

COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE: April 9, 2024

LOCATION: Human Service Building

PRESIDING: Karen Boliver

SECRETARY: Anna Platz

ATTENDEES (Sign-in sheet attached): Julie Grau, Dr. John Wat, Rose Larkins, Ashley Waite, Karen Boliver, Melanie Saber, Wyatt Wagner, Mark Waterhouse, Pat Fralick, Anna Platz, Jennifer Rich, Michelle Monnat, Vincent Smith, Diane Zikowitz, Aileen Martin, Natalie Burnham, Michelle Langdon, Natalie DeMercado.

TOPIC DISCUSSED	SUMMARY OF TOPIC DISCUSSED	DECISION/ACTION TO BE TAKEN	DEADLINE/ PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Welcome	The meeting was called to order at 7:30 am. Quorum present.		
Privilege of the Floor	<p>Mental Health Walk is scheduled for May 19.</p> <p>The Community Services Department will be hosting a Mental Health Month Staff Recognition/Appreciation breakfast in this conference room on May 31, 2024, from 7:30 – 9 am. Please save the date. A formal invitation will follow!</p>		
Approval of the Minutes	Regular minutes from 2/13/2024 were presented for approval.	Moved by Mark Waterhouse seconded by Julie Grau. Motion carried unanimously.	
Directors Report	<p>Pat reviewed the Directors Report and added the following comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The format of this report is a work in progress. • The department is looking at pursuing another round of Opioid Settlement Funds from pharmacy managers. • Links to job postings at each contract agency have been added to the Community Services website. • The 2023 Annual Report will be added to the website and distributed to the CSB. • The Joseph P. Dwyer Program will be presenting today at Priorities Council and at the May SPOA meeting. 	Anna will distribute the Annual Report to the CSB.	
New Business	<p>Behavioral Health and Wellness Center (Natalie)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From about February 19 – April 19, the organization lost multiple therapists, receptionists, a manager, and a director. They are down to having one full-time employee in Lowville (clinician) and one in Watertown. The clinician in Lowville serves the schools four days a week and is in the office one day a week. TLS has secured one locum tenen nurse practitioner and the ACT nurse is providing nursing services. They are still recruiting for a local nurse practi- 		

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	<p>tioner for medication. Some Credo employees have transitioned into part-time roles to help stabilize some of the services in Lewis County. Additionally, one therapist from Credo will transition into the remaining therapist role in Lewis County, so the schools will be taken care of and served.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 136 patients have been affected by the staffing challenges. About 40 of those patients have decided to stay on with the organization and go on the wait list. 28 have transitioned to the remaining therapist in Watertown as well as Jen Rich. Jen will also be taking over Erica’s work in the jail. Some patients have transitioned to medication treatment only. TLS is working with other community partners like Carthage Behavioral Health and the Children’s home to do warm hand offs with other patients if they choose to do so. The organization continues to recruit for providers, including remote providers. • Julie asked when the schools will be able to refer children to Behavioral Health and Wellness again. Natalie said that children can be referred, however they will go on a waiting list. The clinic will not be able to serve children until they have staff who can see children. Prior to February 19, TLS was already down multiple clinicians. Other organizations may be able to serve children faster. • Jen mentioned that a new therapist will be started at Credo on April 22 to back fill Peyton’s role. Peyton is the therapist who is transitioning into the school role. With this hire, Credo services should not be impacted by the staffing challenges. • Michelle mentioned that the Children’s Home (CHJC) wants to support Thrive in any way they can. CHJC does not have a waitlist at this point and is looking to expand their hours for walk-in services. Although they don’t have an office in Lewis County, they do have capacity and can-do telehealth services and in-person services, medication management and verbal therapy. • Pat is very concerned about the implications this will have on our community. The LGU is doing what we can to support Thrive as they navigate this transition period, however we are also responsible for ensuring that we understand the needs of our community and provide services to support those needs. We will continue to support the contract we have with TLS while facilitating access to other services. 		

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	<p>Everyone has a role in meetings these needs, and we must be open, honest and transparent. Communication is key.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lewis County Community Services contracts with TLS/Behavioral Health and Wellness for clinic treatment and school-based services. We also contract with them for crisis services and other community-based programming. The school, crisis and community-based programming are not being disrupted by the staffing challenges. • In the short-term, since last week, we have either met with or arranged to meet with CHJC, Carthage Area Hospital and Citizen Advocates. OMH also came to Lewis County for a clinic site visit and met with members of Thrive’s leadership team. In meeting with the other outpatient mental health organizations, Pat has been trying to get a sense of what their capacity is. What is going on? What is their expertise? What is their capacity? What is their future strategy regarding service delivery? • Pat has also reached out to Aileen and Karen to see if there are any MOUS between NRCIL and the agencies so they could provide support if desired. • Pat has also talked with Casie Buell (Lewis County Public Transportation) and Conner Biolsi (Lewis County IT) about reducing barriers to transportation and telehealth services. • The Community Services Department and Board must also think about long-term access to services. These challenges are not going to go away and are not unique to Lewis County. • The Department is also trying to increase awareness of other available services and providers. Please let us know if you would like a resource or provider added to our website. • Mark expressed concerns about SPOA what happens if someone lacks documentation of a mental health diagnosis while trying to get on the supportive housing waiting list. • Aileen mentioned that parents of children with disabilities can be referred to NRCIL. NRCIL also does home visits, which would help address transportation barriers. NRCIL can also provide peer support to parents and have staff visiting the IMU at Samaritan. • Mark asked if the County is looking at potential recruitment strategies for staffing. Pat said not yet. • Pat also encouraged the group to consider that the merger is happening in the middle of this, so OMH and OASAS are trying to collaborate at the same time. 	<p>Mark will ask Jamie to call Pat.</p>	

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Action Items	N/A		
Subcommittee Reports	<p>Substance Use Disorder/Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee continues to focus on a plan for the Opioid Settlement Funds. The committee completed an internal survey and reviewed data collected during the Getting Ahead Community Assessments but has decided that they would like more community input before identifying focus areas for the funds. They are working on a 10-question survey that will be distributed in May. The survey will be as simple as possible and include language that is easier for everyone to understand. The RFP for these funds will not go out to the community until the survey results have been received. Our tentative timeline for the RFP to be released is August. <p>Developmental Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee discussed that they are seeing an increase in the number of children being identified as having a disability, the self-advocates group that used to exist, the pre-vocational employment program at the ARC and transportation support for new OPWDD hires. 		
Agency Updates	<p>The ARC Oneida-Lewis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ARC is recruiting for staff (LPNs) in Lewis County. Most direct support positions have been filled. • The 70th Anniversary Gala coming up on April 19th. • The ARC is planning a dinner dance for the people they support in September. The theme will be prom! <p>NRCIL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRCIL has two long-time employees retiring at the end of the month. • NRCIL's eclipse events were a success! • NRCIL will be launching CarePath Coaching soon. <p>TLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TLS is anticipating that merger papers will be signed in the upcoming weeks. When the papers are signed, a 90-day window begins during which the organization will be required to implement many changes. • TLS is not losing any programs with the merger. <p>Youth of Lewis County (YOLC)</p>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YOLC has developed a survey to send out to all Lewis County schools. Distribution will start with Lowville Academy. • YOLC hosted their first full board meeting, where their mission statement was developed. • The Youth Advisory Committee will start next school year. <p>Children’s Home of Jefferson County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHJC had a site visit with OMH for their Therapeutic Crisis Respite Program (TCRP). They are hoping to have their license soon. 		
Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 8:30 am.	Moved by Mark Waterhouse seconded by Wyatt Wagner. Motion carried unanimously.	
Next Meeting:	May 14, 2024, at 7:30 am.		