

MENTAL HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE
CORTLAND COUNTY
COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD MEETING

Meeting Minutes REV – March 11, 2019 – 3:00 P.M.
Room 302 – County Office Building

Chair: Shari Weiss, Ph.D.

Vice Chair: Ellen Wright

Director: Mark Thayer

- Members Present:** Shari Weiss (Chair), Ellen Wright (Vice Chair), Cynthia Guy, Elizabeth (Betsy) Larkin, Darlene Latten, Susan Thomas and Leslie Wilkins
- Members Absent:** Loreen Geiger and Christopher Hyde
- Others Present:** Mark Thayer (Director), Denise Schulze and Jesse Belton (Catholic Charities of Cortland County), Michael Barylski (County Legislator), Patty Schaap (CCDMH SPOA Coordinator) and Gail Spitzer (Secretary)
- Call to Order:** 3:02 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Shari Weiss thanked everyone for re-electing her as Chair of the Subcommittee, which she enjoys very much

Agenda Item: Introductions

Agenda Item: Approve Minutes of February 11, 2019 Chair, Shari Weiss asked for a motion to approve minutes

- ✓ Motion made by Betsy Larkin, seconded by Cynthia Guy – with no further discussion, unanimously approved

Agenda Item: Shining Star Recognition Plan Leslie Wilkins

Shari asked Leslie to further explain her thoughts as discussed at the February meeting – Leslie: so many people doing special things in this community – recognition by this Subcommittee would be meaningful / determine a nomination process, frequency, format / Cyndi Guy manages a nomination process at SUNY every year for awards, using Google doc. nomination form – link is made available and the information is easy to manage / Shari: should this be tied in with an event; i.e., May is MH month event – categories / Shari suggested tabling conversation, consider some possibilities and revisit next month / Leslie: everyone appreciates a pat on the back / Ellen Wright: A Nod to Excellence

Agenda Item: Homelessness in Cortland County Shari Weiss

Did research – received information from DSS and other sources / Last month, homeless count approximately 80 people – edging up over the years – previous average approximately 40 people during winter months – contiguous counties reporting similar increases / there is no clear or tangible cause but apparent combination of reasons

Process – working agreement between Catholic Charities and DSS; a homeless individual, reporting to DSS will be placed in transitional housing, if available, or sent to a hotel – try to connect to services, as quickly as possible and ultimately assist finding permanent housing – options for affordable housing are limited and becoming increasingly less available / 2018 – 75 cases in transitional housing; total of 2,529 bed days; average length of stay 33.72 – when leaving that program, they move into permanent housing, the majority of the time / transitional housing program in 2017; rate of recidivism (return to homelessness) was 1/3 the national average – positive outcomes attributed to receiving the supportive services necessary – connecting to peers, health care, behavioral health care

Qualifying for transitional housing – determination and referral only from DSS to CCOCC – only exclusions: sex offenders, arsonists, someone convicted of manufacturing methamphetamine / there are two family units, trying to avoid sending a family to a hotel / "Code Blue" NYS Law, a person must be housed, regardless of status, if the ambient temperature is 32° or below

The other population of homeless are people being released from prison or County Jail – from 2017 to date: 62 homeless: 58 with chemical dependence, 19 have mental health needs, 16 co-occurring / discussion about the additional complexity and challenges of individuals being released from jail who are homeless; i.e., sanctions, jail disqualifies for some residential/employment options, etc.

Mother Cabrini Foundation – Funding that is being made available – a concept paper is submitted , which if accepted is followed by a grant proposal – Charities is preparing a proposal intended to work with individuals coming out of prison or the Jail 0 the program: Justice Involved Transitional Services – linking them immediately with all services they need; housing, vocational training, getting into behavioral health treatment, medical care, social services – one stop setting if possible

Mark: what can be done to expand the housing options? Shari: need more affordable housing, more landlords willing to rent – fair market rent value recently increased to \$673 for one bedroom apartment / single rooms that are available are not a good environment, when the intention is to foster better lifestyle choices and avoid recidivism

Shari: DSS should be recognized for their hard work – trying to find solutions – most flexible, cooperative County – very appreciative

Agenda Item: Agency/School Updates and Report

Ellen Wright – shared information regarding the extremely high sodium levels in Cortland water, 2019 Annual Water report based on 2018 data (City of Cortland water shows sodium level range 49.0 to 66.4 – maximum contaminant level goal is 20)

Patty Schaap – TAG (Think Ahead Group) putting together plans for Mental Health Awareness month in May – dates for MH Walk are not confirmed – sent email to schools today requesting shirt designs for the event / date for Suicide Prevention Coalition meeting with Garra Lloyd-Lester is April 30 – 8:30 to 11:30 – location to be determined

Mike Barylski (County Legislator) – thanked group for the invitation to this meeting – on Health and Human Service Committee and the JPS Committee – these issues do overlap – have not paid enough attention to the overlap – considering some joint meetings (H&HS/JPS) – looking at overcrowding at the Jail – multifaceted questions / have had two not-for-profits researching programs to address jail overcrowding / March 20 and 21, two forums; opioids and findings of the Vera institute relative to the Jail – everyone invited to be part of the discussion

Betsy Larkin (County Clerk) – County Clerk records, going back 100 years, show very clearly how far society has progressed regarding mental health / last month requested discussion of discharge policy at the Mental Health Clinic – Clinic’s Program Director on vacation – will added to agenda for April

Susan Thomas (Racker Children’s Day Treatment – OCM/BOCES) – continues to operate at capacity – continue to see increase in acuity of the types of children that are being referred – utilize mobile crisis and respite frequently – trying to prevent hospitalizations but it has been difficult; both Cortland and Onondaga Counties (program cares for children from 23 school districts) – it is sad to see an increase in the number of children that cannot be stabilized who are needing residential care / BOCES is doing everything State Education is suggesting; i.e., training in restorative practices, social /emotional learning curriculums, reinforcing positive behavior intervention systems, steer away from suspension – continues to be very challenging – behaviors from children running out of school, suicide ideation, bullying, increase in violence – other school districts seeing the same thing

Leslie Wilkins (FCS, CPR, LGBT) – three existing Cohort Management Programs – Family and Children’s Counseling Services focus ACES (Adverse Childhood Experience Study) children and their caregivers – potential to change how to help families – very exciting – will continue to report

Darlene Latten (Director of Counselor at Homer School District) – has dealt with homelessness, mental health issues, emotionally disturbed, social emotional issues / finding ways to implement new State mandate; incorporating mental health programs in all curriculum for all grades / runners – fortunate to have resource officers in every building in Homer

Cynthia Guy (SUNY Cortland) – President of the Board of Education at Cooperative Extension offering classes and workshops for “non-traditional parents”; grandparents, aunts and uncles raising children – becoming more frequent

Agenda Item: Director’s Report (copy provided) Mark Thayer

County Run Services – Openings in Clinic LMSW, Medical Services Clerk – also have openings in Jamee Sobko’s Family Support staff

Will be meeting with Family & Children’s Counseling Services regarding additional funding from OASAS to provide drug and alcohol services in the jail and some plan transitioning – have to submit a plan to OASAS

Guthrie Cortland Medical Center – have had some good meetings – new Nurse Manager, Linda Roos, has expressed interest in community involvement – and attending MH Subcommittee meetings – they have activated the new complex care protocol; intended to avoid people having to remain in the ER for extended periods of time – great strides in collaborative work with hospital

Still in the running for the Columbia University CHASE(County-system Hub and Spoke Empowerment) Grant: had virtual site visit last Friday – Cortland one of 15 counties

Betty Hatheway Foundation – may have a fifth person to complete the board – hope to move forward with plan of using remaining funds – Mental Health Education category

Regional Updates: OPWDD, OMH and OCFS to find resolutions to coordinate care across systems for those highest needs individuals avoiding future problems – Cortland is part of the last of six regions in the State to roll out START – emergency system and to find ways to integrate OPWDD training in existing crisis and respite services

Regional Peer Recovery Center Meeting – all regional peer recovery centers, directors and OMH representatives – Regional meeting coming up March 27

New Regional Open Access – in Tompkins County – planning a site visit and also invite Angela Sullivan to attend CSB and CD Subcommittee meeting

Information about Governor’s budget and legalization of marijuana – more information and links available upon request

Agenda Item: Adjourn Chair, Shari Weiss asked for a motion to adjourn

- ✓ Motion by Ellen Wright - meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. **Next Regular Meeting – April 8, 2019**

Minutes submitted by Gail L. Spitzer

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Approved minutes available on County Website:

www.Cortland-Co.org/433/Mental-Health