

**ST. JOHNS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL
(HHSAC)
MEETING MINUTES
December 5, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Daly, Chair; Tara Haley, Vice Chair; Chip Cover;
Tina D'Allesandro

MEMBERS ABSENT: Eric Colon; Shannon Nazworth; 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
Joy Andrews, Assistant County Administrator - sent regrets

VISITORS: Lisa Burns; Marissa Vetter; Kelsey Wainwright; Judy
Dembowski; Brittany Coronado; Joyce Mahr; Jake Quigley;
Whitney Graves; Betty Rehrer; Victoria Long; Sandi Jackson;
Sharon Gesek; Mary Hepler; Patti Greenough; Dennis
Maneja; Jim Norman; Dawn Bell

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: Chair called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Quorum
was present.

MINUTES – October 17, 2019 Meeting (no November meeting): Tara Haley **motioned**
to approve the minutes. Chip Cover seconded the motion; minutes were **approved**
unanimously by the Council.

REPORT FROM COMMISSIONER JEB SMITH: Commissioner Smith reported the
Board of County Commissioners voted to terminate the employment of County
Administrator Michael Wanchick at their November 19th meeting. Commissioner Smith
went on to say an offer to serve as interim County Administrator has been extended to
current Clerk of Court Hunter Conrad and a negotiation meeting is scheduled to take
place on Monday, December 9, 2019. Commissioner Smith explained if all goes well
during negotiations, Mr. Conrad will resign his position as Clerk of Court and Judge
Zambrano will appointment a replacement.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

OLD BUSINESS:

a. **Homeless Workgroup Update:**

1. **Continuum of Care (CoC) Update:** Brittany Coronado did not have anything of note to report.
2. **HMIS Lead Agency Support/Point in Time Update (PIT Count):** Ms. Coronado advised the Point in Time Count will occur on January 23, 2020, and she said there will be a meeting tomorrow to discuss locations and to ensure there are no gaps in volunteerism. Ms. Coronado went on to say the only real issue last year was the difficulty in locating and counting the homeless youth. Ms. Coronado said Port in a Storm and the placement of volunteers in the locations youth congregate should alleviate that problem this year.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **St. Johns Housing Partnership (SJHP):** Marissa Vetter explained SJHP had been presented with the President's award at the Jacksonville Legal Aid Award Ceremony for their work in housing counseling. Ms. Vetter showed the video that was presented at the award ceremony and it centered around a widow and the loan modification services provided by SJHP that saved her home from foreclosure. Ms. Vetter stressed the importance of this program and spoke about aging in place and the high percentage of clients that are elderly. Ms. Vetter explained the widow's mortgage was modified down to approximately \$500, which, she pointed out, is far less than the average rental on a one bedroom apartment in St. Johns County. Ms. Vetter went on to say SJHP has just received word that they have lost 75% of their funding for this program and without some sort of emergency funding, the program will not continue. Ms. Vetter explained though they are HUD approved, they only receive approximately \$22,000 per year from that agency.
- b. **HHSAC Recommendations:** Chair Charles Daly welcomed any candidates present to introduce themselves. Whitney Graves who submitted an application, introduced herself and talked a bit about her work with Project Buckle-up and why she was interested in joining the Advisory Council. Ballots were completed and tallied and Chip Cover, Tara Haley and Thomas Neilson will be recommended to the Board of County Commissioners to fill the current vacancies.
- c. **Officer Appointments:** Chip Cover **motioned** to nominate Charles Daly for Chair and Tara Haley for Vice Chair. Tina D'Allesandro seconded the motion; **Motion passed unanimously.**

REPORT FROM JOY ANDREWS, ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR: Ms. Andrews was unable to attend and sent her regrets.

FUNDED AGENCY UPDATES:

Alpha Omega Miracle Home: Mary Hepler thanked the County for the quick turn-around on reimbursement. Ms. Hepler reported they have hired someone for their job skills training position and she said they are in the process of purchasing equipment for their computer lab, which will be used as a part of that training.

Council on Aging: Sharon Gesek reported they have opened the waiting list on their dementia program, which she explained is an all-day program for adults with memory problems. Ms. Gesek went on to say 3 of the 4 locations providing the Integrative Memory Enhancement (IME) program have waiting lists. Ms. Gesek said IME is a social and recreational ½ day program.

Betty Griffin Center (BGC): Joyce Mahr reported they continue to be over capacity at the shelter and were at this status for 87 days in the last quarter. Ms. Mahr said they have had to refer out to other shelters 32 different times. Ms. Mahr said their behavioral health component also has a waiting list and their therapists are booked out for approximately two weeks. Ms. Mahr said they are looking into the possibility of bringing in additional interns or volunteers that have worked with them in the past, in order to get this list down.

Early Learning Coalition: Dawn Bell commended Shawna Novak and Angie Cowling for their quick response when contacted via email. Ms. Bell said their Board met yesterday and they are grateful for federal funds coming down, which have enabled them to pay their St. Johns County providers an additional 10%.

Epic Behavioral Healthcare: Patti Greenough advised the request for additional residential treatment beds for women at the recovery center will be heard by the Healthcare Appropriations Committee next week. Ms. Greenough advised they have also embedded peer support specialists at the emergency room at Flagler Health +. Ms. Greenough explained these individuals are there to provide support to anyone coming into the ER with substance abuse issues.

St. Francis House: Judy Dembowski reported they continue to be at capacity. Ms. Dembowski said they have moved 36 households into permanent housing since the beginning of the contract. Ms. Dembowski said she has noticed a large influx of individuals coming to the shelter from the Jacksonville area, as Duval County is now requiring proof of residency in order to access services there, including shelter. Ms. Dembowski said she is continuing to investigate the situation. Ms. Dembowski concluded by stating their Board is doing strategic planning and looking at ways to hone services and serve those who are most in need.

St. Johns Housing Partnership (SJHP): Nothing additional to report.

Emergency Services & Homeless Coalition (ESHG): Ms. Rehrer said they have had to file what she believes is their first eviction, after attempting to work with the renter for 6 months. Ms. Rehrer said the tenant has not made any good faith effort toward paying, leaving ESHG no choice but to begin eviction proceedings. Mr. Rehrer concluded by

stating one of their permanent housing residents was able to leave their campus and find her own place, opening that spot up for someone else.

Good Samaritan/Wildflower Clinic: No representative at this meeting.

St. Augustine Youth Services (SAYS): Dennis Maneja reported the Community Action Team averages 35-40 families per month and in the first quarter discharged approximately 18 families. Mr. Maneja went on to say their 24/7 Mobile Crisis Response team has taken approximately 189 crisis calls year-to-date and they have a Baker Act diversion rate of nearly 84% each month.

St. Johns Welfare Federation: Mr. Norman stated there have been 3 new residents in assisted living at the Pavilion in the last quarter. Mr. Norman said there are 32 subsidized residents out of 69 available beds and their current occupancy rate is 63 individuals.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

Homeless Advocacy Council: No representative attended this meeting.

SMA Healthcare: No report.

Florida Department of Health St. Johns: Jake Quigley reported they have expanded their outreach to one or two locations per day in response to the hepatitis A threat. Mr. Quigley said they are also offering vaccinations every day in the Health & Human Services building. Mr. Quigley cautioned hepatitis A cannot be killed with hand sanitizer.

Flagler Health +: Victoria Long reported their new CareFast+ urgent care center has opened at Murabella and they have just begun construction on a new center located on the hospital campus. Ms. Long said CareFast+ centers will have extended evening and weekend hours.

Health & Human Services Department: Shawna Novak announced one of the County's foster parents will be inducted into the "Foster Parent/Adoptive Parent Hall of Fame" for the State and said this family has made six adoptions. Ms. Novak said the ceremony will take place on Tuesday, December 10th.

Faith Based Community: No representative attended this meeting.

Public Safety: No representative attended this meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Executive Meeting: Thursday, January 2, 2020 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, January 16, 2020 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 4:58 p.m.