

ST. JOHNS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL (HHSAC)
MEETING MINUTES
February 17, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles Daly, Chair; Tara Haley, Vice Chair; Lorraine Keith; Shannon Nazworth

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kim Elmore; Chip Cover; (one vacancy)

STAFF PRESENT: Shawna Novak, Director, Health & Human Services; Joseph Cone, Assistant Director, Health & Human Services; Katrina Tanner, Contract Coordinator, Social Services; Mary Garcia, Social Services Support Staff

BCC LIASON: Sarah Taylor – Assistant County Administrator – sent regrets
Ashanti Austin – Support Staff to Ms. Taylor and Deputy County Administrator Brad Bradley

VISITORS: Via Zoom – Patti Greenough; Sharon Gesek; Dawn Bell; Lindsey Rodea; Michelle Colee; Cyndy Dailey; Judi Dembowski; Kelsey Wainwright; Sandi Jackson; Lisa Burns; Blair Kirkwood; Debi Redding; Kelly Franklin

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

MINUTES – December, 2021: Tara Haley **motioned** to approve the December, 2021, general meeting minutes (there was no January meeting). Lorraine Keith seconded the motion; motion **approved unanimously** by the Council.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a) **Continuum of Care (CoC) Update – Point in Time Count:** Ms. Rodea said the CoC's primary focus is currently the Point in Time Count, which has been postponed and will be held on February 28, 2022. Ms. Rodea stated the results of the count will be presented at the CoC's annual meeting on April 13, 2022. Ms. Rodea said volunteers from CoC partner agencies will once again be assisting with the count.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a) **FY23 Independent Agency Funding:** Katrina Tanner, Contract Coordinator for Health & Human Services, reported she has been working with software engineers at eCivis to develop the application for fiscal year 2023. Ms. Tanner said the process will be slightly different this funding cycle as there will be two separate forms; one with preliminary questions and one for the primary application. Ms. Tanner said she is currently working on the community needs assessment so that needs and service gaps may be identified and she said she expects to have that electronic survey ready for circulation soon. Ms. Tanner said the application should be available by April 25th, if all goes according to schedule, and there will be an approximate 6 week submission deadline.

Discussion ensued with regard to the community needs assessment and Ms. Novak explained the 2017 Community Health Assessment and the 2018 – 2020 Community Health Improvement Plan conducted by the Department of Health and Flagler Hospital were based upon months of work and Covid has prevented similar efforts by those partners. Ms. Novak explained the current survey consists of 8 questions and it will be sent to the Public Affairs department for posting on social media and on the County's website. Ms. Novak said the survey will be streamlined and easy for users to navigate, with IP addresses tracked so that multiple surveys cannot be submitted by one computer. Ms. Tanner said she would share the results of the community survey with the Council. Dr. Haley suggested independent agencies encourage their clients to complete the survey by posting fliers. Lindsay Rodea said she would send results of a community needs assessment completed by the CoC in 2020, to Ms. Novak for consideration. Mr. Daly asked about funding and Ms. Novak stated that while it is early in the budget process, it is anticipated that the funding level will not change from last year.

- b) Good Samaritan Health Center/Wildflower Clinic Presentation:** Michelle Colee said Wildflower Clinic has been providing free medical and dental care in the community for 27 years. Ms. Colee stated volunteer health professionals provide quality, compassionate care, and health education through clinics and community outreach programs. Ms. Colee said Wildflower offers dental exams, extractions, fillings, dental hygiene, and dentures, by appointment, in their clinic. Ms. Colee said they also partner with Ascension/St. Vincent's HealthCare to provide a dental bus in the Hastings area one Friday per month. With regard to medical services, Ms. Colee said they take appointments three days per week and also offer walk-in services one night per week and on Saturday mornings. Ms. Colee said they offer referrals for chiropractic services, physical therapy, labs, and vision services, and they offer a cardiology clinic, women's health clinic, and smoking cessation classes. Additionally, Ms. Colee stated Wildflower partners with Flagler Plus Bus one day per week to offer mobile services throughout the county. Ms. Colee went over 2021 outcomes and stated 90% of respondents indicated their primary issue was addressed; 97% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with services received; and 97% of respondents indicated they would return in the future for care. Ms. Colee also talked about Wildflower's outreach programs and she said they offer specialty medical clinics such as breast cancer education, Covid vaccinations, flu vaccinations, and women's services. Ms. Colee said that Wildflower partners with many of the other non-profits in the area such as St. Francis House, Alpha Omega Miracle Home, Betty Griffin Center, and several others. Finally, Ms. Colee talked about the importance of volunteer engagement and she said Wildflower relies upon volunteer dentists, medical doctors, registered nurses, and dental hygienists. Ms. Colee said medical and dental professionals also see patients in their own offices pro-bono, as do specialty referral professionals. Ms. Colee said there were a total of 5,417 volunteer hours at Wildflower in 2021, and 100% of their volunteers strongly agreed that their volunteer work had a positive impact on the community and that they were respected and appreciated for their service.
- c) Member Attendance/Quorum:** Mary Garcia explained staff at the County Commission office has been in touch with Kim Elmore regarding her lack of response to emails and her lack of attendance at general meetings. Ms. Garcia stated Ms. Elmore expressed her reluctance to attend meetings in person, though it was explained that Zoom attendance cannot be counted toward physical quorum by order of the governor. Ms. Garcia explained today's meeting

would be Ms. Elmore's third missed meeting in a row and a request could now be made to the County Commissioners that Ms. Elmore's term be ended and the resulting vacancy be posted. There was a very brief discussion and Dr. Haley noted there have been some issues with quorum recently. Chair Daley asked for a motion and Lorraine Keith **motioned** to recommend the removal of Kim Elmore from the Health & Human Services Advisory Council. Shannon Nazworth seconded the motion; motion **approved unanimously** by the Council.

There was follow up discussion with regard to reversing the dates the executive and general meetings are held, which was proposed by Council members at an earlier meeting and is allowed under the Council's bylaws. The decision was made to hold the next executive meeting on March 17th, in preparation for the next general meeting, which would occur on April 7th.

REPORT FROM SARAH TAYLOR, ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR: Sarah Taylor sent her regrets but Shawna Novak provided an update on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding workshop which she advised will be held at Health & Human Services on February 22nd and she said it is expected to be very well attended. Ms. Novak stated County staff will provide an overview of ARPA and solicit input thru this workshop to help prioritize impacted areas. Ms. Novak said St. Johns County is expected to receive \$51.3 million and it must be spent by December 31, 2026.

FUNDED AGENCY UPDATES:

Alpha Omega Miracle Home: Bridget Varnadoe advised there were no new updates.

Council on Aging (COA): Sharon Gesek advised all senior centers are open but not at full capacity. Ms. Gesek said COA currently has waiting lists on independent living services, such as Meals on Wheels and in-home care, as they have been in such high demand. Ms. Gesek said COA is fortunate enough to be fully staffed with the exception of a few transportation workers.

Epic Behavioral Healthcare: Patti Greenough reported that although Epic still has 30 open positions they are seeing more applicants and more follow through on interviews. Ms. Greenough said the JET program is back in the jail providing services and they've just recently received word that groups can begin to meet in person again. Ms. Greenough said relapse was becoming an issue for those in abuse disorder programs and the support of in-person groups should help to alleviate that problem. Ms. Greenough went on to say that the expansion of in-patient residential and detox units is planned for March 1st. Ms. Greenough said Epic has partnered with CareConnect and St. Johns County Sheriff's Office on a joint responder group. Ms. Greenough said a peer support specialist and care coordinator have been hired and will be seeing people in protective custody in the jail under a substance use arrest. Ms. Greenough said these individuals will be encouraged to come into care and follow up will be provided once they are released from the jail. Finally, Ms. Greenough reported their administrative office space has been sold and they will be relocating to two suites on Lewis Speedway within the week.

Good Samaritan/Wildflower Clinic: Ms. Collee had nothing additional to report.

St. Augustine Youth Services (SAYS): No representative in attendance.

Betty Griffin Center (BGC): Kelly Franklin reported she and several other administrative staff members are positive for Covid. Ms. Franklin stated BGC is fully operational but is experiencing staffing shortages.

Early Learning Coalition (ELC): Dawn Bell advised nothing new to report other than continued challenges in hiring staff for child care centers.

Emergency Services & Homeless Coalition (ESHC): Debi Redding reported ESHC will be holding a fund raiser on 3/19 in the form of an all you can eat oyster roast. Ms. Redding noted the particulars will be posted on their Facebook page and tickets available on EventBrite. Ms. Redding went on to say they have received a grant to renovate nine of their 100 year old homes over a two year period. Ms. Redding said they have also had approval to demolish a very old building and they plan to rebuild on that site and move their administrative offices there, freeing up another home for a family. Ms. Redding said they also plan to build additional homes on 1.6 acres and they are currently working on a master site plan. Finally, Ms. Redding reported ESHC recently received approximately \$35,000 in past rent from Our Florida.

St. Francis House (SFH): Judi Dembowski reported some recent outcomes and she also shared news of their recent partnership with Drug Court and Veterans Court. Ms. Dembowski said individuals going through these programs were having a hard time finding housing and thus violating court order. Ms. Dembowski said SFH staff take referrals from the courts and work with these individuals on housing plans. Ms. Dembowski also said SFH has applied for CDBG Small Cities funding through the City of St. Augustine and she is hopeful they will be awarded this grant to rebuild the shelter which will increase capacity by 39 beds.

St. Johns Housing Partnership (SJHP): Kelsey Wainwright reported there has been a considerable increase in foreclosures and that trend is expected to continue. Ms. Wainwright stated there has also been a rise in phone calls to SJHP from individuals and families literally en route to the area seeking assistance with housing in St. Johns County and Section 8 vouchers.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

Homeless Advocacy Council: No representative in attendance.

SMA Healthcare: Sandi Jackson reported SMA is in their new building at 1880 San Sebastian View, which keeps them in close proximity to the courthouse, Health & Human Services, and the Sheriff's Office. Ms. Jackson stated all of their programs are up and running with the exception of the Drop-In Center, which was located on SR16. Ms. Jackson said there have been some issues with the cost of rent and construction on this building. Ms. Jackson did say that some of the clients from this program are being seen at their new building while a decision is being made with regard to this program and its location.

Flagler Health +: Lindsey Rodea stated Care Connect staff are back in the office but working hybrid shifts with staff splitting the days of the week they are on-site. Ms. Rodea also stated Patriot Place, a project in partnership with St. Johns Housing Partnership, should be completed in the spring of this year. Ms. Rodea said Patriot Place will be a six-unit complex for at-risk veterans who already live in St. Johns County.

Health & Human Services Department (HHS): Shawna Novak reported eHeap funding is available through the Social Services department for those 60 years or older who need help with utility bills. Ms. Novak reported that HHS leadership recently met with the developers of the San Marcos Heights rental community and she said she can confirm that tenant based rental assistance will not be available. Ms. Novak went on to say it is anticipated that the first building, which consists of 24 units, is slated to be complete by April 1st, and the website for this property is active and applications are available. Finally, Ms. Novak reported HHS is partnering with Care Connect and the Amphitheater to present the Brave Summit, which will be held on March 30th. Ms. Novak said the Summit aims to open a dialogue with teens to address the stigma associated with mental health and encourage them to learn about how to foster mental wellness. Discussion ensued with regard to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and Ms. Novak said she submitted a list of suggestions on behalf of HHS last year and she stated the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee recently sent a letter suggesting several projects

be funded. Joseph Cone stated there is an online survey regarding the funding on the County's website.

Shannon Nazworth asked if there was news from the legislative session and Ms. Novak stated there are some child welfare bills pertaining to funding. Ms. Novak said the House has proposed \$127 million for child welfare which would provide all Community Based Care (CBC) agencies with 100% of necessary funding. Ms. Novak said there is some disparity in the amount of funding allocated to CBCs across the state. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Nazworth provided an update on Ability Housing's upcoming projects. Ms. Nazworth said they are engaging with a potential partner that proposes constructing a free pre-school on a project in Orlando and possibly in West Augustine.

Faith Based Community: No representative in attendance.

Public Safety: No representative in attendance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Executive Meeting: Thursday, March 17th at 3:30 p.m. at the St. Johns County Health and Human Services Center, via conference line 904-209-6136. .

Regular Meeting: Thursday, April 7th at 4:00 p.m. at the St. Johns County Health & Human Services Center, Kingfisher Conference Room, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, FL 32084.

ADJOURNMENT - Meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m.