

Health & Human Services Transcript

11/22/2021

SPEAKERS

Tina Potter, Darren O'Connor, John Lant, Sandra Winney, Tara Gaston, Joe Grasso, Daniel Kuhles, Several Supervisors, Tom Wood, Bridget Rider

Darren O'Connor

Okay, we all set Bridget?

Bridget Rider

Yes, all set.

Darren O'Connor

Okay, let's get going. Welcome to the November meeting of the Health and Human Services Committee. Bridget, do we have attendance?

Bridget Rider

Yes.

Darren O'Connor

Right, we're all set. Do we have a motion to approve the minutes of October 25?

John Lant

I'll make that motion.

Sandra Winney

I'll second the motion.

Tom Wood

Supervisor Wood.

Darren O'Connor

Got that Bridget, for the second?

Bridget Rider

Sure.

Sandra Winney

I'll make the motion.

Darren O'Connor

Discussion? Okay, discussion? All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Darren O'Connor

Opposed? Carried. Great. The next item on the agenda is the renewal of the contract with Captain Community Services. That's a renewal of the three year agreement. Do we need to discuss that? I think it's pretty clear. It's just a renewal of the three year agreement. Okay. Do we have a motion to approve that?

Joe Grasso

So moved.

Sandra Winney

I'll make the motion. Supervisor Winney.

Darren O'Connor

Okay, well, it's a motion made by Joe and seconded by Supervisor Winney. Discussion? All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Darren O'Connor

Opposed? Carried. Next item on the agenda is the renewal agreement with James McGuinness and Associates and that's for software system and support services for preschool. We have a motion?

John Lant

I'll make that motion.

Darren O'Connor

We have a second?

Joe Grasso

I'll second.

Sandra Winney

I'll second the motion.

Darren O'Connor

Discussion? All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Darren O'Connor

Opposed? Carried. Next item on the agenda is the Saratoga County Child and Family Services Plan. And Tina, you were going to read the entire plan for us today weren't you?

Tina Potter

Is it on? Yeah. Thank you, Chairman. Um, no, I just want to request a resolution authorizing the Chairman of the Board to sign the annual update on the Family and Children's Services Plan. The local district is required to submit the and develop a plan and send it to New York State Office of Children's Services, and it's a multi year plan, it's a five year plan, so in this case, our plan was from 2018 to 2023, and the request that I have today is just for the authorization for the Chairman to sign an Annual Update because we have to send an Annual Update each year. So it's kind of a housekeeping item, but

Darren O'Connor

Yeah, sounds good. It certainly is a comprehensive document. Do we have a motion to approve that?

John Lant

I'll make the motion.

Darren O'Connor

We have a second?

Tom Wood

Second, Supervisor Wood.

Sandra Winney

I'll make the motion.

Darren O'Connor

Motion made and seconded discussion. All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Darren O'Connor

Opposed? Carried. Next item on the agenda tonight is the Safe Harbour Program. It's the resolution to approve the acceptance of \$43,350. Tina, do we, what do we need to know about that, in addition to that?

Tina Potter

Yeah, that, again, that's a request for a resolution to accept that additional money from Office of Children and Family Services for the program of 43,350 and also to authorize a renewal of the agreement with Saratoga Center for the Family to meet the needs of the youth that are identified in sex and human trafficking. The renewal agreement would cover January 1, 2022, through December 31, of 2022. Not, in the amount not to exceed 35,350. Originally, when this program started in 2016, we were awarded a five year grant, and we, to develop a human traffic awareness program and develop critical services and we contracted with Saratoga Center for the Family to be the lead agency for the human traffic program. And then last month, we were notified on October 15, that we are going to be receiving, we were notified, we're going to get money this year, for the amount of the 43,350 in 2022, which was not anticipated or expected that we were going to receive those funds. So now I need to request a budget amendment or increase appropriations and revenues. It is 100% state funded. So there'll be no budget impact. And the reason for the difference in the 43,350 to the contract amount for Saratoga Center, there is the 8,000 that we keep in house for reimbursement of staff time spent in working with these human trafficking individuals.

Sandra Winney

Wow.

Darren O'Connor

Sounds good. We have a motion for that resolution?

Joe Grasso

So moved.

Sandra Winney

I'll make a motion.

Darren O'Connor

So we had a motion by Supervisor Grasso and a second by Supervisor Winnie. Discussion? All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Darren O'Connor

Opposed? Carried.

Tina Potter

Thank you.

Darren O'Connor

Thank you, Tina. Other business. Any other business? Dr. Kuhles? Just a quick question on, you know, how we're doing with COVID. I know the numbers across the country are going up a little bit as are Saratoga counties. How are we doing on hospitalizations, deaths, the test stay program?

Daniel Kuhles

Okay, good afternoon. Thank you. Thank you very much. Much like the Northeast and really most of the country as a whole, we are certainly experiencing an increase in cases. This is a you know, three or four fold increase over what we saw pre-Thanksgiving last year. Much of this is due, you know, 98, 99% of, maybe even higher, of what's circulating is the delta virus. And if you combine that with waning immunity in individuals, you get a fair, you know, a fair degree of transmission, which is what we're seeing now. Our vaccination, our booster vaccination rates are higher than both the national and state average. Here when we look at seniors, this, we are at 52.5% of seniors have received the booster compared with the state at 30.2, and the US at 40.6. We need to continue to work to get that number higher, not just for seniors but for everyone. We're holding more clinics again this week. We had them every day last week. And I encourage anyone that's interested in a booster, and now it's eligible for anybody 18 and over, to get one as soon as they are able. So hospitalizations are up compared to this time last year and have had a general trend over the last several weeks of rising. Again, these are people primarily that are either unvaccinated or have waning immunity and they tend to be older and have comorbidities. We've only had one pediatric hospitalization in the last 30 days.

Darren O'Connor

The clinics, how are we doing in terms of making reservations and crowds and you know, taking up the spaces, how are we doing on that? Is it relatively easy to get a, to register for it on a last minute basis?

Daniel Kuhles

It depends on the vaccine there right now, particularly among seniors, the Moderna seems to be of particular interest to seniors. You know, our clinics have primarily been for people over 65 so they don't have to compete against others that may be able to easily, more easily, go to a pharmacy or to another provider. We certainly also make sure that critical infrastructure is taken care of, but we do also hold clinics for you know, anybody that's, that's eligible, Moderna really seems to be what people are interested in.

Darren O'Connor

Okay. Thank you, doctor. Any other questions or discussions for Commissioner Potter?

Joe Grasso

Mr. Chairman? Yes. Hello doctor. Just, in terms of the boosters, you know, I, it sounds like a lot of people are now signing up for the boosters and getting those for the first time is that something that also will wane and every six months or so, go through another cycle of booster shots?

Daniel Kuhles

There's really no data to inform that right now. You know, some countries haven't even started a third dose or are just starting to. Israel has been really at the forefront of the, you know, epidemiological analysis of COVID. They were the first to go with boosters. And they are, they are preparing and making agreements to acquire vaccine in case additional boosters are needed for the population.

Joe Grasso

Great, thanks.

Darren O'Connor

Thanks very much, Doctor. Any other questions?

Sandra Winney

Yes, I have. This is Supervisor Winney. I'd like to just to commend Dr. Kuhles and his staff. I had personally in my family, they had COVID and I just, I'm so proud of our health department, because we had to go through Fulton County, and they're, to me, they're way behind Saratoga County. And I just want to commend him in the staff there. Because when I called they were right on the money, they've got right to my son who contacted that and I really am assured that they're doing a tremendous job.

Daniel Kuhles

Thank you for your kind words, Supervisor, it's, it's truly a team effort. And, you know, the resources that the Board has given to us allows us to do that job. So many thanks for all you do to support us.

Darren O'Connor

Absolutely. I think there'd be a group of seconds to that commendation. So thanks very much, Doctor. Any anything else?

Tara Gaston

Chairman?

Darren O'Connor

Sure, sure. Supervisor, Gaston.

Tara Gaston

Thank you. I would also second uh, today is World or National Public Health Day so I definitely think that recognition is, is very timely Supervisor Winney. But my question is actually for Commissioner Potter. I was wondering if she had an update on Code Blue since I know it started and we've had a few quite cold days, how it was looking compared to previously. Thank you.

Tina Potter

Yeah, Code Blue has been open for about a week and a half now. And it's been pretty close to capacity amount, 44 people have been the average per night.

Sandra Winney

Wow.

Tara Gaston

And since it's only the one location is over capacity, is that unfortunately still the backup of hotels?

Tina Potter

The capacity is about 60. And what did you say about backup? The executive director

Tara Gaston

If it goes past that capacity, since I know this year, we only have the one location.

Tina Potter

We have, he has a plan for backup. If they do get over capacity, and also if that happens to be the case, then we also have to work in our department to try to find resources. But I think we're okay for right now because he has another venue for at least 10 More people if it gets over capacity at the Adelphi location.

Tara Gaston

Thank you.

Tina Potter

You're welcome.

Darren O'Connor

Any other questions? Or discussion or business? Nope. Do we have a motion to adjourn?

John Lant

Yes. I make the motion.

Darren O'Connor

Supervisor Lant. Do we have a second?

Joe Grasso

I'll second

Darren O'Connor

Supervisor Grasso. Discussion? All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Darren O'Connor

Opposed? Carried. We're adjourned. Thanks very much, everybody. Happy Thanksgiving.

Sandra Winney

You too.