



LEWIS COUNTY YOUTH BUREAU

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Penny (Demo) Moser, Director

Lewis County Youth Bureau Advisory Board

Minutes of January 20, 2021

Scott Mathys-Co-Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:01pm. The meeting was held via Telephone Conference Call.

Present: Officers: Scott Mathys Co-Chairperson, Kallie Bauter-Co-Chairperson and Student Representative South Lewis Central, Peyton Walker-Vice-Chairperson and Student Representative Copenhagen Central. **Student Representatives:** David Fayle and Ramsey Metzler Lowville Academy, Emma Reid South Lewis, Adah Simpson-Beaver River Central; and Nathan Schmitt-Harrisville Central. **Community Members:** Lisa Rennie, Katie Zehr, Michele Ledoux, Eileen Mathys and John Exford. **Guest Present:** Jennifer Jones, Commissioner. **Legislator Present:** Legislator Lisa Virkler. **Excused:** Brian Finn and Mike Leviker.

Introductions and Welcome

The Youth Bureau welcomed Legislator Lisa Virkler who has been appointed as the Youth Bureau's Legislative Chairperson.

Minutes Review of November 18, 2020 Youth Bureau meeting minutes. **Co-Chairperson Kallie Bauter made a motion to accept the minutes as written; Emma Reid seconded. Motion Carried.**

Old Business

9th Annual "Homeless Christmas Tree" Initiative-Update

The Youth Bureau's annual "Homeless Christmas Tree" Initiative began November 20th through December 21, 2020. Again this year the tree was displayed in the window at Lake Effect Tech. This initiative is the collection of personal hygiene, kitchen, bathroom, baby items, blankets, pillows, and other supplies needed when an individual or family starts over. The amount of donations received was overwhelming! Additionally, \$3,145.01 in monetary donations was received and will be used throughout 2021 to replenish items we run out of. As part of WWNY Channel 7's "For Your Health" segment, on November 12th the segment featured the "Homeless Christmas Tree." The following were interviewed by Channel 7: Co-Chairperson Kallie Bauter, Amanda Waugh-Sr. Social Services Program Examiner at DSS, Commissioner Jones, Charlotte Beagle who has donated handmade baby sweaters each year and Sylvia Woodhouse who presented a check in the amount of \$200 on behalf of the Northern Cruisers. ■ Additionally, Kallie had a telephone interview that aired on Flack Broadcasting, and she had a "satellite "Homeless Tree" at South Lewis Central School that brought in a huge amount of donations. Kallie, Katie Zehr and myself sorted through and packed up the donations and delivered them to the "Homeless Closet" at the Department of Social Services and to the Lowville Food Pantry where excess donations are stored until needed. A big thank you to the

County's Maintenance Department who also helped deliver donations to the food pantry. ■ This year we coordinated efforts with Josh Fitzgerald and the Americu Credit Union in collecting socks winter hats, and scarfs for their "Warmth for the Sole" project that brought in 155+ pairs of socks as well as other winter attire.

2020 Safe Harbour – Virtual Training

As part of the NYS Safe Harbour for Exploited Children's Act of 2008 that protects commercially sexually exploited children by recognizing them as victims and paves the way for better outcomes, in 2020 Lewis County along with six other counties were the last counties to receive Safe Harbour-Seed Funding. The Youth Bureau contracted with the Victims Assistance Center of Jefferson County who are an oversight agency for the local Child Advocacy Center, to coordinate the 1st year efforts which included outreach and awareness efforts utilizing our local media outlets including the Planning Department's Bus for advertising and Linking Lewis County.

With guidance from Kiley Hilyer, Lead Advocate for Lewis County Safe Harbour and her planning team, due to Covid restrictions we moved forward with a virtual "Unconference" vs. a large in person conference. The "Unconference" was held on December 8th featuring Keynote Speaker Rachel Lloyd, CEO and Founder of GEMS (Girls Educational & Mentoring Services). There were 86 participants from the following agencies: Nazareth College & Mary's Place Refugee Outreach, Seaway Valley Prevention Council, Copenhagen Central School, Snow Belt Housing, Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Jefferson-Lewis BOCES Bohlen Technical Center, Transitional Living Services, Jefferson and Lewis Counties Probation, Lewis County Health System, St. Lawrence Health Initiative, Inc., Beaver River Central School, Victims Assistance Center, Child Advocacy Center of NNY, Pivot, ACR Health, Northern Regional Center for Independent Living, the Children's Home of Jefferson County, NYS Office of the Attorney General, Lewis County Employment & Training; Lewis and Jefferson County's Dept. of Social Services; RESTORE SAS, Lewis County Opportunities, Inc., ACR Health, Lewis County Youth Bureau, and North Country Prenatal/Perinatal Council, Inc.

2021 Safe Harbour Funding

Notification was received on January 5, 2021 from the Deputy Commissioner from the Division of Youth Development and Partnerships for Success, that Lewis County has been awarded \$23,000 for the 2nd year of Safe Harbour efforts to address child trafficking and exploitation. The program year begins January 1 – December 31, 2021. Allowable Expenses include hiring a Safe Harbour Coordinator who will provide leadership in developing and implementing program goals and objectives and provided case assessment and referral services through a multi-disciplinary team approach and more. Commissioner Jones will be completing the 2021 workplan.

2020 OCFS Youth Development Funding-Claiming Update

Penny reported that the 2020 OCFS Youth Development Funding claims have been entered into the County's Tyler Munis accounting system. Once all claims are paid via the county, state aid vouchers for each claim are forwarded to OCFS for reimbursement to the county. Matt Newman-State OCFS and Region 3 Representative continues to advise that there will be a 20% withhold NOT reduction on each 2020 claim submitted. ■ **It is important to note that up until recently for several years now, Youth Bureau's, have been without an "official" OCFS Regional Representative, we now**

have Mr. Newman who can readily answer any questions pertaining to youth bureau processes.

Governor's Youth Council

Periodically updates have been reported to the youth bureau board since the Governor's State of the State address in the spring of 2019, where Governor Cuomo announced a new initiative that would include obtaining youth voice from around the state. In partnership with OCFS, the New York State Youth Bureau Association has taken the lead in creating and developing a system that selected one youth, aged 13 through 21, to represent each county in the state. The formation of the council is intended to provide an effective way to engage youth in state government and creates a platform for their voices to be heard by policymakers. Members of the Youth Council will offer their solutions to key issues facing young people in NYS to the Governor and other policymakers, including how to have better outreach and communication strategies with young people. The application rollout was December 23, 2019.

The Youth Council members were announced, however only to the youth and Youth Bureau Directors in each county. There were youth from Lewis County that applied, and one was chosen to be on the Council. The Youth Council is meeting regularly via zoom under the leadership of Brian Chetney, from Oswego County Youth Bureau and Matt Newman-OCFS ***Prior to today's meeting, Penny contacted Mr. Chetney to see if she could announce the name of the Lewis County Governor's Youth Council representative at today's youth bureau meeting, unfortunately permission has not yet been granted from NYSOCFS to do so.

New Business

2020 OCFS Youth Development Funds "Final" Allocation Amount

On January 7, 2021, Matthew Beck, Director, Bureau of Youth Development advised youth bureau's that they would be receiving additional 2020 OCFS Youth Development Funds. The Lewis County Youth Bureau's additional funding is \$2,284 bringing our total 2020 allocation to \$23,399. Discussion was held on how to utilize the additional funds. **A motion was unanimously approved to roll the additional 2020 funds over to 2021 for youth programs.** **Update from Meeting:** On January 21st Penny contacted Matt Newman our Region 3 OCFS representative for clarification on the use of the additional funds. Mr. Newman advised that youth bureaus are unable to rollover the funds to 2021 but an amendment can be made to add the additional funds to the 2020 program year. ■ Penny consulted with Co-Chairperson Scott Mathys and we both agreed that an amendment will be processed to increase our 2020 OCFS YDF amount to \$23,399. The \$2,284 will be included in the 2020 Youth Bureau Administration Account dedicated for postage, OCFS dues and to offset the director's stipend. Kallie Bauter-Co-Chairperson and Peyton Walker-Vice Chairperson were also made aware of this change.

Virtual Meetings/YouTube

Recently it was advised that in an effort, to adhere to NYS open meeting laws, the county has created a YouTube Channel to broadcast all county department meetings. Beginning in February the youth bureau meetings will be held via zoom.

Youth Bureau Director/Assistant-Discussion

With Penny Moser's announcement of retiring the end of February, Commissioner Jennifer Jones reported that she has reached out to County Manager Piche, and Lawrence Dolhof, Chairperson of the Board of Legislators for guidance on the refill of Penny's current youth bureau position of director and assistant.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Lewis County – 4-H In A Box Program

Michele Ledoux reported that Cornell Cooperative Extension of Lewis County has a new program called 4-H In A Box. The monthly kit service offers hands-on opportunities for youth looking to expand their knowledge and learn through doing. In these kits, a new S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) based activity will be provided, along with all the necessary materials required to complete their activity. The kits can be shipped to home or can be picked up at the CCE office. Upcoming kit offerings include: March-Wiggle Bots; April: Vegetable Garden; May-Birdhouses; June: Solar Bottle Boats; and July Tie-Dye Kits. To find out more visit CCE's website at <http://ccelewis.org/>

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Lewis County Youth Bureau is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 4pm via zoom.**

Adjournment: Peyton Walker, Vice Chairperson moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:47pm, Emma Reid seconded. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,
Penny L. Moser, Director
Lewis County Youth Bureau