

Health & Human Services Committee Minutes
September 29, 2021 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Darren O'Connor; Committee Members Phil Barrett, Eric Connolly, Joe Grasso, John Lant, Sandra Winney, Tom Wood; Supervisor Tara Gaston; Steve Bulger, Ridge Harris, Christine Rush, Audra Hedden, County Administrator; Michael Hartnett, Nicholas Martin, Maribeth Hunt, County Attorney; Daniel Kuhles, Public Health; Michael Prezioso, Mental Health & Addiction; Tina Potter, Social Services; Craig Hayner, County Clerk.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Wood, seconded by Ms. Winney, the minutes of the August 31, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Ms. Winney, seconded by Mr. Barrett, to authorize the acceptance of a \$1,200 donation from Metabolic Fitness of Clifton Park for Saratoga County Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services' Suicide Prevention Coalition of Saratoga County, and amending the 2021 County Budget in relation thereto. Unanimous.

Dr. Prezioso said that approximately 40 people attended the charity workout event and members of the community also made contributions. Funds will be used for education training, and speakers providing education for the community.

Crisis Intervention Team Program Development

Dr. Prezioso said that as an extension of the work done by the EO203 Compliance Group, a proposal was put together in conjunction with the Sheriff's office regarding additional training and support for law enforcement dealing with citizens experiencing behavioral health crises. Sequential Intercept Mapping will be provided, which involves identifying different points in the process of someone's contact with the criminal justice system with law enforcement, and ways to intervene to make sure that the right type of intervention for the person is targeted based on their needs. This will involve 40 hours of training for Deputies who are selected into the program, and \$1,500 per Deputy in the program to offset the cost of overtime. Dr. Prezioso said that this program also emphasizes a lot of communication and collaboration with community-based agencies and private members of the community. The kickoff date has not been scheduled yet.

A motion was made by Mr. Lant, seconded by Ms. Winney, to authorize multi-year Early Intervention Grant Agreements and Contracts. Unanimous.

Dr. Kuhles said that this is an annual housekeeping resolution. The acceptance of a little over \$125K per year from the State will be used to offset salary and fringe for the Early Intervention Program.

A motion was made by Mr. Lant, seconded by Mr. Wood, to authorize the acceptance of New York State Department of Health Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program Grants. Unanimous.

Dr. Kuhles said that the funding will be used to offset salary, fringe, and other personnel costs. These are usually 5-year grants but due to Covid, one grant has been split. One vote was taken for both grants.

A motion was made by Mr. Grasso, seconded by Mr. Barrett, to authorize acceptance of Year 8 Local Health Department Performance Incentive Award from the New York State Department of Health, and amending the 2021 budget in relation thereto. Unanimous.

Dr. Kuhles said that this is an annual award from the State Health Department to Local Health Departments to incentivize performance for different projects or priorities. This year the amount is \$21,893 and the funds can be spent on any work that is eligible for State Aid.

A motion was made by Mr. Lant, seconded by Mr. Wood, to authorize the acceptance of State Aid from New York State Department of Health for Covid-19 Vaccine Response Grant and amending the 2021 budget in relation thereto. Unanimous.

Dr. Kuhles said that these are Federal dollars that pass through the State. The amount of aid is \$645K to support vaccinations, both Covid and routing, from 1/1/2021 through 6/30/2024. Mr. Bulger said that the funds will go a long way toward covering the cost of ramping up the booster shot program.

Mr. Grasso questioned the criteria the County will be using regarding the booster shot. Dr. Kuhles said that overall eligibility are individuals who've received the Pfizer vaccine, their second dose was at least six months ago, and there are three broad categories: Age-based, those 65 and older; those 18 and over with certain medical conditions; and those with a risk of exposure or transmission such as healthcare workers, first responders of those in congregate settings. Dr. Kuhles said that at this time the booster shot is Pfizer only. Moderna will probably be in a few weeks and Johnson & Johnson probably a few weeks after that. Dr. Kuhles said that the epidemiologists have created a database of all individuals from the State immunization registry. The database, however, only contains information on age not pre-existing conditions. A postcard will be mailed to individuals in groups as they hit their six-month mark for the Pfizer vaccine. The postcards will contain information on how people can register online or use a phone number for those who need help registering. Mrs. Winney expressed concern regarding individuals that are skeptical about receiving the vaccine. Mr. O'Connor questioned the impact on Saratoga County of the new regulations on healthcare workers and possible staffing shortages. Dr. Kuhles reported that Saratoga County is doing quite well. The Capital region has the highest vaccination coverage among health care workers that are subject to the mandate. Saratoga Hospital currently has at least 94% of their health care workers vaccinated. Mr. Connolly questioned the impact on the COVID testing machine that was purchased by the County last year. Dr. Kuhles said that he is extremely thankful to have this available and believes it will continue to pay dividends. This machine has helped getting PCR test results back quickly, particularly for students pre-K to 12 who develop symptoms, and aids in getting the children back to school quickly.

On a motion made by Mr. Lant, seconded by Mr. Barrett, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Clerk of the Board