

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
1 Executive Drive, Morris Plains
March 26, 2019 Minutes

I. Call to Order: The meeting opened at 5:17 p.m. by Mr. Ken Oexle.

Members Present:

Robert Armstrong, HIV/AIDS Advisory Liaison
Jeff Bashe, Citizen Representative, CoC Liaison
David Johnston, Deidra O'Brien Child Adv. Ctr.
Joanne McEniry, New Jersey AIDS Services
Kenneth Oexle, Citizen Representative
Joseph Pawelczyk, Citizen Representative
Tom Pepe, Citizen Representative, Chair
Michelle Roers, United Way of NNJ
Rebecca Sherrod, Child & Family Resources
Jane Shivas, Project Self Sufficiency

Also Attending:

Donna Buchanan, MSW Workforce Development Board
Kathy DeFillippo, MC Freeholder
Wesley Gaynor, Homeless Solutions
Kathy Goldberg, Morris View Health Care Center
Danielle Pera, MHAEM
Nadine Venezia, MHAEM

Staff in Attendance:

Laurie Becker, MCDHS
Shelia Carter, MCDHS
Gary Denamen, Deputy Director, MCDHS
Pat Mocariski, MCDHS
Luis Tamayo, NJDHS

II. Welcome and Introductions

All were welcomed and introductions made.

III. Approval of February 26 Minutes

Motion to approve the February 26 minutes made by Mr. Dave Johnston and seconded by Ms. Jane Shivas. All were in favor with no opposition and four abstentions. Motion carried.

IV. Morris View – Ms. Kathy Goldberg, Admissions Director

Morris View brochures were distributed. In response to questions from the last board meeting:

- Is Morris View accepting people from outside of Morris County?

- Priority is given to Morris County residents. They are not being denied. People who are non-residents of Morris County are being accepted at the expense of the other county.
- Are those with Medicaid pending applications not being admitted?
 - People with Medicaid pending applications will be accepted as long as they provide bank statements and financial criteria.
 - This may take 3 – 9 months.
- How has the transition been?
 - In the beginning it was bumpy. They reached a year in November and now there is stability and no turnover.
 - They have 268 patients and some beds available. They are looking to expand and use the third floor.

Mr. Pepe thanked Ms. Goldberg for coming to speak with the board.

V. Presentation – Safe Haven Transition to Permanent Housing – Mr. Wesley Gaynor, Homeless Solutions; Ms. Danielle Pera and Ms. Nadine Venezia, Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris County

Since 1995, Homeless Solutions, Inc. (HSI) has partnered with the Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris (MHAEM), to address the long-term housing and service needs of county residents who are chronically homeless and mentally ill. The Safe Haven Program is staffed 24-hours a day, 7 days a week and provides shelter to 20 homeless individuals in a safe and secure environment. All guests receive dual case management and have a program length stay of up to 18 months. HSI and MHAEM actively collaborate with guests to expedite their transition into housing.

Federal funding sources under Continuum of Care funding are migrating to permanent supportive housing programs. This migration has resulted in a loss of hundreds of thousands for Safe Haven Programs. The last of which, remained in Morris County. This has forced Homeless Solutions and MHAEM to adjust service provisions and effective July 2019, the Safe Haven Model will be transitioning to a permanent supportive housing model. The transition will occur in two phases. Ten people, prioritized by their chronic homelessness, will be provided permanent supportive housing vouchers. Eventually, the plan is for the remaining ten to transition.

Mr. Bashe stated the reason for this is that HUD wants to fund permanent and rapid rehousing program models. All counties are changing to this model. HUD does not want to pay for support services. With this change, it is likely that these providers may be looking to the county for Grant in Aid funding. Mr. Johnston said since we are the last county with a Safe Haven Emergency Shelter Program, perhaps we can look to other counties to learn how they are addressing these gaps.

Ms. Pera stated there will probably be longer waiting times for shelters since there are less places for people to go. Morris does not have many shelters. Some counties have more shelters but do not have places like Homeless Solutions.

Ms. Pera said that through the Coordinated Entry there are 195 people on the shelter waiting list. There are 50 reporting mental illness and may be another 10% with mental illness.

There is a big issue in Morris County with the fair market rate. It is very hard to find housing. Although places farther out in the county are less expensive transportation and travel costs are expensive. Further discussion ensued about the many homeless and the housing crisis in Morris County. Ms. Becker said this is a conversation the CoC Executive Committee is having and they are looking at alternatives. This will also be a part of the Advisory Leadership group discussion.

VI. New Jersey Department of Human Services – Mr. Luis Tamayo

Governor Murphy gave the budget address on March 5. The Commissioner had a phone conversation with stakeholders and reviewed the DHS budget. It seems to be in line with the goals of the department. The Governor has additional funds to combat the opioid epidemic and to provide critical resources to allow individuals with both developmental disabilities and mental health challenges to thrive in the community. There is a surplus of \$1.2 billion. Will see how it all works out. This surplus includes the marijuana taxes. For now, all will have to be on hold since the bill is tabled.

The Human Services Directors met on the March 8. The fiscal person was there and went through the budget. They got feedback on items that people want changed and have been advocating about.

Mr. Tamayo said that at the Directors meeting there was a request for each HSAC to do a needs assessment. This would include having focus groups to find out what gaps there are in each county. Some counties are involved but Morris has not yet been. Human Services Advisory Councils get funding from the Division of Children and Families. They are now organizing this effort. He will send Ms. Carter further information.

Division of Child Protection and Permanency – No Report

**VII. New Jersey Department of Children and Families – No Report
Division of Child Protection and Permanency – No Report**

VIII. Staff Reports

Ms. Laurie Becker –

At the April 24 Freeholder session an updated report will be given on our Stigma Free work. Three Stigma Free Ambassadors will be recognized.

The annual Consumer and Family Forum will be on June 18 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Morris County Arboretum. Recovery stories will be told and the Terry Belske award given out. This award is for a long time consumer advocate that deserves recognition. We are hoping Freeholder DeFillippo will be there and give the opening remarks.

Ms. Shelia Carter –

They are getting closer to the 2019 Point in Time summary. They are de-duplicating information and hope to have a report soon.

Reminder that nonprofits can go to the Human Services website and there is a portal to nonprofit events. Go to the top of the page <https://hs.morriscountynj.gov/non-profit/> and click nonprofit events and event information can be posted.

IX. Subcommittee Reports

Planning – Child Care (Voucher System Update) – Ms. Rebecca Sherrod

- There is no waiting list for childcare subsidies. All eligible applicants are being served and they receive approximately 20+ new applications a week.
- There are currently not any openings at any dedicated voucher centers.
- The following centers are centers that have Dedicated Voucher Spots throughout Morris County:

Dover Child Care – 50 North Morris Street, Dover NJ 973-366-0277

Early Years – 52 Cooper Road, Denville NJ 973-328-4011

El Primer Paso – 29 Segur Street, Dover NJ 973-361-0880

Flanders Valley Country Day – 6 Bartley Chester Rd, Flanders NJ 973-252-9696

F.M. Kirby Center – 54 East Street, Madison NJ 973-377-4945

Jefferson Child Care– Nolan’s Point Road, Lake Hopatcong NJ 973-663-2704

Little Learner Academy – 30 Old Budd Lake Road, Budd Lake NJ 973-691-9430

Little Learner Academy – 89 Route 46 East, Denville, NJ 973-625-2800

Little Learner Academy – 25 Green Pond Road, Suite 2, Rockaway NJ 973-983-0600

Mt. Olive Child Care – 150 Wolfe Road, Budd Lake NJ 973-426-1525

Neighborhood House – 12 Flagler Street, Morristown NJ 973-538-1229

Parsippany Child Day Care – 300 Baldwin Road, Parsippany NJ 973-334-7286

Roxbury Day Care – 25 Righter Road, Succasunna NJ 973-584-3030

Salvation Army – 95 Spring Street, Morristown NJ 973-539-0543

The Magic Garden – 113 Fern Avenue, Wharton NJ 973-361-4167

These centers hold 350 dedicated voucher spots cumulatively.

There are also three different grant opportunities for childcare centers through Division of Family Development as well CDA Scholarships for teachers that work at a childcare center accepting subsidy/child care assistance.

X. Employment & Training Services (ETS) – Ms. Donna Buchanan

Ms. Donna Buchanan, Workforce Development Board, provided an organizational overview of Morris/Sussex/Warren Employment and Training Services (ETS) and the populations supported by this MC DHS Division. In addition to training and employment support provided to dislocated, low income and youth residents, ETS also provides case management and employment services support to Morris County residents receiving

public assistance (GA, TANF and SNAP) through New Jersey's welfare reform program, Work First New Jersey (WFNJ). All individuals deemed employable by OTA are referred to ETS and assigned to WFNJ work activities.

The goal of the WFNJ program is to assist individuals and couples in getting off public assistance, secure employment and become self-sufficient through job training, education and state required work activities. Those activities include; 1) a 30-day work readiness training facilitated by ETS covering resume development, interviewing techniques, job search practices; 2) assignment to the Community Work Experience Program (CWEP), a non-paid work experience at a not-for-profit or governmental agency. This assignment exposes participants to work environments to enrich their time management, communication and networking skills. Lastly, work-ready clients may be approved for occupational or vocational training with an ETS approved training vendor.

Ms. Buchanan also reported a NJDOE and NJDOL approved Bridge Program, led by Entrepreneurial U, LLC is being launched on Morristown on Monday, April 1. The program will initially take four work ready, upwardly mobile WFNJ participants, currently receiving public assistance and experiencing significant challenges to re-entering the workforce, and provide one-on-one intensive instruction and guidance on creative approaches to their career interests and job search methods. Lack of confidence is a major roadblock to work re-entry for this population. The training facilitator will also expose these participants to potential employers having a need for the skill set/transferrable skills they possess.

Ms. Buchanan also reported that ETS is sponsoring free ESL training at 1 Medical Drive, Morris Plains location. Call (973) 829-8115 for an appointment and further information.

Morris, Sussex, Warren (MSW) HIV/AIDS Advisory – Mr. Armstrong

There have been no meetings since the last meeting. The next meeting will be on April 16.

As discussed earlier in the meeting the Safe Have Program is being phased out. New Jersey AIDS Services has had a parallel experience since closing their transitional housing program at the Eric Johnson House. Clients changed over to permanent housing with support services.

In the beginning of April is the annual AIDS Watch and many go to Washington D.C. for advocacy. Some Morris County residents will be going to meet personally with representatives in the Washington, DC offices. Last year's local AIDS watch was held on the Morristown Green but this year it will be held at Greystone Park on Sunday, May 5.

Mental Health Addictions Services Advisory Board – Ms. Becker

- Bob Davison, Mental Health Association, requested that the MHASAB advocate for the legislature to take a good look at Greystone and the pending lawsuit. It is a class action suit, dated December 17, 2018, against the State of New Jersey for what is described as inhumane conditions at Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital.

He suggested the board put together a letter and send it to the legislators. The letter will address the need to improve the quality of life for thousands of residents impacted by Greystone Hospital. This hospital serves New Jersey residents statewide including approximately 20% of Morris County residents. There are many disturbing allegations in the lawsuit that appear to be substantiated. The allegations cite inadequate staffing, overcrowding, ineffective safety and security measures, lack of life saving medical equipment and questionable record keeping.

The letter was drafted. A subcommittee will work with Ms. Becker to edit and complete. The board voted to empower the subcommittee to send out the letter on their behalf.

- Hope One received an additional \$150,000 from DMHAS for NARCAN, the Hope One vehicle and service dollars. The program has greatly expanded. The Hope One model is being duplicated by other counties.

It was a good year since there was additional funding that came into the county to help fund various services.

Council on Aging, Disabilities & Veterans – Ms. Rosario

Guest Speaker- Sheriff Gannon

Sheriff Gannon philosophy is that law enforcement has a duty to act as guardians. He highlighted his program started by his office to combat the opioid pandemic. The Hope One mobile substance abuse recovery vehicle-retrofitted from a defunct SWAT truck, celebrating its second anniversary April 3. It brings critical recovery services and resources to the people.

The success of Hope One led to the creation in 2017 of the Hope wing at the Morris County Correctional Facility. There, inmates committed to overcoming alcohol or drug addiction confront their struggle through daily programs like relapse prevention, anger management counseling, education, spiritually, family and relationship connections and peer-to-peer counseling.

Youth Services Advisory Committee – Ms. Mondino

There were no presentations and no action items.

State Reports:

- Jenna Williams reported that there is an RFP out for short-term stabilization and assessment programs. This is for 2 – 5 bed programs. Proposals are due by May 1. More information can be found at <https://nj.gov/dcf/>

General Announcements:

- Dave Johnston from Deidre's House gave out fliers for their annual Wine and Whiskey Tasting Fundraiser, which will be on April 5 at 6:00 p.m.

- Laura Riley from Daytop announced that all Daytop Outpatient facilities are now accepting Medicaid.

XI. Continuum of Care

Ms. Carter said there will be a Continuum of Care Executive Committee meeting 10:00 a.m. Thursday morning at 1 Medical Drive, in Morris Plains.

XII. Old Business – None

XIII. New Business

Ms. Roers stated there are unintended consequences of increasing the minimum wage. She has been hearing this is putting a lot of strain on businesses.

Many of the teaching staff at childcare centers are making minimum wage. There is a push to drive childcare centers to improve quality. Some childcare centers are raising rates. United Way surveyed 50 childcare centers and the vast majority are very concerned about this.

Bigger centers are looking at how this will affect their budget and they will probably have to increase rates. There was discussion that some centers may take away staff benefits since they will no longer be able to afford them.

Ms. Roers passed out letter from United Way to the Commissioner of Education, Dr. Repollet thanking them for their unwavering commitment to early childhood education. They commend the Dept. of Education for recent funding awards for Public Preschool Expansion knowing more children across New Jersey will have access to full day quality preschool.

The letter also stated that based on discussions with school districts and providers, they are aware that several districts did not apply for the recent funding, or significantly, limited their application solely based on not meeting the space requirements. United Way respectfully requested this requirement be lessened or the waiver option be reinstated for the anticipated next phase of the public preschool expansion.

XIV. Public Comment

Ms. Roers distributed the ALICE report. ALICE is an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. What the data reveals is that New Jersey ranks 38 in the county with 38.5 percent of households unable to afford basic necessities. See the report distributed or for more information go to <https://UnitedWayALICE.org> for more information.

Ms. Roers also distributed fliers for Strolling Thunder. Join in for the Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) rally for babies on May 30, 11:00 a.m., at the State House in Trenton. Let state leaders know the future begins with babies. RSVP today at <https://acnj.org>.

Also distributed were fliers on Youth Mental Health First Aid Training for educators, parents and youth workers. Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers and school staff how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who may be experiencing a mental health crisis or challenge with addictions. This training will be on April 13 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at New Bridge Services Drop In center in Parsippany. RSVP to STEPHANIE.SAMUEL@UNITEDWAYNNJ.ORG

Mr. Johnston reported that Deidre O'Brien received a \$370,000 grant for services from DCF.

Mr. Pawelczyk said with the new cannabis regulations he wonders what resources will be needed in this county. We should do some homework and figure how we will address these needs. Perhaps there are lessons learned from other counties. Ms. Becker said about a year ago the board put together a position paper on this but no response was received.

Mr. Johnston said we might be looking at decriminalization for parents. There is concern that parents may be getting high while taking care of their kids. There may be a lot more referrals to DYFS. Believe we need to prepare for an increase in treatment dollars. Mr. Bashe said the local community seems to agree we should put something together. There is a lot of work that needs to be done. Further discussion ensued.

Mr. Gary Denamen announced that the new Human Services Director, Sharon Yoo, Esquire, will start her new position on May 6.

XV. Adjournment

Mr. Ken Oexle made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 p.m. Motion seconded by Ms. Rebekka Sherrod. Meeting adjourned.