

**ST. JOHNS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL (HHSAC)**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
May 4, 2023

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tara Haley, Chair; Charles Daly, Vice Chair; Kathleen Patneau; Howard Hitzel; Chip Cover; Shannon Nazworth; Leslie Barstow

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Tracy Dillon, Manager, Social Services; Katrina Tanner, Contract Coordinator, Social Services; Mary Garcia, Administrative Coordinator, Social Services

**BCC LIASON:** Commissioner Krista Joseph – District 4 – sent regrets  
Sarah Taylor – Assistant County Administrator – sent regrets

**VISITORS:** In Person – Anita Daniel  
Via Zoom – Austin Burns; Amanda Callahan; Dawn Bell; Judi Dembowski; Patti Greenough; Chynequa King; Michael Hartman; Debi Redding; Fred Baker; Brian Robinson; Nancy Russo; Sara Hernandez; Jacob Manning

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:** Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Quorum was present.

**MINUTES – April, 2023:** Chip Cover **motioned** to approve the April, 2023, general meeting minutes. Shannon Nazworth seconded the motion; minutes **approved unanimously** by the Council.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**REPORT FROM COMMISSIONER JOSEPH:** Commissioner Joseph sent regrets.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- a) **Continuum of Care (CoC) Update:** Anita Daniel reported the CoC has been awarded another program competition from HUD for funding through September 30, 2024. Ms. Daniel stated they were awarded an increase that will help support the program internally with costs associated with data and staffing. Ms. Daniel went on to say that proposals for the competition for ESG and ESG-CV3 funds are due on May 5<sup>th</sup> and she stated categories are street outreach, emergency shelter, prevention, and rapid rehousing. Ms. Daniel also welcomed new CoC board member, Tracy Dillon, manager of St. Johns County Social Services Department.
- b) **Update from San Marcos Heights & Victoria Crossing Multi-Family Developments:** Mary Garcia stated property management staff at San Marcos Heights were unable to attend the meeting but sent word that units are 100% occupied and there is a waitlist on 1, 2, and 3 bedroom units. Michael Hartman, Turnstone Development, was unable to attend the meeting but did send an update via email. Tara Haley, reading off of this report, stated Victoria Crossing is 93% complete as of this date, and that buildings one and two will be complete in May but won't be ready for occupancy until the water and waste water systems

have been approved by the County and FDEP. Ms. Haley stated it is estimated that all buildings should be ready for occupancy by mid-June. Ms. Haley went on to report the clubhouse will be complete, with all furniture installed, by the end of May and ready for occupancy by staff from Health & Human Services. Photos of the progress at Victoria Crossing were circulated.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a) **Point in Time Count – 2023:** Austin Burns began by explaining that the Point in Time (PIT) Count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night. Mr. Burns further explained that sheltered counts include those in temporary housing settings, such as emergency shelter, transitional housing, and safe havens, while unsheltered counts are those who reside in a place not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, abandoned buildings, and streets/sidewalks. Mr. Burns said the process spans a week but individuals are asked where they stayed on the specific night of the PIT count. Mr. Burns stated this year's total count was 435, a 24.6% increase over 2022. Mr. Burns said the unsheltered count was 283 (up from 242 last year) and the emergency shelter-sheltered count was 101 (up from 66 last year) and transitional housing-sheltered count was 51 (up from 41 last year). Mr. Burns stated 35 families were identified as unsheltered and 82 families were sheltered and he said "family" in this case simply means four or more individuals identified as "together". Mr. Burns said 43% of unsheltered individuals were experiencing mental health issues and 32% were experiencing substance use issues. Mr. Burns stated 9% of sheltered individuals were experiencing mental health issues and 3% were experiencing substance use issues. Mr. Burns said that just 5% of individuals in both of these categories are receiving regular healthcare. Mr. Burns said there was a focus on the chronically homeless and he said the count went from 80 to 156 this year, with 44% reporting mental health issues, 34% reporting substance use issues, and 68% reporting being head of household with no other members. There was some discussion as to why numbers are so much higher this year and Tracy Dillon stated some of the disparity is believed to be artificially low numbers in 2022, due to inclement weather during the count, reluctance of individuals to engage in the survey, and the date of the count, which fell near the first of the month when checks are typically received. Mr. Burns added that new canvassing strategies, increased trainings, better communication, and more partner participation in 2023, likely contributed to a more accurate count.

Mr. Burns went on to review the youth count (ages 18-24 years) and stated that count was 28, up from 17 last year, 68% male and 32% female, with 35% reporting mental health issues and 11% reporting substance use issues. Mr. Burns stated there has been a focus on the aging population and he said the count this year was 57 individuals aged 55-61, and a count of 44 individuals aged 62 and older, with 73% of these male and 27% female. Mr. Burns stated 42% of this group reported mental health issues and 35% substance use. Mr. Burns moved on to the veteran count and reported a decrease to 14 from 25 in 2022. Mr. Burns stated 100% of respondents were male, 14% reported mental health issues and 38% substance use. Mr. Burns noted that 2 in 3 people in this group identified as chronically homeless.

In conclusion, Mr. Burns said the average homeless profile is a male 35-44 years, with a 1 in 4 odds of having a disability (mental or physical), likely living alone, homeless at least twice in the last 3 years, with a 5% chance to be receiving

regular medical care, and a 1 in 16 odds of being awarded benefits. Mr. Burns also shared feedback from survey participants as to what the community could use most and quoted affordable housing, more homeless shelters, more rental units, more public transportation and better access to healthcare as the top five answers. Presentation available upon request.

**REPORT FROM SARAH TAYLOR, ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR:** Sarah Taylor sent regrets.

**FUNDED AGENCY UPDATES:**

**Early Learning Coalition (ELC):** Dawn Bell reported they have been able to get families enrolled in just two to three weeks thanks to additional funding.

**Council on Aging (COA):** Brian Robinson reported they had 200 people attend the centenarian luncheon held recently at the River House and he stated 54 honorees were 95 years or older, and 19 of those were 100 years or older. Mr. Robinson said that on May 18<sup>th</sup> there will be another centenarian luncheon at their Ponte Vedra location

**Epic Behavioral Healthcare:** Patti Greenough reported that in the recent legislative session they have been budgeted \$750,000 in continuation funding for women's residential treatment in order to expand capacity/number of beds. Ms. Greenough went on to say there is also a first time, one time only budgeted item at \$576,000 for renovations on their mental health clinic, as well as their medication assisted treatment facility.

**Good Samaritan/Wildflower Clinic:** Chynequa King was having technical difficulties and her report could not be heard.

**St. Augustine Youth Services (SAYS):** Amanda Callahan reported on the CAT program and stated 64 clients and their families have been seen this year and she stated 2023 should shape up with more children being served than ever before. Ms. Callahan stated they received additional funding for training, making it possible to sign families up for conferences with the parent partner on staff. Ms. Callahan said they have also planned an awards banquet that will be held over the summer for community families. Fred Baker reported for Emma Hayes and stated MRT has done 376 assessments as of March, with a Baker Act diversion rate of 82%, which translates into an approximate savings of \$1.2 million. Mr. Baker stated the Coaches program is fully staffed with a caseload of 12 youth, and he said that as of last month, all youth are enrolled in school, there were no arrests, and no need for a higher level of care,

**Betty Griffin Center (BGC):** No representative in attendance.

**Emergency Services & Homeless Coalition (ESHC):** Debi Redding reported they are partnering with the Emmanuel Project to hold a community health clinic targeting people that are uninsured on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 11am-2pm. Ms. Redding said this is open to the community and will include a cook-out.

**St. Francis House (SFH):** Judi Dembowski reported they are fully staffed and they've recently hired a new case manager who will work with those who have deeper needs by attending appointments with them and advocating for them. Ms. Dembowski said they are also bringing more representatives on-site from partner agencies such as Epic and Operation New Hope, so that they can connect with clients that may need their services.

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS:**

**Homeless Advocacy Council:** No representative in attendance.

**SMA Healthcare:** Nancy Russo reported that they have received full and recurring funding to support their FACT team, which serves those most vulnerable in the community.

**Department of Health:** No representative in attendance.

**Flagler Health +:** Anita Daniel reported the due diligence period continues on the merger with UF Health. Ms. Daniel said there will be an expansion of the Plus Bus, with additional staffing, more services provided, and more locations visited.

**Health & Human Services Department (HHS):** Tracy Dillon reported budget hearings will take place at the Agricultural Center on May 24<sup>th</sup>, at 1pm, should anyone wish to attend. Ms. Dillon also reported the County has taken over administration of the SHIP Rehab program from St. Johns Housing Partnership effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, so anyone that wishes to apply should contact Housing and Community Development.

**Faith Based Community:** No representative in attendance.

**Public Safety:** Sgt. Manning reported an excellent outcome to the partnership of the SJSO and the Mobile Response Team (MRT) for adults, managed by Epic, by talking about a particular interaction with an adult male with possible dementia. Sgt. Manning stated family members were called and the gentleman's safety was assured and he said he was very impressed with the MRT member. Sgt. Manning said ride-alongs are planned for all members of the MRT, which will foster relationships between officers and the MRT. Sgt. Manning also stated he has been in touch with Alachua County regarding their co-responder program for interactions with individuals with mental health issues. Sgt. Manning stated Alachua has had great results with the program and this might be something that could eventually be introduced in St. Johns.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Executive Meeting:** Thursday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, at 3:30 p.m., in the Kingfisher conference room, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, FL 32084.

**Regular Meeting:** Thursday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, at 4pm, in the Kingfisher conference room, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, FL 32084 and by Zoom

**ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting was adjourned at 4:59 p.m.