



Niagara County Community Services Board
Minutes
Regular Meeting
Date: Monday, October 21, 2024
Time: 6:00 pm

LOCATION: Dept. of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Administrative Offices, Shaw Building, Health Department Conference Room, 1st Floor, 5467 Upper Mountain Road, NY.

ATTENDANCE:	PRESENT	EXCUSED
Burt Marshall, Board President	X	
Annette Dobrasz, EdD, 1 st Board VP	X	
Stephanie Donovan, 2 nd Board VP	X	
Rosamond Siegwarth, Board Member	X	
Thomas Gerbasi, MD, Board Member	X	
Candace Butcher, Board Member		X
Ronald Barstys, PhD, Board Member	X	
Suzanne Diez, Board Member		X
Richard Abbott, Board Member	X	
Betsy Farkas, Board Member		X
Donald Jablonski, Board Member	X	
Rev. Francis Kadryna, Board Member	X	
Kelly Biehls, Board Member	X	
<u>Niagara County Mental Health Administration</u>		
Laura Kelemen, LCSW-R, NCDMH Director	X	
Myrla Gibbons Doxey, LMFT, NCDMH Deputy Director	X	
Lee Ann Cogar, Confidential Assistant	X	
Cindi Wilkins, Fiscal Administrator	X	
<u>Guests</u>		
Bailey Norris, Homeless Alliance of WNY	X	
Melody Stuckey, InTandem	X - Webex	
Brittany Scott, InTandem	X - Webex	

1) **Burt Marshall, Board President, called the Community Services Board (CSB) Meeting to order at 6:05 PM.**

2) **Meeting Minutes**

- Minutes for the September 23, 2024 CSB meeting

Donald Jablonski motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Dr. Thomas Gerbasi seconded the motion; the minutes for September 23, 2024 were approved by the Board.

3) **Membership Review:** Director Kelemen reported there are some interested candidates for 2025, and we will be reaching out to them in the near future.

4) **Director's Report**

- **Correspondence was reviewed by Laura Kelemen, Director.**

- Letters, Memorandums & E-mails:
 - Correspondence listed on separate page, attached

- **Certificate of Need (CON) / Prior Approval Reviews (PAR)**

***CON –**

- NYSARC Inc., Cattaraugus Niagara Counties Chapter (DBA InTandem) – Application #ICF-092424-1-WS – Close and decertify ICF located at 15 Mead St., North Tonawanda, NY. Application summary presented by Deputy Director Gibbons Doxey. Reason for closure is that during two (2) recent state surveys, agency received statements of deficiencies including an immediate jeopardy due to an electrical issue and the issues within the home cannot be corrected by the landlord. Additionally, four (4) of 10-beds have remained vacant for over a year. Challenges to filling the vacancies due to the home being 3-stories and those in need of the services have high needs not conducive to being served in a 3-story home.

The six (6) ICF residents were relocated to Niagara County IRA locations within the agency and are reported to be content and doing well in their new environments. Those six (6) residents were reassessed to no longer require the ICF level of care and will be Waiver-service enrolled effective 11/1/24.

The agency operates two (2) Other ICFs in Niagara County that are currently operating at 100% occupancy. InTandem is equipped to care for some medically complicated ICF clients in their IRA locations. The agency has a total of 17 IRAs in Niagara County, 16 of which are currently operational with a total of 129 beds, filled at 94% occupancy. The one (1) IRA that is not operational closed during the COVID-19 pandemic due to staffing challenges.

Melody Stuckey and Brittany Scott from InTandem were present at the meeting via Webex to answer any questions from the Board.

Dr. Annette Dobrasz motioned to approve the CON as presented, Richard Abbott seconded the motion; the CON was approved by the Board.

- Horizon Health Services – Capital Project to increase space within existing building at Horizon Village. Application summary presented by Deputy Director Gibbons Doxey. This Capital Project will include a new addition to existing building located at 6301 Inducon Drive East in Sanborn, NY. The expansion will increase space to allow groups to run more effectively, create more offices for existing staff, and add additional restrooms, storage rooms, staff break room, and large community room. Total project cost is \$2,759,000 with OASAS funding. Proposed construction start date is October 2025.

Proposed space will be approximately 5,000 square feet. No changes are being made to services, patient population, staffing or exterior.

Francis Kadryna motioned to approve the CON as presented, Kelly Biehls seconded the motion, the CON was approved as presented.

***EzPar – None**

Informational –

- Gateway-Longview – Deputy Director Gibbons Doxey provided an update on information previously presented to the CSB related to submitted Administrative Action requests to reduce days/hours of operation at school-based satellite clinics in (3) Elementary Schools in the Niagara Falls City School District. Deputy Director Gibbons Doxey met with Gateway-Longview and Niagara Falls City School District Leadership on 9/30/24. The District expressed an understanding of and agreement with the changes. They shared a collaborative plan to improve communications, including a Gateway-Longview Supervisor in monthly school staff meetings, advanced planning for the transitions to summer break and back to school for fall, which is time when service engagement has been difficult to maintain with students and their families, and continued efforts to reduce barriers to care. Gateway-Longview also noted the agency created 10-month school-based satellite positions with summer per diem hours to improve fiscal sustainability. They have 4-posted positions with (one) 1 potential candidate. The District expressed understanding that if the need is demonstrated to increase service availability at the school in the future, they can approach the agency to consider this.
- Key Findings on Intersection of Mental Health and Homelessness in Niagara County – Bailey Norris with Homeless Alliance of WNY provided a brief presentation to the Board regarding the new 2023 homelessness statistics in Niagara County. This data was compiled from the HCMIS, and covers Niagara, Erie, Genesee, Orleans and Wyoming Counties. Bailey reported that 8,500 individuals have been utilizing services across the five counties. In 2023, 1,241 individuals lost their housing in Niagara County. This was a 33.8% increase from the previous year. The largest need was determined to be mental health disorder individuals. Prevention and Early intervention is their focus.
- **2025 NCDMH Department Detailed Budget Information** – Presented by Cindi Wilkins, Fiscal Administrator
- **Corporate Compliance – No new business.**
- **Programs / System Updates, provided by Director Laura Kelemen and Deputy Director Gibbons Doxey –**
 - Court Based Mental Health Navigators update – Director Kelemen reported that OMH has offered the department additional funding for two positions, which would be working to address the mental health and related needs of defendants from the point of arraignment and moving forward. The Department has submitted a program design to OMH for its approval and is working with Lockport City Court and will work with CAP court to implement. OMHs vision is to potentially reduce the need for 730 Competency Restoration down the line when needs are addressed early in the process.
 - ECMC CPEP and MHL 9.45 Transports – Director Kelemen reported that ECMC is unhappy with ambulance transports of children to ECMC. The ambulance companies are instructed to transport individuals to the closest 939 location. Most times, the closest facility is NFMHC, but NFMHC will not accept these individuals. The children and families are being caught in the crossfire between the two hospitals. The Department is attempting to work with NFMHC,

Sheriff's department and Emergency Management, OMH Field Office to resolve these concerns.

- Soul Shop Training Outcome – Deputy Director Gibbons Doxey reported the Soul Shop training was held on September 18, 2024 with 39 individuals attending. Clergy expressed interest in obtaining more information on available resources in the community to help support individuals with mental health and substance use concerns. Constance Desmarais, NCDMH Community Coalitions Contractor is providing follow up to connect them to additional resources. This training was funded through Niagara County Opioid Settlement dollars, and was a very successful event.

5) President's Report – Burt Marshall reported the Aurora House is finally operating fully staffed.

6) Executive Session Regarding a Personnel Matter

Dr. Annette Dobrasz motioned to enter into Executive Session; Dr. Thomas Gerbasi seconded the motion; the Board entered into Executive Session at 7:26 pm.

Dr. Annette Dobrasz motioned to exit Executive Session; Dr. Thomas Gerbasi seconded the motion; the Board exited Executive Session at 7:46 pm.

7) Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned immediately following the end of the Executive Session at 7:46 pm.

Next CSB Meeting Date: December 2, 2024

For portion that included individuals on Webex:

Recording link:

<https://niagaracounty.webex.com/niagaracounty/jdr.php?RCID=cfede228226642563f5d3aea5bea3b95>

Password: 2rRA3VTn