

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
March 21, 2023

Present: Lisa Virkler, Chair; Andrea Moroughan, Vice-Chair; Richard Chartrand; Jessica Moser and Jeffrey Nellenback.

Others: Legislators Larry Dolhof, Josh Leviker, Phil Hathway, Thomas Osborne and Ian Gilbert; County Manager, Ryan Piche; County Treasurer, Eric Virkler; Human Resources Director, Caitlyn Smith; and County Attorney, Joan McNichol.

Chair Legislator Virkler called the meeting to order at 1:49 p.m.

Legislator Virkler moved to accept the January 17th and February 21st minutes, seconded by Legislator Moroughan and carried.

Lewis County Wellness Team – Anna Platz, Public Health Deputy Director

Anna Platz began by explaining that she was going to go over the past, present and future of the Wellness Team, which is made up of several people from different county departments. The Wellness Team was established in May of 2017 as a result of the Lewis County Community Health Improvement Plan. Public Health's Community Health Assessment revealed that Lewis County adult and childhood obesity rates exceed the statewide average. Developing worksite wellness programs was one of the strategies chosen to address obesity among adults in Lewis County.

Worksite wellness was chosen because social determinants of health are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. Work influences many aspects of life that affect health, including income, workplace hazards, social status, healthcare access, housing, economic security and more. Worksite wellness programs can simultaneously improve the health of employees while also reducing health care costs for employers and improving worker productivity.

Between 2017 and 2022, there have been many things the Wellness Team has done. Some of these items are a monthly newsletter, wellness/health eating challenge, 1st Annual Community Cup event, kickball league, 10-week step challenge, boilermaker group photo, fridge finds, "breath of Fresh Air" challenge, launch of "snackchats", and many more things. The "Breath of Fresh Air" challenge was March 30 to May 1, 2020. This was done in the early days of social distancing, and employees were encouraged to get outside for 30 minutes a day. Employees posted pictures of themselves enjoying the outdoors in the "Lewis County Employee Wellness" Facebook group. Each picture sent/posted would get them entered into a drawing to receive a local gift card.

Fridge Finds was from September 2019 to March 2020. The goal was to make it as easy as possible for employees to have a healthy and nutritious lunch or snack. The county partnered with Salad Advantage, Lowville Producers, Black River Valley Natural, Get It & Go, Jeb's, and PB & J. Each week there would be items that employees could order like fresh salads, wraps, etc. and in addition they could purchase milk, chocolate milk, or cheese and bologna packs directly from the fridges.

Lewis County Community Cup is a competition of events such as bowling, volleyball, badminton, home run derby, field relay, euchre, free throws, kickball, trivia, cornhole, golf chipping, and tug of war. Lewis County employers are solicited to comprise teams and compete against each other in a multi-day, multi-sport competition. Past participants include Lewis County Government, Lewis County Health System, Beaver River Central School, Lowville Academy and Central School, Otis Technology, and South Lewis Central School. This year the Lewis County Community Cup event will be held May 31st through June 3rd, 2023.

Snackchats are special time set aside during the workday to promote health and happiness at work in various locations around the county. The first session was with Dr. Vance, PsyD, who helped employees explore ways to prevent burn out in an hour-long session. The snacks are provided by the Wellness Team. This was implemented from the take-away of the Wellness Survey as many employees voiced a need to take a break.

In 2023 the Wellness Team created a mission statement "Foster a workplace that supports anyone's desire to make healthy lifestyle choices" and a vision statement "Employee physical and mental well-being." The budget line in 2023 was increased to \$5,000.00 compared to only \$500.00 in 2020. The funding in the past has been used for Community Cup supplies, Fridge Finds, prizes for challenges, snacks for Snackchats, and recreation equipment for the Glenfield building.

The 2023 Goals are a healthy and productive workforce; quarterly Snackchats; collaborate with Lee Vance, new EAP provider; 5th Annual Lewis County Community Cup; make annual gym membership discount, Biometric screenings, and free calm app subscription available to ALL employees (regardless of insurance status). The County has contracted with Lee Vance to provide EAP support services. The 2024 Goals and beyond are a healthy and productive workforce; revisiting the possibility of a county Wellness Coordinator; fully utilize available resources and information; and develop a comprehensive wellness plan and/or incentive structure.

Legislator Virkler questioned on how many sessions an employee can have with Dr. Vance, Anna responded that Mr. Vance would meet with them and then gauge what their needs were and recommend further assistance with an outside agency. Anna explained the gym membership discount. The county pays for 70%, or up to \$200.00 for the annual membership to a qualifying gym. At one point YMCA and Double Play were brought into the workplace to sign employees up but they can

also just go directly to the gym and sign up there. The gym is then required to send the county information and verify that the person is an employee.

Anna explained that the Biometrics screening gathers bulk information, no one is singled out, and reports it back to the county and to GKG. The High Deductible Health Insurance Plan puts \$500.00 in the employees HSA if they participate. She concluded by explain that the Calm app can be used for mindfulness and meditation but can be used to help an individual fall asleep and have better quality sleep.

IGT payments – Eric Virkler, County Treasurer

Eric began by explain the concept of IGT, which is Intergovernmental Transfer. It is an interesting funding mechanism that has been in place for years, where federal Medicaid funds flow through NYS to public hospitals and nursing homes. Lewis County General Hospital receives funding for the Skilled Nursing Facility and separate funding for the Hospital. Funds are identified as Disproportionate share funds and Upper Payment limit funding. The timing of funding is very undefined. Generally, the Skilled Nursing Facility funds are received annually in December and February/March. Hospital funds are often paid for a two-to-three-year period with a preliminary payment and then reconciliation and final payments later.

The funding that is provided to Lewis County General Hospital must be offset or matched at 50% by the sponsoring public parent organization (the 50% was reduced to 43.8% by covid legislation). Thus, for Lewis County General Hospital to receive an IGT payment scheduled at \$1,000,000, Lewis County must first make a payment to NYS Department of Health of \$438,000. Both Lewis County General Hospital and the County budget for these IGT amounts (Lewis County General Hospital as a revenue and the County as a DSS Medicaid expense). Due to the undefined timing of the IGT program, the budgeting is a challenge.

The Skilled Nursing Home IGT usually runs the county about \$1 million to \$1.2 million on average. The Hospital side is much more inconsistent, and the final amount is based on a DSH Audit, which was just completed on year 2019. It shows that the State is behind and that the preliminary payments are just very rough estimates. The County just received notice at the beginning of March for two payments for the Hospital. One was for the final 2019 amount and the second one was for the interim estimated payments for 2020 to 2021.

The history shows that there were no IGT payments made to the Hospital in 2020 and no IGT payments made to the Nursing Home in 2022 and 2023 to date. So far to date in 2023, the county has paid \$3.6 million in payments for the Hospital IGT, just cleaning up some of the past years. The Hospital should have received their IGT payment of \$8.3 million. Legislator Dolhof questioned the Surplus/Deficit column on Eric's handout, Eric explained that there have been years where the County didn't payout anything for IGT and that money ended up as a surplus and

now it shows that the County is over budget in that account line by \$1,249,126.00 but because the surplus was put into the general fund in the years that the County didn't pay, technically the money is available. The figure will increase because the County will eventually have to pay something for the Nursing Home.

To give larger picture, the percentage that the County's share of IGT is compared to the Annual Budgeted expenses is ranging from 1.2% up to 6.2%. The budget in 2021 for the County's share of IGT was \$2.9 million but the County only paid out \$1.6 million. In 2022 the budgeted amount was \$2.96 million, and the county paid out \$1.28 million. In 2023 the budgeted amount was \$2.4 million and so far, the county has paid out \$3.6 million. There was more discussion of how the surplus in that budget line ends up in the general fund at the end of the year. Eric explained how the fund balance is used to offset being over budget this year.

Ryan stated that there are other counties with nursing home facilities that leave money on the table because they won't match, Lewis County is lucky that we have been able to match the states amount so the Hospital can receive the most revenue. Jerry Cayer, Lewis County General Hospital CEO stated that DSH stands for the Disproportionate Share of Hospital payments are intended to offset the hospitals uncompensated care costs to improve access for Medicaid and uninsured patients as well as the financial stability of a safety net hospital. Jerry went on to touch on the hospital budgeting versus the Nursing Home budgeting for the IGT revenue.

The following draft resolutions were reviewed:

1. Appropriating funds into the Community Services accounts in the amount of \$162,808.00 from NYS OASAS related to the NYS opioid litigation settlements.
AYE 5 NAY 0
2. Appointing Celia Bango of Harrisville, NY to fill the vacancy of District No. 1 representative on the Lewis County Office For Aging Advisory Council effective April 5, 2023 through December 31, 2025. *Legislator Hathway stated that Celia will be a great asset and is replacing Barbra Ward who had been on the board for several years.*
AYE 5 NAY 0
3. Approving the 2023 Resource Allocation Plan with NYS Office of Children and Family Services for funding in the amount of \$29,610.00.
AYE 5 NAY 0

There being no other business to come before the committee, Legislator Virkler moved to adjourn at 2:47 p.m., seconded by Legislator Chartrand and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board