid predatory lending traps and helping them to avoid foreclosure by ensuring they aren't over-borrowing for a home. Marissa Vetter reported about St. Johns Housing Partnership's work with foreclosure prevention and she spoke about a recent success story. Ms. Vetter said a County fireman received their help in a loan modification request to his lender. Ms. Vetter said the gentleman and his wife and four children were saved from foreclosure due to their intervention and he will make his first modified payment in March.

**Council on Aging:** Cathy Rabino reported COA has been collaborating with Flagler Hospital on home delivered meals two weeks after an elderly person's hospital stay. Ms. Rabino said this program helps to prevent a return to the hospital. Ms. Rabino said their outreach team receives referrals from DCF for seniors living alone that are having difficulty functioning. Ms. Rabino said they try to contact family members and/or put other services in place to allow these seniors to remain in their homes.

**Wildflower Clinic:** Kasey Ivey reported the County supports their community outreach which has historically been focused on health care screenings of medical and dental services. Ms. Ivey said they decided to change their mobile locations in order to see patients from other areas who might not have transportation. Ms. Ivey said they are at a different site every week and they are going to be doing health screenings at Winn-Dixie, Alpha-Omega Thrift Store and locations in Hastings, near the migrant farms, to name a few. Ms. Ivey said they are also going to be focusing on prevention and they have put together a team of clinical educators toward that end. Ms. Ivey said they will hold different workshops focused on topics such as diabetes, hypertension and nutrition. Ms. Ivey said they are also contacting medical suppliers so that they can have diabetic supplies, medications and other resources available at the workshops. Finally, Ms. Ivey said they are seeking more partners for their mobile medical and dental clinics.

**St. Augustine Youth Services:** No representative was able to attend the meeting.

**St. Johns Welfare Federation:** Jim Norman said they are finding more people in need of assisted living, as sometimes care in the home is no longer possible, depending of the needs of the patient. Mr. Norman said they successfully transitioned all clients from Buckingham Smith into the Pavilion and he said they currently have about 10 beds available.

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERS:**

**Homeless Advocacy Council:** Ellen Walden shared the group's recent discussion and concern over social media postings that include pictures of various homeless camps. Ms. Walden said the Homeless Advocacy Council members had heard that the Vagrant Watch Group has expressed their intent to clean up the camps and they believed this could be dangerous as they are walking into camps unexpectedly and uninvited. Ms. Walden also mentioned the Council members had concerns that all of the development on 207 is pushing the homeless farther and farther out, and forcing the camps to break down and move their settlements in 24 hours, which they considered very little notice. The Council said this is why disbanded camps are left such a mess, because there is very little time to clean them up and move properly, and they thought 72 hours to move camp would be more reasonable, since some of their set-ups are quite elaborate.

**Stewart Marchman Act:** None.

**Florida Department of Health St. Johns:** Reminder about flu season – get vaccinated and wash hands frequently.

**St. Johns County Sheriff's Office:** None.

**Flagler Hospital:** Brittany Coronado said they are seeking a Community Health Associate to assist in the Care Connect office. Ms. Coronado also said everyone should watch social media between 3pm-5pm tomorrow but said she couldn't share anything more about it.

**Health & Human Services Department:** Shawna Novak stated the County still has Rapid Rehousing funds that must be used by June 30<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Novak also stated the County will be applying for the federal and state funds under the Challenge, ESG and TANF grants.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Executive Meeting:** Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 3:30 p.m. at the St. Johns County Health and Human Services Building, Kingfisher Conference Room, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, FL 32084.

**Regular Meeting:** Thursday, March 21, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. at the St. Johns County Health and Human Services Building, Kingfisher Conference Room, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, FL 32084.

**ADJOURNMENT** - Meeting was adjourned at 5:16 p.m.