

Health & Social Services Committee Minutes  
April 3, 2019 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Dick Lucia; Committee Members Tara Gaston, Darren O'Connor, Dan Pemrick, Jon Schopf, Tom Wood; Spencer Hellwig, Chad Cooke, County Administrator; Sandi Cross, Office for the Aging; Catherine Duncan, Public Health; J. Wes Carr, Youth Bureau; Tina Potter, Marisa Alber, Department of Social Services, Michael Prezioso, Mental Health & Addiction; Karen Gregory, Shelters of Saratoga.

Chairman Lucia called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

**On a motion made by Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, the minutes of the March 6, 2019 meeting were approved unanimously.**

**A motion was made by Mr. Schopf, seconded by Mr. Pemrick, to proclaim May as Older American's Month in Saratoga County. Unanimous.**

Mrs. Cross said that this is an annual item also done at the Federal and State levels.

**A motion was made by Ms. Gaston, seconded by Mr. Pemrick, to authorize the acceptance of a \$5,000 donation from the Cleo F. Emmer Trust to support the senior nutrition program and amend the budget in relation thereto. Unanimous.**

Mrs. Cross said that Ms. Emmer was a home delivered meal client of the Office. She was a resident of Clifton Park who passed away recently and left \$5K in her will to the Office for the Aging.

Mrs. Duncan said that this is Public Health Week. They have and will be highlighting several public health issues through their Facebook posts daily this week. Monday – Healthy Communities, Tuesday – Violence Prevention, Wednesday – Rural Health, Thursday – Technology and Public Health and Friday – Climate Change and food waste policies.

Mrs. Duncan distributed two handouts. Their spotlight handout highlights the Backstretch and migrant farm workers. This is currently also highlighted on the website homepage. The second handout lists the County Health Rankings for Saratoga County. Saratoga County is ranked at #4 for Health Outcomes, which rates the length of life and quality of life. Saratoga County is ranked at #2 in Health Factors, which rates health behaviors. The State Prevention Agenda from the NYS DOH has given them goals from 2019-2024 and have narrowed down six areas of need. Obesity, Smoking, Breast Cancer, Suicide, Self-inflicted injuries, Substance and Alcohol abuse. Community Stakeholders, Saratoga Hospital, and Public Health then choose two priority areas in which they will collaborate on for the next five years. The areas chosen were Obesity, and Substance Use Disorders. A plan will be brought forward to the committee to review by Fall.

Mrs. Duncan said that the State Aid funding application for Article 6 core Public Health services were submitted and accepted by the NYS DOH. There is a new policy to fight childhood lead poisoning, the lead levels are being dropped from 10 to 5.

Mrs. Duncan said that an Emergency Preparedness drill will be held on April 11 from 10:30am – 12:30pm at the Corinth Jr./Sr. High School. This drill will mimic the need to treat over 1,000

people due to an anthrax incident. Supervisors interested in participating or attending the drill are welcome.

Mrs. Duncan said that Influenza Type A is still high in 61 counties. The measles outbreak is still contained to downstate, they continue to monitor Saratoga County for cases.

Mrs. Duncan said that she will be distributing tick bags to Supervisors at the Board meeting. Mrs. Duncan said that it would be helpful if the towns and cities would provide links on their websites to highlight tick prevention.

Mr. Carr distributed a handout regarding Preschool special related services rates. Mr. Carr said that at present the rate is \$45/half hour for individual sessions and \$35/hour for group sessions. These rates were established by Resolution 181-2014 and went into effect for the 2015-2016 school year. The related services are a component of the NYS mandated special ed. program. The overall county budget for this program in 2018 was approximately \$11.6M with a county share of approx. \$5.4M, related services component was approximately \$1.5M. It is estimated that the 2019 total program costs will be \$12.5M.

One issue encountered with this program, and specifically related services, is county demographics. The majority of the preschool special ed. students are in the three biggest school districts, Shenendehowa, Ballston Spa and Saratoga Springs. It can sometimes be difficult to get providers to the northern more rural portions of the county. Another issue they see is the lack of new providers to fill the void of retiring providers. Mr. Carr said that rates are set county wide, Mrs. Gaston suggested looking into whether the rates could be raised for certain areas of the County to entice providers to travel to the more rural areas.

**A motion was made by Ms. Gaston, seconded by Mr. Wood, to proclaim April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Saratoga County. Unanimous.**

Mrs. Potter said that the goal is to increase public awareness in the need to ensure the safety and welfare of children. Locally, Saratoga County will be participating in activities, outreach with school districts, law enforcement, day care centers. April 17<sup>th</sup> is wear blue day in recognition of raising awareness.

Mrs. Potter said that Saratoga County was the recipient of two awards recently at the State Office of Temporary Disability Assistance Commissioners meeting. Certificate of Achievements were awarded for The Child Support Collection Unit for 2018 best overall performance for medium counties, and Saratoga County Department of Social Service for overall performance in achieving job entries for recipients of public assistance from 2015 – 2018.

Mr. Lucia commended Mrs. Potter and her staff on their accomplishments.

Mrs. Gaston introduced Karen Gregory, Executive Director for the Shelters of Saratoga. Ms. Gaston said that the Shelters of Saratoga currently runs the Code Blue program for the County. Ms. Gaston said that they have been discussing Ms. Gregory's vision for Shelters and Code Blue and that Ms. Gregory is interested in getting more involved with the County, providing updates on the plans and needs of SOS. Ms. Gaston hopes that the County will lend more support to SOS, and work with County Departments to ensure the population being served by SOS and Code Blue have access to all of their services. Ms. Gregory said that they have a population of about 300 people that are living without homes, this includes Code Blue with a population of approximately 55, SOS

with a population of 33, and people that are in very remote motels that are substandard in needs, and no access to benefits. Ms. Gregory said that between motels and tents, there are approximately 175 people. Ms. Gregory said that they may not have a Code Blue location for 2019-2020 and her request to the County is support in finding a Code Blue location, temporary for the upcoming season and permanent following that. Many of the people are sanctioned from receiving benefits. Ms. Gregory said that the mandate for Code Blue is from the Governor to the County to provide some type of stability during the months of November through April. Ms. Gregory said that she may not be able to do Code Blue next year and this will be a County issue at that point. Ms. Gregory said that she would like to work with the County to create a better solution. Ms. Gaston said that Ms. Gregory has been holding meetings and working with individuals in Saratoga Springs to try to find a location. Ms. Gaston said that any Supervisor interested in more information can reach out to her or Ms. Gregory.

**On a motion made by Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. Schopf, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Therese Connolly  
Deputy Clerk of the Board