

STEBEN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES, HEALTH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, September 6, 2023

9:00 a.m.

*Legislative Chambers, 3rd Floor, Annex Building
Bath, New York*

****MINUTES****

COMMITTEE:	Carol A. Ferratella, Chair	Aaron I. Mullen	Paul E. Van Caesele
STAFF:	Jack K. Wheeler Patty Baroody Lynn Lewis Gary Smith Nate Alderman	Christopher Brewer Kathy Muller Auralee Jefferds Lindsay Rice Bill Caudill	Jennifer Prossick Lise Reynolds Jennifer DeMonstoy Darlene Smith Craig Patrick
LEGISLATORS:	Scott V. Van Etten Wendy Lozo Frederick G. Potter	Kelly H. Fitzpatrick John V. Malter Gary D. Swackhamer	Hilda T. Lando Nicholas D. Pelham
ABSENT:	K. Michael Hanna	James Kuhl	
OTHERS:	Ann Domingos, CASA-Trinity Allison Hunt Joe Tobia Mary Perham		

Secretary's Note: Mr. Kuhl attended via Zoom, however, not under the extraordinary circumstances exemption.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Ferratella called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked Mr. Mullen to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 2, 2023, MEETING MADE BY MR. VAN CAESELE. SECONDED BY MR. MULLEN. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0.

III. DEPARTMENT REQUESTS

A. Social Services

1. **Contracts** – Ms. Muller requested authorization to renew the contract with Diona. She noted this is the software program for the Services Division. This is a one year renewal for \$24,500 for 150 hours. If we do not use all of the hours, they are rolled over to the following year. Mr. Mullen asked is there a change in the amount? Ms. Reynolds replied last year the hourly rate was \$155.00 and this year it has increased to \$163.00 per hour.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SERVICES TO RENEW THE CONTRACT WITH DIONA FOR SOFTWARE FOR THE SERVICES DIVISION FOR ONE YEAR FOR \$24,500 MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. VAN CAESELE. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0.

Ms. Muller stated prior to COVID we had a contract with one of the foster parents to work with our staff to provide training to incoming foster parents. Now that we are back to in-person, she requested authorization to enter into a contract with a foster parent to provide that training. The rate is \$55.00 per session. There will be

seven sessions and the total cost is \$385. She noted she is working with the Risk Manager to waive the insurance requirements.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SERVICES TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH A FOSTER PARENT TO WORK WITH STAFF TO PROVIDE TRAINING TO INCOMING FOSTER PARENTS AT A RATE OF \$55.00 PER SESSION, TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$385.00 MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. VAN CAESELEE. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0.

2. **Budget Appropriation** – Ms. Muller announced child care funding for Steuben County was restored. The State had originally reduced our allocation, but we fought it and now will be receiving \$2.5 million for this year and \$10.1 million for 2024. Mr. Wheeler stated he would like to congratulate Ms. Muller for all her work on this. She and her colleagues applied a tremendous amount of pressure on the State. Per the State requirements, we had significantly ramped up to meet the needs and then we got the funding letter reducing our allocation. Had that funding been reduced, we would have had 100 families that would have been without child care and would have been placed on a wait list. This revised allocation will take care of that.

Mr. Mullen asked how does the funding work? Ms. Muller replied we will receive the allocation and then we will contract with ProAction and they will register and certify the child care providers. Any one that needs child care will go to ProAction and apply. The State has continued with the Governor’s initiative to open up eligibility; they have reduced the amount of money that families can make to be eligible and they are continuing to expand that. Right now the requirement, as of October, is that households need to be at 85 percent of the State’s median income.

Mr. Van Etten asked next year will the State balk at this again? Mr. Wheeler replied there is always a chance, but this is an area that the State has specifically announced additional grants for child care. With the workforce initiatives and worker shortage, I think they would have a difficult time cutting this. Ms. Muller commented this has become a top priority for the State.

MOTION: ACCEPTING AND APPROPRIATING DAY CARE FUNDING FROM THE STATE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2.5 MILLION INTO THE 2023 BUDGET MADE BY MR. VAN CAESELEE. SECONDED BY MR. MULLEN. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0. Resolution Required.

B. Public Health

1. **Approval to Purchase Software** – Mrs. Smith requested authorization to purchase Track the Jack Software for time and activity tracking for vouchering Article 6 State Aid and Grants. The total amount for the remainder of this year is \$2,000. The annual cost after this year will be \$4,500. Mr. Mullen asked what kind of revenue comes in as a result of tracking time and activity? Mrs. Smith replied this will be revenue associated with grant work. We get reimbursed by tracking time and activity and submitting that information for reimbursement.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH TO PURCHASE TRACK THE JACK SOFTWARE FOR TIME AND ACTIVITY TRACKING FOR ARTICLE 6 STATE AID AND GRANTS FOR \$2,000 FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2023 WITH AN ANNUAL COST THEREAFTER OF \$4,500 MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. VAN CAESELEE. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0.

2. **Contracts** – Mrs. Smith requested authorization to amend the contract with Pivotal (formerly known as S2AY Rural Health Network) to increase the contract by \$5,225 for the update to the Public Health Strategic Plan for 2023 – 2025. This update will be done by Lynn Scalzon Consulting, LLC. She noted that she anticipates this cost will be covered by the Public Health Infrastructure Grant. All of the participating counties in S2AY will pay the same amount.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH TO AMEND THE CONTRACT WITH PIVITAL TO INCREASE THE CONTRACT BY \$5,225 TO INCLUDE AN UPDATE TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2023 – 2025 MADE BY MR. VAN CAESELEE. SECONDED BY MR. MULLEN. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0.

Mrs. Smith requested authorization to amend the contract with Pivital (formerly known as S2AY Rural Health Network) to increase the contract by \$21,000 to add consulting/headhunting services with Xelerate, LLC to assist in recruiting for two full-time nurse positions. We cannot even get an applicant and these positions have been open for months on end. She noted that Chemung and Yates have also been unable to fill their nurse positions. Between the three counties, we have 10 – 12 positions that need to be filled. The consultant sounds very confident that they can fill the positions within three months. We have been operating at 60 percent staffing capacity.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH TO AMEND THE CONTRACT WITH PIVITAL TO INCREASE THE CONTRACT BY \$21,000 TO INCLUDE CONSULTING/HEADHUNTING SERVICES FOR RECRUITING NURSE STAFF MADE BY MR. VAN CAESELEE. SECONDED BY MR. MULLEN.

Mr. Mullen asked what is the success rate for other areas with similar pay rates? Mrs. Smith replied we are not the highest payor. In the consultant's search and marketing they will tout the information we give them such as benefits, pension, Monday-Friday schedule with normal business hours, etc. Mr. Mullen asked have you gone through with assessing this with Personnel? Mrs. Smith replied yes, she has talked with both Personnel and Purchasing. Mr. Wheeler stated we have worked with Mrs. Smith to work outside the normal channels to recruit. Mrs. Smith stated Personnel has also advertised on Indeed.com. Mr. Van Caeselee commented it is not just a problem here; it is everywhere.

Mrs. Ferratella asked is there any guarantee that the nurses will stay after they are hired? Mrs. Smith replied no. With any of the nurses that have applied, she has emphasized to them that this position is not traditional nursing. She commented Arnot Hospital is giving \$35,000 signing bonuses. Mr. Mullen asked how will having this consultant help us to compete? Mr. Wheeler replied the consultant will be able to more proactively reach out to the candidates and talk to them. The County cannot do direct marketing or conversations with candidates.

Mrs. Lando asked what about retired nurses? Mrs. Smith replied we are very fortunate that some of our retired nurses do come in and assist us with the biometric screenings, rabies and some other programs. Mr. Swackhamer commented many years ago we had this similar problem and we had to give sign on bonuses. Mrs. Smith stated if that were pursued, that is something that could come out of the Public Health Infrastructure Grant.

Mr. Van Etten asked if this workforce issue never improves, can we go to contract service delivery? Mrs. Smith replied we would have to and that would be done using travel nurses. In order to keep the department open, you have to have nurses.

Mr. Mullen asked what is our current pay rate for nurses? Mrs. Smith replied it is in the low \$60,000. Mr. Mullen asked what is the market rate? Mrs. Smith replied she is not sure, but the hospitals are paying more with their huge sign on bonuses. Mr. Malter asked can we pursue the sign on bonus? Mr. Wheeler replied he would not recommend that. That will have a huge ripple effect across all of the bargaining units. We would have to negotiate the implementation of a sign on bonus. Ms. Prossick stated along with that, there is always the discussion of whether that is a gift of taxpayer dollars as you cannot make them stay. Mr. Wheeler stated we would have to negotiate that. The larger issue is what about the 20-year employee that has been there. He stated Ontario County spent \$13 million to give everyone bonuses.

Mrs. Lando asked can you use LPN's? Mrs. Smith replied we could use them for some things, but not everything. They could be used to conduct rabies investigations and immunizations. Mrs. Lando stated BOCES has an LPN program. Mrs. Smith replied they do and she has talked with area colleges as well and they will tell the students

about job opportunities. However, they encourage graduating students to work on the floor first to get that experience.

Mr. Mullen stated he would like to see more information on the market rate for nurses. Mr. Wheeler stated we did a market rate study at the end of 2020 and we significantly raised the nurses in the pay grade. Again, we would have to negotiate that with the union. It would not be a quick process and would take a few months. His recommendation is to see how this contract goes and at the same time gather information on the market rate.

Mr. Van Etten commented spending \$21,000 for a headhunter is worth it. Mrs. Ferratella asked have other counties used this service? Mrs. Smith replied Family Services in Chemung County has used them.

Mr. Mullen stated that he does not think this is a good idea.

Mr. Malter asked what percent of the budget is covered by grant funding? Mr. Wheeler replied he can get that information. That has significantly increased since COVID. Mrs. Smith stated if you approve this, we would not move forward without approval from the Public Health Infrastructure Grant. She noted the purpose of this grant is for the recruitment and retention of staff. Mr. Wheeler noted the grant cannot be used to supplement salary. Sign on or retention bonuses would be an eligible expense. Mr. Mullen commented he thinks the grant funds would better be spent on bonuses. He will vote to move this forward, but this is a waste of grant money.

VOTE ON PREVIOUS MOTION. MOTION CARRIES 3-0.

Mrs. Ferratella asked since we are talking about staffing, could you talk about the Public Health Educator? Mrs. Smith stated Public Health Educator Lorelei Wagner's last day is Friday. She has accepted a position in Schuyler County as Deputy Director of Public Health. She noted that she has four fellows in the office and six fellows are at the Institute for Human Services. Two of the fellows started in early June and one was assigned to Ms. Wagner since day one and is very familiar with the projects that Ms. Wagner was working on. So, some of Ms. Wagner's duties are being reassigned to that fellow. The other duties will be assigned to the fellow who is assigned to Mr. Marmour. Unfortunately, there will be some things that will not get done.

Mr. Wheeler stated in answer to Mr. Malter's early questions, the department is 70 percent grant funded/revenue funded. They have \$10 million in expenses and \$7.5 million in revenue, however, not all of that is grants.

3. **COVID Update** – Mrs. Lando asked for a COVID update. Mrs. Smith stated there has been an uptick in the number of positive cases. Earlier in the summer we were seeing 0 - 3 positive cases per day (lab confirmed). Now that we are into late August, early September we are seeing 12 - 15 positive cases per day. All reports indicate that the symptoms are mild. We have not received any reports from the hospitals that their emergency departments are backed up or that hospitalizations are increasing. Mrs. Smith stated the updated vaccines are due any day. They are supposed to be readily available through pharmacies and we will have some on hand as well. Mr. Malter asked are the cases spread across the County? Mrs. Smith replied yes. Mr. Potter asked the test kits that are a year or two old; are they still good? Mrs. Smith replied probably. The FDA has extended the expiration dates on the test kits. If you have an older kit, you can email me the name and the lot number and I will let you know. She stated in the lobby of the County Office Building they continue to offer hand sanitizer, test kits and masks for anyone. The libraries have also been great partners in making the test kits available for free for anyone. We have 1,200 test kits left and we are in the process of putting in an order for more.

C. Community Services

1. **Amendment of CASA-Trinity Contract** – Ms. Lewis requested authorization to amend the contract with CASA-Trinity to reallocate funds for the DIVERT Program to the AIR Program. They were originally allocated \$60,000 for the DIVERT program and have only used \$12,000. CASA has reached out to 14 police departments and the only one to buy in was the Hornell City Police Department. They are continuing to work with the Hornell Police Department with DIVERT, but would like to reallocate the remaining \$48,000 to the

AIR Program. She noted the AIR Program is a recovery based program which has served 652 county residents. This program is being utilized and they offer a wide variety of activities to support individuals in their recovery.

Mr. Mullen asked are the clients who are utilizing the activities unique or repeat? Ms. Domingos replied we have that data. Some attend every week when an activity is offered and some come and go. Mr. Mullen asked how are you staffing the program? Ms. Domingos replied we have one full-time position for Steuben County. A lot of their work takes place in the evenings and on weekends. They also transport individuals to other activities in other counties. Mr. Mullen asked are they supplemented by part-time employees? Ms. Domingos stated we have one employee dedicated to Steuben County. We also have programs in Livingston and Chemung.

Mr. Mullen asked how much did we allocate for the AIR Program? Ms. Lewis replied the allocation was \$108,200 which covers the cost of the employee, the vehicle, payments for activities, fuel, etc. Mr. Mullen asked is there a population that is not being served because of the lack of employees? Ms. Domingos replied yes. I think we could extend to other areas of Steuben County. Mr. Malter asked are you suggesting that that \$48,000 be allocated for more personnel? Ms. Domingos replied that is what she would like to do.

Ms. Fitzpatrick asked this is a program that is not self-supporting and that you are not able to bill for? Ms. Domingos replied correct. Ms. Fitzpatrick asked do you have a long-term plan to support the program? Ms. Domingos stated she will continue to look for more funding. She is hoping the State will come out with additional funding. She believes that down the road OASAS will be looking to make different, currently non-billable services billable. We report our numbers to OASAS.

Ms. Fitzpatrick stated she sent Ms. Domingos an email that the Village of Bath Police Department would like her to reach out again about the DIVERT Program. They had indicated that they did not recall CASA reaching out. The Chief of Police has stated given the current situation in Bath and the issues they are having, they may be more interested in this type of program. Also, with the AIR Program, are you considering increasing activities that are more popular and getting rid of those that are not? Are each of those activities, when scheduled, at full capacity? Ms. Domingos replied we look at the activities that people are interested in and that ebbs and flows. We don't look at the capacity as anyone who wants to show up can. Ms. Fitzpatrick asked are there other organizations that provide self-help meetings? Ms. Domingos replied generally an individual will open a meeting as a volunteer. Those have closed because of the pandemic and they are not reopening.

Mr. Malter commented with the DIVERT Program in Hornell and with the possibility of having it in Bath, he would not want to see all of those funds reallocated. Ms. Domingos stated she will check with her staff and reach out to the Village of Bath again. We would be able to do both Hornell and Bath with the funding that we have. Mr. Malter asked could we combine the two programs into one? Mr. Wheeler replied you allocated funds to both of those programs with separate resolutions. If you co-mingled it would be with the goal to provide both programs.

Mrs. Lando commented 652 county residents is a lot and I'm very surprised. Ms. Domingos stated we were offering this program before we had the funding. We included individuals through the activities provided with Livingston County funding. The funding opportunity came up and gave us more ability to expand the program. Mrs. Lando asked where do they meet? Ms. Domingos replied they meet at the Community Hope Center in Hornell and we are also partnering with Catholic Charities. We have reached out to the Hornell and Bath Area Concern for Youth programs. There is a lot of interest, but not enough hands. Mrs. Ferratella asked is there crossover in the 652? Ms. Domingos replied there is some.

Mr. Mullen asked was the full-time staff person added after the grant? Ms. Domingos replied yes. Mr. Mullen stated he is inclined to do this, but he would like to see the data to see the number of regular participants and general data on how many people are impacted by the program. Ms. Domingos replied we are gathering that data. We do have sign-in sheets. Mr. Mullen stated it would also be helpful to know in the future, the difference in the program with two full-time staff versus one full-time. Ms. Domingos stated I can send you information from the Livingston County program if that would be helpful.

Ms. Fitzpatrick stated it would be interesting to see information on people that participate in the AIR Program and how many stay in recovery. It is important to focus on services to provide a more positive benefit. Because the potential of funding is questionable, if you are making this kind of investment and see the positive benefits, it may be worthy of a long-term investment. The information from Livingston County would be helpful to see. Ms. Domingos commented she one hundred percent agrees.

MOTION: AMENDING THE CONTRACT WITH CASA-TRINITY TO REALLOCATE \$48,000 IN ARPA FUNDS ALLOCATED TO THE DIVERT PROGRAM TO THE AIR PROGRAM TO FUND A FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITION MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. VAN CAESEELE. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0.

2. **Allegany ACASA Outreach and Engagement Grant Funding** – Ms. Lewis requested authorization to accept \$8,270 from the Allegany Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse. Steuben and Allegany County are partnering to implement the Outreach and Engagement Services Grant. Both counties will provide a peer who will do outreach to individuals who are not involved in treatment, but may be contemplating taking steps toward recovery. These funds will be used to recruit and provide office space, a place to park the program vehicle and supervision to a peer assigned to Steuben County.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES TO CONTRACT WITH ALLEGANY COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TO RECEIVE \$8,270.00 TO RECRUIT AND PROVIDE OFFICE SPACE, A PLACE TO PARK PROGRAM VEHICLE AND SUPERVISION TO A PEER ASSIGNED TO STEUBEN COUNTY THROUGH THE OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT SERVICES GRANT MADE BY MR. VAN CAESEELE. SECONDED BY MR. MULLEN. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0. Resolution Required.

3. **Contract Amendment** – Ms. Lewis stated she will bring this request back at a later date.

4. **Budget Adjustment** – Ms. Lewis requested authorization to accept \$40,617 in State OASAS COLA funding that will be allocated to local agencies.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES TO ACCEPT \$40,617 IN STATE OASAS COLA FUNDING AND ALLOCATING TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: FAMILY SERVICES (\$2,210.00); HORNELL AREA CONCERN FOR YOUTH (\$3,437.00); CATHOLIC CHARITIES (\$21,816.00); OASAS BATH (\$7,701.00); OASAS HORNELL (\$2,491.00); AND OASAS CORNING (\$2,962.00) MADE BY MR. VAN CAESEELE. SECONDED BY MR. MULLEN. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0.

5. **Drug Court Case Manager** – Ms. Lewis stated we contract with CASA for a case manager for drug court in Steuben County. That contract was originally due to expire September 30, 2023, however last week we received word that the grant will be extended through March 30, 2024. She requested authorization to extend the contract with CASA through March 30, 2024.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES TO EXTEND THE CONTRACT WITH CASA FOR CASE MANAGER SERVICES FOR STEUBEN COUNTY DRUG COURT THROUGH MARCH 30, 2024, TO COINCIDE WITH THE EXTENSION OF GRANT FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. VAN CAESEELE.

Mr. Van Caesele asked what is the amount? Ms. Lewis replied we pay the salary of the case manager and bill CASA and they reimburse us. Ms. Domingos stated she believes the amount is \$70,000.

VOTE ON PREVIOUS MOTION: ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0.

Ms. Fitzpatrick asked if we are providing peer services and other organizations are providing more peer services, can we get an “organizational” chart showing all the organizations that provide peer advocates and their area of

expertise? Since we are providing funding for various organizations, it would give us a better picture of where the services are. Mr. Wheeler stated we can work to identify that.

D. Personnel

1. **Office for the Aging** – Mr. Alderman requested authorization to create one Account Clerk-Typist position, CSEA Grade D. The intent is to take more duties from a contracted position and put those under the County. The funding for the contracted position will be used for this new position.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF ONE ACCOUNT CLERK-TYPIST POSITION, CSEA GRADE D, IN THE OFFICE FOR THE AGING MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. VAN CAESELEE.

Mr. Malter asked what is the impact on the budget? Mr. Wheeler replied there will be an incremental cost with the overlap; about three months of overlap and we have more funded vacancies and salary dollars to cover this.

Mrs. Baroody explained we had a contracted position for the aging well planner and that employee resigned, which has freed up those dollars. The fiscal duties in our department have escalated over the years and we did not have a good backup plan. This resignation created an opportunity. We will absorb the aging well planner activities into our other position and also have a backup for the Account Clerk. Mr. Alderman commented this also provides an opportunity for succession planning.

VOTE ON PREVIOUS MOTION: ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0. Resolution Required.

E. County Manager

1. **Request to Issue RFP for Temporary Housing Study** – Mr. Wheeler stated Corning Housing Partnership approached him with an idea to fund a study of temporary and transitional housing. This study will look at the current landscape, the needs and identify gaps. A study like this will give us data and good information and recommendations for us when we look at temporary housing placements and the need for transitional housing. Mr. Wheeler stated in his discussions with Corning Housing Partnership he indicated that he felt it would be better if it were a countywide study rather than just a study focusing on Corning. They have offered to provide \$25,000 towards this study. He noted with the committee's approval, they will work with the Department of Social Services to issue an RFP. This study would give all of the communities information about what the housing needs really are. He requested authorization to draft an RFP with responses coming back to the committee for evaluation.

MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY MANAGER, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES AND PURCHASING, TO ISSUE AN RFP FOR A TEMPORARY HOUSING STUDY MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. VAN CAESELEE.

Mr. Swackhamer asked what is temporary housing? Mr. Wheeler replied it is essentially temporary housing for homeless individuals that we traditionally have housed in hotels and motels. Mr. Swackhamer asked is there a 30-day limit on temporary housing? Mr. Wheeler replied it can vary, but is regulated by the State. Mr. Van Etten commented the City of Corning wants to do this because of the old Lando's building which is currently being used for temporary/transitional housing.

Mrs. Lando stated this is a good thing to do. Mr. Van Etten stated I agree that it is a good thing to do. The study will tell us a lot of things we already know and provide us with better statistics. Mr. Malter asked will this study be specific to each township and village and will the information go back to those officials? Mr. Wheeler replied the study will encompass the entire County. The information will be very useful and will show what the needs are.

Mr. Van Caeselee commented Hornell currently has issues with the EconoLodge. What other locations are used in Hornell for temporary housing? Ms. Muller replied we use the EconoLodge and the Hornell Days Inn. Mr.

Van Caesele stated Jessica LaFrance has been contacting him about this issue. When we do placements, where are they coming from? Ms. Muller replied the placements are coming from within the County. Mr. Van Caesele asked what are the protocols for an individual to be eligible for temporary housing? Ms. Muller explained the individual must present to the Department of Social Services as homeless and fill out an application. All of this is State regulated if they meet eligibility. Eligibility is having no home, no money and no family. If there are kids, then we try to place them in the same school district. We check to see if there is a potential for employment.

Ms. Fitzpatrick commented I think we really don't understand the amount of homelessness that is in our county. The Mayor of Bath came in and explained the issues we are having and now that issue is moving out to other areas of the community and that shows that we have a huge problem. There are other things that we can do to manage the collateral damage that happens. There is a higher incidence of crimes or other troubles that are happening in those locations. We need to support a study and we may need to look at the other issues that present themselves.

Mr. Malter asked the City of Corning is contributing \$25,000 to this study? Mr. Wheeler replied Corning Housing Partnership. Mr. Malter asked what is the cost to do the study? Mr. Wheeler replied the Corning Housing Partnership had received a proposal from a firm to do a study of just the Corning area and it was \$50,000. We don't know what the cost of the study will be, but we will find out when we get the RFP's back.

Mr. Van Caesele stated I think this is a good idea. We have to figure out ways to minimize the issues that come along with temporary housing. Ms. Muller stated right now we have 122 homeless individuals and we expect that number to double with the cold weather. Mr. Wheeler stated those numbers are double what we saw a few years ago.

VOTE ON PREVIOUS MOTION: ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0.

2. **Community Services Lobby Evaluation** – Mr. Wheeler stated in response to internal discussions we have been having over the past couple of years and concerns raised by the Village of Bath, there has been a request to move the entrance to the Mental Health Building in the Village of Bath to the back of the building. The cost to move the entrance will be hundreds of thousands of dollars. We would like to look at improving/expanding the waiting area and incorporate access controls and security in the waiting area. This improvement will make the waiting area bigger and it will be easier for staff to know where people are going. He stated that Buildings and Grounds is evaluating if this is something they can do on their own. We are also looking at access controls and the addition of cameras. We are in the process of evaluating whether this can be done in-house. We will be putting money into the budget to address this.

Mrs. Ferratella asked if we cannot do it in-house, can we use ARPA funds? Mr. Wheeler replied we have to see how the Public Works Construction project ends up. If it comes in under budget, we might have enough. Right now we have \$20,000 remaining in ARPA funds. Mrs. Lando commented the Mayor had also suggested having a guard at the door. Is that a viable option? Mr. Wheeler stated he has talked with the Sheriff about security at that building. He has also talked with a lot of other counties about this. This is a push/pull because it is a mental health facility and we want it to be welcoming and we want people to come to the office to receive treatment. In most counties, unless they are co-located, their mental health building is stand alone and they do not have security guards as that, for a lot of people, presents as a barrier to treatment. They use, like we are talking about, access controls and cameras. In my opinion, using access controls and cameras is better than posting someone there with a magnetometer which might turn some people away.

Mr. Mullen stated he would disagree with that; not your opinion, but about what should be over there. Walking up and down Liberty Street; if you have a bigger lobby, some people might be nervous about who they are sitting there with. I have almost been attacked on Liberty Street within the last year by a guy that I believe was hyped up on drugs down near there. So I would think security being there would help people, particularly those who wouldn't be the strongest in the room and I think it probably would also help people generally be safer in the area. We have all kinds of security officers here and it's probably largely because of State mandates or something like

that, but overall when you consider who might be a bigger risk, or which buildings might be a bigger risk for that sort of stuff happening in, that is going to be just as big a risk down there as it is here.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN MADE BY MR. MULLEN. SECONDED BY MR. VAN CAESELE. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted by

Amanda L. Chapman
Deputy Clerk
Steuben County Legislature

****NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR**
Wednesday, October 4, 2023
9:00 a.m.**

**Please send agenda items to the Clerk of the Legislature's Office
NO LATER THAN NOON
Wednesday, September 27, 2023**