

Health & Human Services Committee Minutes
July 28, 2021 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Darren O'Connor; Committee Members Phil Barrett, Eric Connolly, Joe Grasso, John Lant, Sandra Winney; Supervisor Tara Gaston; Steve Bulger, Ridge Harris, County Administrator; Michelle Granger, County Attorney; Daniel Kuhles, Public Health; Michael Prezioso, Mental Health and Addiction Services .

Chairman O'Connor called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Barrett, seconded by Mr. Lant, the minutes of the June 30, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously.

Appointment of Vice Chair

Mr. O'Connor appointed Mr. Barrett as Vice Chair of the Health & Human Services Committee.

A motion was made by Mr. Barrett, seconded by Mr. Lant, to authorize amendments to Mental Health Contracts to include an increase in State Funding and amending the 2021 budget. Unanimous.

Dr. Prezioso said this money is 100% state aid that comes from the Office of Mental Hygiene to cover a 1% cost of living increase for contract agencies.

A motion was made by Mr. Barrett, seconded by Mr. Connolly, to authorize acceptance of additional funding from Health Research, Inc. (HRI) ELC COVID-19 Enhanced Detection grant in the amount of \$652,203. Unanimous.

Dr. Kuhles said this is federal money given to the state and passed on to local health departments that supports case investigation and contact tracers and will carry us through March 2024. Mr. Barrett inquired about anticipated need for more contact tracers now that COVID cases have ticked up slightly. Dr. Kuhles said they had dialed back but have kept contact tracers active to keep their skill sets sharp and have increased their hours in the last week. As the numbers rise Dr. Kuhles is not concerned with our capacity to respond. Dr. Kuhles reported the number of vaccinated individuals and breakthrough cases in the county.

A motion was made by Mr. Barrett, seconded by Mr. Connolly, to authorize the acceptance of funding from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Grant via the NYSDOH/Health Research, Inc. (HRI) in the amount of \$3,986,793. Unanimous.

Dr. Kuhles said these federal pass through funds are targeted for COVID testing in schools.

A motion was made by Mr. Lant, seconded by Mrs. Winney, to authorize a contract with Quadrant Biosciences, Inc. in the amount of \$3,520,000. Unanimous.

Dr. Kuhles said Quadrant will test the school samples using saliva based pool testing, sequence positive results to identify variants, and will also provide data management and reporting for the school and the State Health Department. Mr. Bulger thanked Dr. Kuhles and his team for all of their hard work making this happen.

A motion was made by Mr. Grasso, seconded by Mr. Lant, to authorize major contracts for contact tracing services for one year terms with Jessica McCamy, Mary Ann Priest, Hannah Ives, and Brianna McLain. Unanimous.

Dr. Kuhles said these are identical to previous contracts that have been authorized and the ELC enhancing detection money will be used to pay for them.

Mr. O'Connor announced that the next meeting of this committee will be held on Tuesday, August 31st.

Mr. Barrett provided an update regarding the Human Resource & Insurance committee's approval of the Director of Environmental Health position and the transition Task Force's progress.

Dr. Kuhles provided an update on the recent developments regarding COVID and CDC guidelines. A discussion took place about the impacts of these developments on the county. 93.2% of county seniors have at least one vaccine. Of the 150,000 vaccinated individuals in the county, only nine (0.006%) have had a breakthrough case that required hospitalization.

On a motion made by Mr. Grasso, seconded by Mr. Connolly, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Bridget Rider
Deputy Clerk of the Board