

ST. JOHNS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL (HHSAC)
MEETING MINUTES
September 4th, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tara Haley, Chair; Howard Hitzel, Vice Chair; Deanna Jones; Shannon Nazworth; Chip Cover; Kathleen Patneau; Leslie Barstow

STAFF PRESENT: Shawna Novak, HHS Director (virtual); Joe Cone, HHS Asst. Director; Juliette Maronel, HHS Admin Coordinator; Katrina Tanner, HHS Contract Coordinator; Tracy Dillon, Social Services Manager

VISITORS: Marion Bluhm
Virtual- Nangy Pulsfus, Chynequa King, Sara Rutan, Kelly Franklin, Brian Robinson, Valeria Duquette, Sandra Jackson, Sandra Jackson, Judy Dembrowski, Valerie Duquette, Anita Daniel, Taylor Hodges, Tara Wildes, Sara Vanik, Nancy Russo, April Florida, Lori Vogel, Maria Pagan, Paige Stanton

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: Tara Haley called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Quorum was present.

MINUTES: Tara opened the floor for a motion to approve the meeting minutes for August 7th and August 21st. Chip motioned to approve the minutes with minor edits, including correcting one spelling error and adding last names for three individuals. Howard seconded the motion. The Council unanimously approved the minutes with those changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Tara Haley opened the floor for public comment, but there were no remarks. She announced that Florida State College at Jacksonville (FSCJ) will host its 5th Annual Community Wellness Summit on Friday, October 24th, from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM at the downtown campus, Building A. Flyers were distributed, and participants were encouraged to attend and share the event details.

REPORT FROM COMMISSIONER ARNOLD: Commissioner Sarah Arnold was not present.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Continuum of Care (CoC) Update: Anita Daniel reported the team remains in a holding pattern as they await the release of subcontracted service provider contracts from their legal department. They are also anticipating HUD's upcoming Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), which will inform them of their next steps of planning.
2. The Strategic Plan, GAP Analysis, and Impact Report are nearing completion. These documents will be shared once finalized. The team is available to address any questions and will use these materials to guide their initiatives over the coming year.
3. Preparations are underway for the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) count. The team is actively preparing and looking forward to upcoming developments. Regular updates will be provided during monthly meetings.

NEW BUSINESS: The Funding Recommendation Letter to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) was signed by Tara Haley, Chair. The submission remains contingent on any final adjustments to the FY26 budget.

Health & Human Services/County Administration Update- Shawna Novak, Director, HHS

- Shawna shared highlights from the first public budget meeting held on 9/3/25. The proposed partial rollback was approved, resulting in approximately \$3 million in tax savings. She spoke with the Office of Management and Budget earlier in the day regarding Independent Agency (IA) funding and noted that things appear stable for now. The recommendation letter may proceed with signature, but the council should be prepared to reconvene on October 2 to discuss alternative funding options if reductions are requested.

- An updated community needs assessment is currently underway, the first since 2010. Through the RFP process, Syra Health was selected as the provider and has initiated weekly planning discussions.
- A steering committee is currently being formed to guide the assessment process. While the council previously served in this role, it was agreed that full council participation is not required this time. Shawna proposed appointing one council representative to join the committee alongside herself, Tracy Dillon (SJC Social Services), Paige Stanton (Care Connect), and Paul Grecco (United Way), with virtual participation. The committee will support the development of focus group questions and review surveys intended for nonprofits and the public. Public Affairs will be engaged to help maximize community response. Leslie Barstow volunteered to serve as the council's representative.
- The Community Baby Shower, in partnership with the Department of Health (DOH), is scheduled for Saturday, September 13 at the Solomon Calhoun Center. Plans are underway to host these events more than once a year, with a potential second event in April to align with Child Abuse Prevention Month. The baby shower will feature educational workshops, including topics such as safe sleep practices—a valuable opportunity for community outreach and education.
- November is National Adoption Month. FIP is planning an Adoption Day celebration and hopes to issue a formal proclamation in recognition of the occasion.

Funded Agency Updates: Currently there are no updates due to the blackout period.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

SMA Healthcare: Sandra Jackson didn't have any current updates.

Department of Health: Shane Lockwood was unable to attend.

UF Health St. Johns: Paige Stanton shared that the hospital is actively progressing through the EPIC system transition. Care Connect's mobile outreach clinic is expanding in September/October, with plans to add 12 additional clinics per month. Those interested in partnering or hosting services are encouraged to contact Paige Stanton, Kayla, or Michael Arnold. To view the mobile clinic schedules and locations, visit the Care Connect website, navigate to the "Programs" tab, and select "Mobile Outreach Clinic" for the monthly calendar. Narcan dispensers have been installed at both the Whetstone office and the mobile outreach clinic.

Public Safety: Director Wildes reported ongoing efforts to hire a second co-responder team member in October, contingent upon budget approval. Funding from LSF is being allocated for one-time equipment purchases and software costs to support the team's expansion. The co-responder team remains active and currently includes an intern who is participating in ride-alongs and may transition into a clinician role upon completing their program. Ride-alongs are also being coordinated with University of Central Florida students in sociology-related fields, with the goal of integrating them into the co-responder model and connecting them to residents in need of mental health and substance abuse support. The team is strengthening ties with the Seniors Against Crime group, facilitating interventions for individuals who engage with or are referred by the group and may benefit from additional services.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The next General Meeting is scheduled for October 2nd, 2025, at 4:00 PM at the Health & Human Services Center, Kingfisher Conference Room, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, FL 32084, and via Microsoft Teams.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned at 4:21pm