

**ST. JOHNS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL (HHSAC)**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
February 2, 2023

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tara Haley, Chair (attendance via Zoom); Charles Daly, Vice Chair; Kathleen Patneau; Howard Hitzel; Shannon Nazworth

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None (one vacancy)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Shawna Novak, Director, Health & Human Services; Tracy Dillon, Manager, Social Services; Katrina Tanner, Contract Coordinator, Social Services; Mary Garcia, Administrative Coordinator, Social Services

**BCC LIASON:** Commissioner Krista Joseph  
Sarah Taylor – Assistant County Administrator

**VISITORS:** In Person – Anita Daniel; Shane Lockwood; Chynequa King; Gary Bailey; Sara Rutan;  
Via Zoom – Austin Burns; Rebecca Sinclair; Michael Hartman; Brian Robinson; Patti Greenough; Sandi Jackson; Judi Dembowski; Paige Stanton; Emma Hayes

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:** Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. Quorum was present.

**MINUTES – January, 2023:** Howard Hitzel **motioned** to approve the January, 2023, general meeting minutes. Shannon Nazworth seconded the motion; minutes **approved unanimously** by the Council.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**REPORT FROM COMMISSIONER JOSEPH:** Commissioner Krista Joseph reported she had a chance to tour Council on Aging’s River House facility in downtown St. Augustine and she said she was very impressed, especially with the fact that it can be used to generate revenue through rentals for weddings and other events. Ms. Joseph stated she is very interested in becoming familiar with the community’s different partnerships and she looks forward to learning more about the many non-profit organizations.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- a) **Continuum of Care (CoC) Update:** Anita Daniel stated the Point in Time (PIT) Count ends on February 2<sup>nd</sup> at midnight and she said it has been very successful. Ms. Daniel stated a community breakfast was held at the main library branch and free sandwiches, coffee, and donuts were offered and this brought the homeless to this central location for the purpose of the PIT Count. Ms. Daniel said results will be shared at the CoC annual meeting on April 12<sup>th</sup>.
- b) **Update from San Marcos Heights & Victoria Crossing Multi-Family Developments:** Michael Hartman, Turnstone Development, reported Victoria Crossing is 76% complete as of January 31<sup>st</sup>, and they expect to release 24 units for occupancy in May, with the remaining 72 units becoming available in June. Mr. Hartman said the pre-application list includes more than 500 names and they are contacting those individuals to ask them to come in to the office in order to

fill out an application. Mr. Hartman said their goal is to have all 96 units fully qualified before construction is completed, which will allow tenants to move in as soon as Certificates of Occupancy are issued. Gary Bailey, with SPM, the property management company for San Marcos Heights, reported they have been working to resolve some issues surrounding a lack of understanding by applicants of the eligibility requirements. Mr. Bailey said they have been providing information at community meetings on the tax credit program in order to educate the public and community groups and partners. Mr. Bailey also said a new manager has been hired and she has experience with the tax credit program.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a) **Epic Behavioral Healthcare – JET Program – Rebecca Sinclair:** Ms. Sinclair explained the program is a collaborative effort with the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office and is designed to assist high utilizers of the criminal justice system with making a smooth transition out of jail and into the community. Ms. Sinclair stated the program is voluntary and provides mental health and/or substance abuse treatment and care coordination of services at no cost to incarcerated/recently released individuals in order to aid their recovery and reduce recidivism. Ms. Sinclair said access to psychiatry, medicated assisted treatment, outpatient substance abuse groups, and residential treatment and detox is coordinated through the JET clinician in collaboration with care coordination. Ms. Sinclair stated staff have observed an increase in engagement levels with clients that participate in clinical services. Ms. Sinclair went over the outcomes expected in the three year JET grant program and she said a 50% reduction in the total number of arrests among program participants within the one-year period following program discharge as compared to the one year period prior to Program admission is expected. Ms. Sinclair said it's also expected that 70% of the participants not residing in stable housing at Program admission will reside in stable housing within 90 days of admission. Ms. Sinclair continued to review expected outcomes and also went on to explain staffing and community partnerships. Ms. Sinclair said clients are on-boarded by referral process and also by brief assessment, with a follow up by a more in-depth assessment by a JET Transition Specialist. Ms. Sinclair talked about the importance of stable housing and stated partnerships have been formed with sober living facilities and with St. Francis House. Finally, Ms. Sinclair provided statistics, stating there have been a total of 188 participants to date; 142 individuals have been discharged in 12 months or less; 73 of those discharges were successful; 14 returned to incarceration; 12 moved out of jurisdiction; and the remaining 38 cases were closed for change in providers or disengagement in services. Ms. Sinclair stated overall recidivism percentage from the start of the program is 17%, compared to 58.6% of program participants who had been arrested at least once in the year prior to their arrest that brought them to the program. Commissioner Joseph asked what the cost per participant was for the last program year and Ms. Greenough said that information is not readily available but she would send it to Ms. Joseph once calculated. Ms. Greenough stated Epic has been granted funding by LSF in order to expand the JET program to the Flagler County jail.
- b) **Recommendations – Two Vacancies:** Charles Daly explained there are currently two vacancies on the Council – a “human service professional” and a member “at large”. All applications were provided to Council members in advance of this meeting and after general discussion, Howard Hitzel **motioned** to recommend Shannon Nazworth to serve another term as an at-large member;

there were no other nominations. Kathleen Patneau seconded the motion; recommendation **approved unanimously** by the Council.

There was further discussion with regard to candidates for the human service professional vacancy. Howard Hitzel **motioned** to recommend Leslie Barstow for this position; there were no other nominations. Kathleen Patneau seconded the motion; recommendation **approved unanimously** by the Council

**REPORT FROM SARAH TAYLOR, ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR:** Sarah Taylor did not have anything to report on behalf of County Administration at this time.

**FUNDED AGENCY UPDATES:**

**Early Learning Coalition (ELC):** Teresa Matheny was in attendance but had no new updates.

**Council on Aging (COA):** Brian Robinson said they are planning for a feasibility study in order to determine how much money might be raised in order to enter into a multi-million dollar capital campaign for renovations and other projects.

**Epic Behavioral Healthcare:** Patti Greenough reported they received the SAMHSA grant to expand the drug court program, which is in the 4<sup>th</sup> month of the five year grant. Ms. Greenough said they started their intensive outpatient treatment program last week, which was a cornerstone of the funding received.

**Good Samaritan/Wildflower Clinic:** Chynequa King reported they currently have a new position open for a community health advocate and this individual will coordinate care and connect patients to services. Ms. King stated they have also applied for a grant for a point-of-care lab and this would offer real time results and treatment for patients.

**St. Augustine Youth Services (SAYS):** Emma Hayes said they've been able to add therapist and case manager positions and they plan to make offers to prospective employees in the near future. Ms. Hayes said they completed 53 assessments in January with a continued 80% diversion rate of Baker Acts.

**Betty Griffin Center (BGC):** Kelly Franklin reported they are still experiencing staffing issues and she asked that anyone interested in being an overnight advocate contact them. Ms. Franklin stated 30 hours of domestic violence training and 30 hours of sexual assault training is necessary to work as an overnight advocate and will be provided.

**Emergency Services & Homeless Coalition (ESHC):** Betty Rehrer reported renovations continue on their older homes with just three left to be completed.

**St. Francis House (SFH):** Judi Dembowski said they have seen a rise in families seeking shelter over the past 6 weeks or so. Ms. Dembowski reported they held an open house at Port in the Storm for at risk youth and she said it was very successful. Ms. Dembowski went on to say a tour is planned at First Coast Technical next week for youth interested in aeronautics and she said they also hope to arrange a tour of Northrup Grumman.

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS:**

**Homeless Advocacy Council:** No representative in attendance.

**SMA Healthcare:** Sandi Jackson stated SMA is going to merge their St. Johns and Putnam offices. Ms. Jackson stated there won't be a significant change but she said Nancy Russo will be named Vice President and she will now be Regional Director and they will pool their resources to work on larger projects and expand services for both counties.

**Department of Health:** Shane Lockwood reported there has been an increase of approximately 100 families getting involved with the WIC program over the past six months and he said he would provide Ms. Novak with more information in that regard. Mr. Lockwood also reported the DOH is part of a state-wide program to get Narcan out into the community and he said while it cannot be distributed to an organization, it can be provided directly to the public at outreach events.

**Flagler Health +:** Paige Stanton reported Flagler Health + and UF Health, the University of Florida's academic health center, have entered into an exclusive, non-binding letter of intent. Ms. Stanton said a formal due diligence period to fully determine the details of a final agreement will take place and she will have more details to report in the future.

**Health & Human Services Department (HHS):** Shawna Novak reported an item will go before the Board of County Commissioners on February 7<sup>th</sup> with regard to a contract amendment that will provide additional funding to the County's Community Based Care program to initiate a fatherhood engagement program. Ms. Novak reported she will be travelling to Tampa in mid-February to attend the Florida Association of County Human Service Administrators bi-annual meeting as secretary of their executive board. Ms. Novak said that Shannon Nazworth will be on a panel for discussion on the subject of affordable housing. Finally, Ms. Novak stated the BCC asked staff to research the structure and organization of Florida PHAs and that this information was presented at the January 17<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting. Ms. Novak stated that while this was an informational only item and did not require action, the BCC voted not to further pursue the formation of a PHA within St. Johns County at this time, for various reasons.

**Faith Based Community:** No representative in attendance.

**Public Safety:** No representative in attendance.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Executive Meeting:** Thursday, February 16, at 3:30 p.m., in the Kingfisher conference room, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, FL 32084

**Regular Meeting:** Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 4pm, in the Kingfisher conference room, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, FL 32084 and by Zoom

**ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.