

ST. JOHNS COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL (HHSAC)
MEETING MINUTES
April 4, 2024

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Shannon Nazworth

STAFF PRESENT: Shawna Novak, Director, Health & Human Services; Joe Cone, Assistant Director, Health & Human Services; Tracy Dillon, Social Services Manager; Katrina Tanner, Contract Coordinator, Social Services; Mary Garcia, Administrative Coordinator, Social Services

BCC LIASON: Commissioner Sarah Arnold, District 2

VISITORS: Via Zoom – Kelly Franklin; Judi Dembowski; Brian Robinson; Patti Greenough; Sharron Green; Nancy Russo; Chynequa King; Schuyler Siefker; Dennis Maneja; Tim Decker
In-person – Dawn Bell; Nangela Pulsfus; Kristine King; Susan Jackson; Anthony Levy; Lana Sample

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Quorum was present.

MINUTES – March, 2024: Charles Daly **motioned** to approve the March, 2024, general meeting minutes. Kathleen Patneau seconded the motion; minutes **approved unanimously** by the Council.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

REPORT FROM COMMISSIONER ARNOLD: Commissioner Arnold reported that she and Shawna Novak have spoken to Schuyler Siefker, SAYS, about reconvening the Childrens’ Alliance, which she said was a pre-Covid initiative. Commissioner Arnold said they will begin looking at options for gap funding and legislative asks for next year.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a) **Continuum of Care (CoC).** Anita Daniel was unable to attend but sent some updates and an invitation to attend the CoC annual meeting on April 10th. Ms. Daniel reported HB1365 was signed into law by the governor and it will become effective October 1st. Ms. Daniel also reported the CoC Board of Directors is actively engaged in supporting and contributing to the implementation efforts of this bill by both the City of St. Augustine and the County.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a) **2023 HHSAC Annual Report:** The report was sent electronically to all Council members for review. Kathleen Patneau **motioned** to approve the submission of the

report as written to the Board of County Commissioners. Leslie Barstow seconded the motion. Submission of the report **approved unanimously** by the Council.

- b) Independent Agency Funding – FY25: Review of Funding Categories, Approval of Proposed Application, Application Posting, and Timeline:** A hard copy of a PowerPoint presentation was provided to all attendees and the Council. Katrina Tanner began by explaining the methodology used to identify unmet and significant health needs in St. Johns County. Ms. Tanner said the community health needs assessment conducted by Flagler Health + in 2023, used a review of secondary health data, and validation through stakeholder interviews. Ms. Tanner said the identified significant needs included access to healthcare, chronic diseases, healthy eating and physical activity, housing and homelessness, mental health, preventative practices, and substance use. Based upon these findings, Ms. Tanner said three funding categories have been targeted – community healthcare, including aging, affordable housing and homelessness, and employment opportunities. Ms. Tanner reviewed the timeline for the RFP and shared key dates, such as the application posting on April 22nd, deadline for funding application questions on May 17th, deadline for application submittal on May 31st, the completion of scoring of applications on June 21st, preliminary scoring announced on August 1st, and approval of funding recommendations on August 15th. Ms. Tanner said the blackout period will begin on April 22nd and it will end upon contracts being executed in October. Dawn Bell asked if any assessment had been done of neighboring counties such as Putnam or Flagler. Ms. Novak said an assessment could be included in the scope of work for the comprehensive needs assessment of human services she will be asking for in next year's budget. Chip Cover **motioned** to approve the application itself, application posting, and the timeline. Howard Hitzel seconded the motion. Application, application posting, and timeline all **approved unanimously** by the Council.

REPORT FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATION: Shawna Novak expanded on what Commissioner Arnold reported with regard to the Children's Alliance and she said they are partnering with INK (Investing in Kids). Ms. Novak said she will add necessary funding to the Health & Human Services budget for next year, while they are seeking state appropriation.

FUNDED AGENCY UPDATES:

Early Learning Coalition (ELC): Dawn Bell said they are gearing up for the next legislative session when they intend to ask again for a change of income requirements from the currently used 150% of the federal poverty level to the state median income.

Council on Aging (COA): Mr. Robinson said they recently held their annual business meeting and they compared services provided from year 2022 to year 2023. Mr. Robinson said they have seen a 16% increase in congregate and home delivered meals, a 32% increase in senior center participation, a 7% increase in use of para-transit and independent living services, a 36% increase in care connection services, an 11% increase in adult daycare services, and an increase of 80% in participation in care giver support groups. Mr. Robinson requested help in getting the word out to anyone 95 years or older as they will be holding centenarian lunches on May 9th at the River House and on May 16th at the Players Community Senior Center.

Epic Behavioral Healthcare: Nangy Pulsfus reported there are two legislative funding requests that are awaiting the governor's signature; one that would support six additional residential beds for women, and one that would support their sober living expansion, which she said would ultimately include eight homes.

Good Samaritan/Wildflower Clinic: Chynequa King reported that construction on their point of care lab, which will provide real time lab results, will begin within the next three months. Ms. King reported they have hired a new dentist in response to a 32% increase in dental clients over the last quarter.

St. Augustine Youth Services (SAYS): Schuyler Siefker reported they have hired three therapists, which has allowed them to clear their waiting list. Ms. Siefker said that SAYS, in collaboration with LSF and other community partners, will be holding an event called “Uplift” on May 16th at the Agricultural Center. Ms. Siefker said the goal is to open a healthy line of communication between state agencies and faith-based organizations, to ensure they are aware of services available for their parishioners.

Betty Griffin Center (BGC): Kelly Franklin reported April is “sexual assault awareness” month and she said they are holding a 5K on April 6th, an event titled “Walk in my Shoes” on April 16th, and they are partnering with Flagler College on “Take Back the Night” events throughout the month.

Emergency Services & Homeless Coalition (ESH): Sharron Green reported they’ve had two new families move in over the last six weeks and one family has completed the program and moved on to their own apartment. Ms. Green said the need for food has grown as they were feeding approximately 15 to 20 families per day, and now 20 to 30 families are relying on their food pantry.

St. Francis House (SFH): Judi Dembowski was attending a homelessness conference so she was not available to provide a report.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

SMA Healthcare: Ms. Russo said she had nothing new to report on this date.

Department of Health: Lana Sample reported that WIC program participation continues to grow and the program’s availability at the Hastings Library has been very beneficial to the community. Ms. Sample said they have just recently hired a peer breast feeding counselor

Flagler Health +: Paige Stanton was not in attendance.

Health & Human Services Department (HHS): Shawna Novak reported she will be presenting at the April 16th County Commission meeting in conjunction with Public Works as part of the service delivery team. Ms. Novak said Social Services has a staff member embedded in the jail to help with the re-entry program by assisting inmates with SNAP, Medicaid, housing, etc. Ms. Novak said Public Works is hiring participants of the re-entry program through a staffing agency.

Faith Based Community: No representative in attendance.

Public Safety: Sgt. Manning was unable to attend the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Executive Meeting: Thursday, April 18, 2024, at 3:30 p.m., in the Kingfisher conference room, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, FL 32084.

Regular Meeting: Thursday, May 2, 2024, at 4pm, in the Kingfisher conference room, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, FL 32084 and by Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.