**Developmental Disabilities subcommittee**

**meeting minutes**

**Date:** December 6, 2024

**Location:** Human Service Building

**PRESIDING:** Karen BOliver

**SECRETARY:** anna platz

**ATTENDEES (sign in Sheet attached):** Karen boliver,Tina cummings, rose larkins, dixie lehman, louise fox (virtual), erin larget, wyatt wagner, REbecca Kelly, pat Fralick, anna platz, jennifer baker, beth astramskas, erin holmes, and mary compo.

| **Topic****Discussed** | **Summary of Topic****Discussed** | **Decision/Action****to be Taken** | **Deadline/person** **responsible** |
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| Call Meeting to Order | The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM. Quorum present.  |  |  |
| Privilege of the Floor | N/A |  |  |
| Approval of the Minutes  | 10/4/2024 minutes presented for approval. | Motion moved by Wyatt Wagner, seconded by Becky Kelly. All in favor.  |  |
| New Business | Bountiful Harvest Program: Overview and Plan (Erin Holmes)* The Maple Ridge Center and the Board of Directors have gone through a strategic planning process and are interested in exploring the concept of a care farm, where individuals with disabilities are support by staff from several different organizations and receive education and training about farming, harvesting, taking care of food and selling it.
* They hope to work with local farms to purchase or obtain their excess produce and then Cornell Cooperative Extension to can and preserve the produce. The produce would be used by Bountiful Harvest participant to prepare and serve quarterly meals.
* Erin is looking for enthusiasm and people to support this project, as well as advisory board members.
* Ideas mentioned by attendees throughout the discussion included
* Pairing up with OPWDD as a supportive employment program (people are already placed at Maple Ridge)
* Ensure that any modifications that are planned for the Maple Ridge Center are ADA Compliant
* Maple Ridge Center already has existing partnerships with Lewis County Government and BOCES
* DPAO has a prevocational program in Jefferson County and that could be extended to Lewis County if the ARC needs support
* Cooking classes should be inclusive and open to all!
* DPAO’s self-direction program has community classes, but one of the requirements is that they are open to the public and not just people with developmental disabilities
* ARC has a prevocational program for people with developmental disabilities and NRCIL has a contract with ACCESS-VR to provide the same service to the general population who aren’t DD but have a disability
* Consider adding housing to the plans (like the social farming happening in St. Lawrence County or tiny homes workforce housing in Hamilton County)
* OPWDD has opportunities for non-certified housing
* Potential connections for grants (Northern New York Community Foundation, Naturally Lewis, United Way, The Pratt Northam Foundation, Lewis County Housing Coalition)

DCS Retirement* Pat will be retiring on December 13.

DCS Hiring Process* According to Mental Hygiene Law, Lewis County is required to have a Community Services Department and a Director of Community Services, to receive state aid.
* Because we are a non-chartered County, the Community Services Board (CSB) is responsible for filling the position, of which we include representation from the Lewis County Board of Legislators (BOL). The interview committee, including Community Services Board Members, the Lewis County Manager, HR Director and Chairman of the Board of Legislators have completed the interview process and have selected Anna Platz as the new director.
* The CSB will vote on Anna’s appointment at their December meeting. After that, Anna will be presented to the Inter-Office Coordinating Council (IOCC), which includes the Commissioner of the Office of Mental Health (OMH), Commissioner of the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and the Commissioner of the Office of Addiction Services and Support (OASAS). Following an IOCC decision, Anna’s appointment will go to the Lewis County Board of Legislators.
* Anna will serve as the interim director until permanent appointment as taken place.

2025 Meeting Schedule * After a brief discussion, the DD Subcommittee has decided to continue meeting every other month on the first Friday from 10-11 am.
 | Anna will share subcommittee emails with Erin.  |  |
| Old Business | Local Services Plan Review & Updates* DPOA is presenting at Community Orientation on December 16.
* Tina shared that she will be training Life Plan staff in early 2025.
* Erin Largett has been connected to Steve Virkler at Lewis County Office for the Aging so she can provide him with updated information about Kelberman for the Community Resource Guide.
* Erin also shared that Kelberman partners with the Oneida County Police Academy and that they are a part of their orientation process for new officers.
* Planning for the 2026 update to the Local Services Plan will begin in early 2025.
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| Project Updates | CSB Ad Hoc Committee* The committee continues to review and update the monthly report document that will be shared with contract agencies, beginning in 2025.
* After the monthly reports are finalized, the committee will begin reviewing the CSB and subcommittee applications and appointment process as well as the CSB Manual and Bylaws.

Transition Taskforce* Last quarter’s meeting was heavy on transition manual content, ideas to promote the transition information, making the handbook accessible electronically, distributing hard copies at events and potentially incorporating a QR code.
* They also discussed coordinating with Families Together of the North County for the community orientation event on December 16 and with Systems of Care for next year’s summit.
* Ally Petrus (leader of the Task Force) sits on the Long-Term Care Council that is run by Lewis County Office for the Aging, to ensure coordination between groups.

1115 Waiver* NRCIL has applied, passed the credentialing process and is now in the contracting phase.
* DPAO has also applied but still has questions due to the geographic areas that they serve.
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| Agency Updates | DPAO* Tina Cummings has been selected as the new executive director for DPOA, when the current executive director retires at the end of January. Shannon New will assume the role of Assistant Executive Director.
* The Lewis County Family Support Christmas Party is taking place on Saturday, December 7.
* The Fall Beaver Camp retreat was extremely successful.

Lewis County Public Health* Has hired an Occupational Therapist (OT) from BOCES to be an independent contractor doing early intervention and committee of preschool special education (CPSE). He is starting in January and will reduce their waitlist for OT down to zero (currently in 20s).
* There is no waitlist for speech. The biggest waitlist is for special education. The schools are also struggling to hire special education teachers.
* Beaver River Central School has applied for funding to support special education in an integrated setting, which is a resource that hasn’t existed since Benchmark closed its doors.

Wyatt* 15 youth attended the inaugural weekend of the Youth Activities Program for Youth of Lewis County (YOLC). Anyone age 13-21 is welcome to attend these programs that are happening every Saturday from 12-4 at the Maple Ridge Center.
* YOLC will be hosting a Renaissance Faire fundraiser in August 2025, including a competition between nonprofits for sponsorship.

NRCIL* Dixie is coordinating a community education event for OPWDD services. More information to come.

The ARC* There are openings at Day Hab, Pre Voc and LCI.

Kelberman* Family Navigation is very busy.
* Partnering with the Doug Flutie Foundation for an event at Get Air in Utica.

Other Updates* Community Orientation is happening on December 16 at the New Bremen Fire Hall.
* The Community Services Department will be looking to hire a Mental Health Coordinator in the upcoming weeks.
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| Adjournment: | Meeting adjourned at 11:09 AM.  | Motion made by Wyatt Wagner, seconded by Tina Cummings. All in favor.  |  |
| Next Meeting: | February 7, 2025, at 10:00 am. |  |  |