

COUNTY OF MORRIS
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES
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HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL (HSAC)
Tuesday, January 28, 2025, Hybrid Meeting
Meeting Minutes

I. Called to Order, Welcome, and Introductions

Ms. Hess, HSAC Coordinator, called the meeting to order at 5:19 pm. Ms. Hess turned the meeting over to Ms. Errico for an announcement.

Ms. Errico announced a change in the organizational structure of the Advisory Committee on Women. She warmly welcomed Ms. Bennett-Santoro (not present), Ms. Muller, and Ms. Ugalde, who have joined the Human Services Advisory Council as appointed members. These individuals will serve as a standing subcommittee within the HSAC, ensuring that their contributions to identifying the needs of women in our county are closely aligned with the mission of the HSAC. As part of our integrated planning process, we conduct an annual review of funding priorities and other essential human service needs identified within the county, ensuring that the perspectives of all stakeholders are valued throughout this process.

The subcommittee has convened and established an agenda item to be discussed during the closed session this evening, specifically concerning the Seeds of Change Awards. They have already generated substantial work to be presented to the Human Services Advisory Council (HSAC). Ms. Errico expressed her enthusiasm about the energy and input that will contribute to the significant endeavors undertaken by this advisory council. She also recognizes that several HSAC members have previously served on the Advisory Committee on Women, which enhances the knowledge available in this setting and will aid us in fulfilling our important objectives.

A Quorum was established, and attendance was as follows:

Board Members:

Joann Bjornson, Family Promise
Donna Boyce, Citizen Representative
Elaine Muller, Citizen Representative

Ken Oexle, Citizen Representative
Michelle Roers, United Way of Northern New Jersey
Sydney Ugalde, Citizen Representative
Diane Williams, JBWS

Board Liaisons:

Leena George, Morris County Office of Child Protection & Permanency
Kayla Gieger, Child & Family Resources (virtual)

Morris County Commissioner:

Christine Myers, Ex Officio (virtual)

Morris County Staff:

Amy Archer, Director of the Division of Community & Behavioral Health Services
Kasey Errico, Director of Human Services
Anna Marie Hess, HSAC Coordinator, Division of Community & Behavioral Health Services

Community Members:

Jeffrey Bashe, Citizen Representative
Shayne Daly, Township of Long Hill (virtual)
Allison Delcalzo-Berens, Atlantic Health (virtual)
Shannon Muti, Homeless Solutions (virtual)
Steven Nagel, HomeSharing (virtual)
Kelsey Reenstra, NORWESCAP (virtual)
Sarah Rubinstein, Atlantic Health (virtual)
Emily Savino, Mental Health Association (virtual)

II. Nominating Committee – Ms. Hess

Ms. Hess stated that the nominees presented at our November meeting were Ms. Michelle Roers for Chair and Ms. Joanne Bjornson for Vice-Chair. No other nominees were presented to the committee from the floor. Mr. Oexle motioned to accept Ms. Roers as Chair, Ms. Bjornson as Vice-Chair, and Ms. Boyce seconded. All were in favor, with no opposition and three abstentions. The motion carried.

III. Approval of November 19, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Mr. Oexle motioned to approve the November 29, 2024, meeting minutes, which was seconded by Ms. Bjornson. All were in favor, with opposition and three abstentions. Motion carried.

IV. Open to the Public

Ms. Bjornson opened the discussion by stating that the recent ICE raids and the federal funding freeze have raised considerable concern in our community, especially regarding the anxiety many feel about the potential impacts on those around them. As we navigate this situation, it's vital to differentiate between accurate information and possible misinformation, like the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

At Family Promise, we are actively preparing for the possibility of ICE raids, knowing that many individuals we support might be at risk. Our location in a public area underscores the necessity for robust safety measures to help those affected. I am interested in learning if other nonprofits in our region are also considering the implications of these raids, particularly given recent events in our state that may extend to Morris County.

Commissioner Myers addressed community concerns regarding potential ICE operations by highlighting the agency's focus on targeting serious offenders rather than creating fear within the community. Commissioner Myers reassured attendees that the primary objective remains to remove individuals posing a threat, with a clear intention to avoid impacting innocent residents.

Commissioner Myers addressed the current federal funding freeze, emphasizing a prudent approach to monitoring the situation as it develops. She recognized the collective interest in securing significant financial resources but highlighted the importance of preserving well-established programs that deliver vital services to the community. Commissioner Myers noted that the freeze is presently paused and encouraged everyone to collect comprehensive data on the potential effects of this freeze on funding and services. By gathering detailed information about which services may be impacted and the timeline of these effects, the organizations will better enable the commissioner board to advocate effectively with their congressional representatives.

Mr. Bashe stated we are all aware of the affordable housing mandates imposed by the state on municipalities. Each municipality has specific targets for the number of affordable housing units it must develop, and many municipalities are struggling to meet these requirements. The Housing Alliance is organizing a municipal engagement forum to address these challenges on March 20, 2025. This event will take place in the afternoon at the Arboretum. The forum aims to assist municipalities with their planning and development efforts. Additionally, it will provide opportunities for them to connect with funders and potential developers while introducing new ideas to the conversation.

V. Chair Report – no report

VI. New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJ DHS) – no report

VII. Division of Child Protection & Permanency – Ms. George
A. Morris East

Criteria	December 2024
Children <5-years old, Mother <30 -years old	11
Substance Affected Newborn Cases (aka Safe Care)	2
New	37

Reopens	28
Active	7
CPS	67
CWS	18
Domestic Violence	24
Sex Abuse	2
Unhoused	7
SPRU	24
Spanish Speaking	13
< 90 Day Re-opens	13
Substance abuse	15
Child on Child Sex Abuse	1
Unaccompanied Minors	0

B. Morris West

Criteria	December 2024
Children <5-years old, Mother <30 -years old	0
Substance abuse affected newborn cases, aka Safe Care	1
New	36
Reopens	37
Active	4
CPS	77
CWS	18
Domestic Violence	16
Sex Abuse	3
Unhoused	2
SPRU	27
Spanish Speaking	19
< 90 Day Re-opens	16
Substance abuse	17
Child on Child Sex Abuse	0

VIII. Staff Reports**A. Human Services – Ms. Hess**

- i. The Office of New Americans is committed to maintaining open lines of communication and ongoing support as updates and changes in federal policy arise and providing resources for our communities. Know Your Rights & Program Flyer was distributed last week [NewAmericans.nj.gov](https://www.newamericans.nj.gov)
- ii. Ms. Hess discussed the importance of subcommittees within the Human Services Advisory Council (HSAC) and outlined the expectations for participation. She emphasized that all voting members are encouraged to participate in at least two subcommittees. The main subcommittees mentioned include:
 1. Planning Subcommittee: This group assists in developing and implementing comprehensive human services plans, such as needs assessments, and discusses potential meeting presentations.
 2. Program Review Subcommittee: Members of this subcommittee focus on funding allocations and conduct monitoring reviews of funded agencies to assess their performance.
 3. Nominating Committee: This committee handles nominations for the chair and vice chair positions at the end of the year.
 4. Bylaws Committee: This group will review new bylaws developed by the State Human Services Department.
 5. Women’s Subcommittee: An established committee joining the HSAC as a standing subcommittee will advise on the needs and concerns of women in Morris County.

Ms. Hess mentioned that emails would be sent to voting members to encourage participation in these subcommittees, highlighting the collaborative effort needed to effectively address various human services issues.

- iii. Finalizing 2025 HSAC Funding Contracts will be sent out for signature soon.
- iv. Finalizing the 2024 4th Quarter vouchers.

B. Council on Aging, Disabilities & Veterans – no report**IX. Old Business**

- A. Ms. Archer announced the start of outreach for the Point in Time Count, which began on January 28th. This is a week-long effort to count individuals experiencing homelessness.
- B. Ms. Archer mentioned that the Mental Health Association (MHA) will host Project Homeless Connect, which will provide resources for those experiencing homelessness and allow individuals to participate in the Point in Time Count.
- C. There were discussions about the potential challenges in accurately counting individuals experiencing homelessness this year due to fears related to immigration enforcement, which may deter people from seeking help.

- D. Mr. Bashe suggested that a presentation on childcare services in Morris County would be beneficial, highlighting the need to assess their current state.

X. New Business – no comment

XI. Subcommittee Reports

- A. **Program Review** – no report
- B. **Planning** – no report
- C. **Bylaws** – no report
- D. **Legislative** – no report
- E. **Nominating** – moved to the beginning of the meeting
- F. **Committee on Women** – Closed Session moved to the end of the meeting

XII. Advisory Committee Reports

- A. **Morris, Sussex, Warren HIV Advisory** – no report
- B. **Mental Health Addiction Services Advisory (MHASAB)** – Ms. Archer
 - i. Morris County Aftercare Center presentation detailed its various services to support individuals in recovery.
 - ii. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has opened the state rental assistance program, which began on January 13th and will continue until January 31st. Applicants need an email address to apply.
 - iii. The Municipal Alliance coordinator updated plans for the upcoming year, indicating that recommendations will be presented to the Mental Health and Addiction Services Advisory Board (MHASAB) in February or March.
 - iv. At the Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting, Community Hope presented information about their programs for veterans and individuals with disabilities, which was well-received and informative for the attendees.
 - v. Future presentations are planned, including one from the Morris County Prosecutor's Office regarding their various programs and another from Newbridge on gambling addiction.
 - vi. Morris County Commissioners allocated \$100,000 through ARPA funding (American Rescue Plan Act) for homeless prevention services. This funding was awarded through a competitive process to three organizations: Family Promise, Integrity, and Legal Services of Northwest Jersey. Contracts with these organizations have been finalized, and the next steps involve arranging a meeting to discuss referral processes and collaboration within the existing coordinated entry system. The funding aims to enhance efforts to prevent homelessness and provide vital services to vulnerable community populations.

C. Youth Services Advisory – Ms. Archer

- i. A new youth services coordinator will be announced shortly.

- ii. The January meeting included a presentation from Acenda, which detailed their adolescent and family services and highlighted the support they provide to the community.
- iii. The focus was on re-engaging subcommittees that had fallen in participation during 2024.
- iv. The front-end diversion subcommittee, which interacts with law enforcement to address youth in the juvenile justice system, was discussed.
- v. Neville Newton, the Executive Director of the Plaid House, announced his upcoming retirement, which is significant given his long-standing role in supporting adolescent girls.
- vi. There was a discussion about examining the lengths of stay in youth shelters and juvenile detention centers. Plans are to analyze trends and data to inform future funding priorities.

XIII. Partnership Announcements

A. Child Care – Ms. Gieger

- i. The total number of Registered FCC Providers is 35, with two prospects.
- ii. NJEDA Child Care Facility Improvement Program Grant Phase 2 for Registered Family Child Care (FCC) Providers: This pilot grant of \$5 million supports NJ Registered FCC homes with the purchase of furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE) that will contribute to Health, Safety, Accessibility, and/or High-Quality Learning Environments.
- iii. Child & Family Resources FCC Initiatives
 - 1. Offered the All Our Kin Business Series for FCC Providers in English on 10/10/2024 – 12/19/2024
 - 2. Offering the All Our Kin Business Series for FCC Providers in Spanish 02/06/2025 – 04/10/2025.

B. Continuum of Care (CoC) – Ms. Archer

- i. The CoC held a meeting in January, which kicked off the year's activities.
- ii. An orientation presentation was conducted to familiarize members with their roles and responsibilities.
- iii. Alicia Alvarez has been appointed the new chair of the Continuum of Care (CoC), taking over from Allison Delcalzo-Berens.
- iv. The next meeting, scheduled for March, will feature a presentation from Monarch Housing Associates regarding the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). This presentation will cover funding opportunities available for various housing services.
- v. Collaboration among different agencies and organizations is important to effectively address homelessness and housing issues in the community.

XIV. Seeds of Change Award Recommendations Closed Session

Ms. Roers asked that all nonvoting members and the public leave the meeting. Ms. Delcalzo-Berens, Ms. George, Ms. Gieger, Commissioner Myers, Mr. Bashe, Ms. Daly, Ms. Muti, Mr. Nagel, Ms. Reenstra, Ms. Rubinstein, and Ms. Savino left the meeting.

Mr. Oexle motioned, and Ms. Boyce seconded to begin the closed session of the meeting. There are no abstentions and no opposition. Motion Carried.

According to P.L. 1975 Ch. 231 of the Open Public Meetings Act, the board closed the open portion of the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

Return to Meeting

The meeting reopened at 7:00 p.m. No one returned to the meeting.

Actions Resulting from Closed Session

Ms. Roers stated that the Committee on Women met, reviewed, and provided the Seeds of Change Award recommendations. Let the record reflect that the Board voted to approve the request in closed session. Therefore, we need a motion to approve it in open session.

Ms. Bjornson motioned to approve the recommendations as discussed in the closed session. Mr. Oexle seconded the motion. All were in favor, with one abstention and no opposition. Motion carried.

XV. Adjournment

Mr. Oexle motioned to adjourn, and Ms. Williams seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anna Marie Hess
HSAC Coordinator