

## **HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Monday, May 8, 2023 - 10:30 AM

JoePete Wilson, Chairman  
Charles Harrington, Vice-Chairman

Chairman Wilson called this Human Services Meeting to order at 10:30 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Clayton Barber, Robin DeLoria, Stephanie DeZalia, Shaun Gilliland, Charles Harrington, Roy Holzer, Noel Merrihew, James Monty, Thomas Scozzafava, Matt Stanley, Ike Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson, Davina Winemiller, Margaret Wood and Mark Wright. Derek Doty and Steve McNally were excused. Kenneth Hughes was absent.

Department Heads present: Angie Allen, Linda Beers, James Dougan, Judy Garrison, Krissy Leerkes, Michael Mascarenas and Terri Morse.

Also present: Dan Sadowski

News media: Sun news, Alana Penny.

WILSON: Okay I'm going to call Human Services committee to order. First up, is Social Services Angie Allen.

ALLEN: Good morning everyone. Before we take a look at the report, I do have a resolution. Is it okay if we put it out for a vote now? Get it done, get it over with. So the resolution is to approve that the Stop DWI department spend \$7,600.00 from the Stop DWI reserve account, at the recommendation of the Stop DWI Advisory Board to bring the Tall Cop Says Stop to Essex County in the spring of 2024.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING STOP DWI, AT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE STOP DWI ADVISORY BOARD, TO PROVIDE TRAINING OF THE "TALL COP SAYS STOP" PROGRAM TO ESSEX COUNTY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$7,600.00, WITH FUNDS TO COME FROM THE STOP DWI RESERVE ACCOUNT. Wright, Stanley**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor, aye, any opposed – the motion carries, thank you.

ALLEN: Perfect. We are getting busy, I know the towns are getting busy getting ready for the summer youth programs. I just want to point out some trainings have started and the programs and staff are not able to actually start without the specific training so the flyers are in the back of the report. I just wanted to kind of make sure I put that out there for you.

Another flyer I just wanted to bring to your attention is one that the Department of Social Services, it's the very last page so May is Foster Care Awareness month and as you know, the foster care program that we contract with is Berkshire Farms. It's also Mental Health Awareness month and Families First usually does a walk, they are not this year so DSS is partnering with Berkshire Farms to do a walk on the 23<sup>rd</sup> with hotdogs and grilling and just a mile and a half walk around the area. We will be working with Mr. Dougan to use the grounds which will help bring awareness and recognition to our foster parents so I invite you to join us on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

One other thing I wanted to point out because I was asked specifically last month, that under the day care portion of the report, I have now included the ages. There was a question regarding the

ages of pre-school children verses school age so that is something that I will be able to break down for you. I do have it broken down by towns so if you do have a specific request for your own towns just give me a call. Do you guys have any questions for the report?

WILSON: No questions? Alright, thank you very much. And next, Mental Health Terri Morse.

MORSE: Good morning everyone. What I want to talk to you a little bit about today and I don't know if anybody read my reflections, it's a little bit of a just reflecting on what has been going on in the Mental Health field over the last few years and especially as it relates to Covid and also the burgeoning need for mental health services coming through from schools, community members, etc. I just want to kind of bring to your attention and it's vulnerable for me to stand up here and talk to you about this topic because the paper is here and I am reluctant to really share the struggles we're having. So if you look at my numbers on the first page of my report you'll see that the number of unique individuals that we serve in a year in 2022, was 1,462 and when you compare it with 2019 at 1,159 basically that means we are serving approximately 350 more people a year than we have in the past. Our staff serve about 100 persons per year, I'm just going to use that number so that means technically our staff whose numbers have not gone up are serving 3.5 staff members more services per year. They are getting burned out. We are in a crisis. One of the things I don't want to do is start doing wait lists, telling people with private insurance they can't be seen because what happens is I put that message out there and I can't get it back. Because a few years ago we did put a moratorium on individuals with private insurance because they have more choices than people with Medicaid for services, I put that message out there, it was like a temporary thing, we did it for about four months and I had somebody a year and a half later say to me, but you're not taking clients with private insurance. So I fear putting any kind of messaging out there that's broad stroked because I can't pull the message back but one of the things, so now let's talk about my reflections for a moment. One of the things that BRIEF is desperately trying to do is to strengthen the communities, strengthen the providers, and strengthen the school systems to be able to respond to mental health situations so that they're not always coming to my door. There are situations that we get referrals that really kind of, if somebody had a good friend that they could talk to or a caring adult or a mentor, those would be options that they don't feel like they have. So somehow we need to work together as a community and help our communities be able to reach out to those that are struggling and that referring them to Essex County Mental Health cannot be the resource so, BRIEF is trying to do just that. Is to strengthen our services, strengthen the communities to be kind of more what we thought of communities back decades ago when neighbors were helping neighbors, when people access help from a church, we need to get back to that and I'm hoping BRIEF and the executive committee of BRIEF are committed to helping do what we need to do but we need your help and your communities help to address this issue. Any questions or comments about what I just said?

HOLZER: So Terri I can sense your frustration and your concern and your emotion definitely radiates to me that you have about your staffing level but how many vacancies do you currently have right now and if we were to try to elevate some of the burn out that you mentioned earlier, how would we go about doing that because I don't feel we have the whole picture here. Certainly the idea of BRIEF sounds great but I think the reality is, we are all dealing with the same issues in our community and I can certainly see where mental health providing for our community is needed. I see it all the time and the people that we're dealing with but how would you go about, are you one, are you working short staffed? Two, how would you go about creating another position, how much would it cost? I think that's some of the information that I think we need to have than just the emotion of you guys are getting burnt out.

MORSE: So my answer to your question is this, we are I mean, honestly to meet the need that the communities, I've got schools asking me for a five day a week therapist I'm supplying one day a week so if I add that into the mix, it would probably, if I could find six therapists to hire that will take the pay that we offer than that would probably help us breathe a little and meet the need in a greater way.

HOLZER: So funding for that position is that, do we get help from the Federal and State Government on these positions?

MORSE: Front line therapists can are an income provider, they are a profit. They don't cost any money.

HOLZER: The impact to the county budget would be net zero?

MORSE: At the rate they are currently paid that is, they would cover their costs.

HOLZER: So I think as we're talking about again, staff being burnt out and your emotion about this issue which I tend to agree, we do have an issue with mental health in the county more so than I've ever seen before but I think we need an actual plan on how we go about proposing it and not just the numbers going forward.

MORSE: The challenge Mr. Holzer is there aren't a lot of available licensed mental health providers in Essex County. They're, just the number of them are low and then the ones that maybe I could attract, maybe they are living in Essex County but work somewhere else that becomes more of a salary issue. Right now, a front line therapist that I hire at the current rate is \$54,760. When I do the math, after five years and assuming like a 2.5 COLA, that number goes to \$6,854 so if they stay with us that number goes up it's attracting them away from a job that they are getting paid seventy some thousand dollars from that's difficult.

MONTY: So, trust me Terri, you and I have had some in depth conversations on these things and I wholeheartedly concur but like Roy is saying, you have all your vacancies filled right now?

MORSE: We have one on boarding in May.

MONTY: On board and then I understand what you're saying about salary but that necessarily include the benefits, the benefit package that goes with that.

MORSE: Correct.

MONTY: Which a lot of your younger professionals want the immediate coin and not looking down the road 25 years.

MORSE: Correct.

MONTY: But I like Roy's thought about how would you solve this? How many people would you think you need to hire in what areas? Now with the schools you say, one school district requested five days a week and yet you are only able to provide one. Is the school district going to reimburse any of this?

MORSE: It's about finding the staff.

MONTY: No, for my own edification here do the school district pay for any of that or is that just a service –

MORSE: It's reimbursable by, I can't double dip in some ways so I'm using insurance reimbursement to cover that staff's salary.

MONTY: And I get it trying to attract people, how many recruitment and retention meetings have we sat through trying to fill many vacancies within the county and I know personally, the need. I know the need is there and how to solve it and I really don't know how we can bring more people in without paying city prices for therapist or counseling and we can do it but it's going to go across the tax levy and sometimes you can't put a price on it so you know, you come with a plan I would definitely get behind it, and support it.

MORSE: Well, some of things that have changed in the field of mental health is there is an additional staff member title called a Peer and a Peer is somebody with a lived experience. They don't have to have even an associate's degree but they are somebody with a lived experience that goes through something called the academy of peers so they are trained on how to be supportive to somebody that is referring themselves for mental health. The reimbursement for them was very, very narrow up until about 4 months ago. I believe that peers is what is going to help us. I've had a peer job description or a peer posting for almost a year and have not had a lot of applications. So, one of things I'm hoping we can do is think of somebody maybe in our community, we are certainly thinking of people who have been through our organization that have come out with a successful discharge. DSS can think of some of the people they have been working with that we can look at some of the natural resources that we have within our communities, have them go through that academy of peers and work for us because what they can do is they can help stabilize that person that comes in the door that we can't get to right away for the licensed person but they can provide some support for up to three months. So to me, peers are what is going to save us.

MONTY: I agree.

STANLEY: So, my question is do we need more positions created? Do we need hire rates for these individuals? Where are we going to get these people? What's the plan on how to do it? How are we going to get church groups involved and those types of things? A lot of this is to me, I don't know much about this so you're the expert that we need, I think you have a lot of support in this room from everybody just hearing things around the room it's just a matter of coming back to us and saying, I need this thing, these are my plans because we can talk about things all day but if we don't have a plan to look at and what your requests actually are I think it would help us to make decisions knowing exactly what you need.

SCOZZAFAVA: Is this an issue in other counties also? I assume that it must be if you don't have qualified people out there obviously in Clinton County, Warren County, Franklin are they experiencing this also?

MORSE: It's less than an issue in Clinton County because they have a nonprofit provider that has pursued many, many federal grants and are enticing staff away from Essex County Mental Health with salaries at least twenty to thirty thousand dollars more than I can pay them.

MASCARENAS: Not every county Mr. Scozzafava has a clinic.

SCOZZAFAVA: Correct.

MORSE: Twenty-six out of all counties have clinics.

SCOZZAFAVA: So do you feel the increase in people asking for the services are addiction related a lot of it or no?

MORSE: We serve about 60% of individuals that have co occurrent disorders but I do not feel that this wave that has been coming over the last two years is fueled by addictions. It's not fueled by addictions but it's certainly a component of it, yes. I think people just don't have the skills on how to maybe cope with some of their own conditions or their own emotional disruption.

SCOZZAFAVA: So our current health care providers in Essex County which would be Hudson Headwaters, UVM do they provide any of these services?

MORSE: No. Hudson Headwaters does have a two day a week person who provides mental health services that I found for them but they are one of the sources that are asking for more support and it's sad because I can't supply it.

SCOZZAFAVA: Same with the University of Vermont health network? Same?

MORSE: Yes.

SCOZZAFAVA: So, they are referring people to you?

MORSE: Correct.

SCOZZAFAVA: So let's talk about the peer specialist position. Now, you currently have one opening you're saying or you want to create more positions? And I agree, I think that would be very helpful.

MORSE: I have one opening and we'll come back to you and ask for more once I fill that one. I haven't done as much as a full court press about that as much as I should but will be doing that because before the four months it was not something that could pay for itself but the New York State Office of Mental Health and the Department of Health had changed some of the reimbursement protocols and so now it becomes a position that could possibly pay for itself.

SCOZZAFAVA: Mountain Lake Services, do they have therapists on staff and so on? I mean have we had any conversations with them? I'm just thinking maybe a consortium between our health care providers you have Mountain Lake Services, Essex County and we all sit around the table because it is an issue and discuss this on how we can make these services not better but at least provide them.

MORSE: Absolutely, so yes, Jack Mudge from Mountain Lake Services has Article 16 clinic that is a mental health designation to help those who he serves that have that dual diagnosis. You know it's one of things that I try not to gum up his system with my, I mean, we try to help each other so there are some people that we're serving that are autistic and have mental health conditions and he and I are in communication to say hey, can I refer some of these people to your clinic and vice versa so, yes Jack and I talk.

SCOZZAFAVA: Thank you.

MORSE: You're welcome.

DELORIA: Terri, I'm looking at your year to date total for 2023, and that represent one quarter, the first quarter of the year?

MORSE: Yes.

DELORIA: Do you have quarterly reports for 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 so we can compare the first quarter in 2023 to where we were in numbers for those years in the first quarter because that would help me understand more and I think it would help the board understand that is this a trend, we don't have a crystal ball we can't look at December of '23 yet but it seems to me we should at least compare the quarters the first four years and the only other thing I had is school based health clinics is very legal and common thing to do. How many of the school districts in Essex County actually have school based health clinics that maybe they can absorb some of the services here that seem to be pushed off onto us?

MORSE: I don't know the answer to that question. Linda, do you know of?

BEERS: Yes.

MORSE: Okay so she can answer that when she comes up to the podium. I know a lot of the schools have said okay Terri you can't provide me kind of what I need I'll go out and hire my own and they haven't hired their own because they can't find them.

DELORIA: Right, right back to the quarterly reports, could you provide those?

MORSE: Absolutely. I'm sorry. Absolutely I do have that data.

DELORIA: Okay because as I'm looking at it I can't tell what we're going to be in December it looks like we may be above the first four years in each category but without that quarterly comparison it is going to be difficult for us, at least for me.

MORSE: Absolutely I have that data.

DELORIA: Good.

WINEMILLER: Terri I know a lot of mental health resources are now you know therapy session are being done over zoom, over telephone so have you thought about doing any type of hiring, you know you could hire somebody in California that can provide therapy through a zoom call or on the phone. I know that's a big trend right now and I think that that might actually help a lot if we could kind of think outside the box.

MORSE: It could definitely help a lot. There's two barriers to that. Number one, I'm not allow to hire. I can't contract with an entity for a because of civil service, I can't contract with an entity that would provide a service that is a posting.

WINEMILLER: That is a what?

MORSE: A posting like a civil service type so that is a barrier. Second barrier is that I have to have all of my staff work in the building because there's no remote working from home.

WINEMILLER: Alright so what can we do to eliminate those two barriers? What can we do on the county level where we can open up these jobs on the two folks that don't live in our area but are more than willing to do therapy on the zoom call?

MORSE: So this civil service thing I'm not sure we can get around that.

WINEMILLER: Okay.

MORSE: But allowing us to hire people that don't have to show up to our building would be a way to get around it.

MASCARENAS: You can certainly contract for services through an RFP type process that isn't hired right? That's how a lot of counties do that kind of work quite frankly that's why every county doesn't have a clinic because they contract with outside providers to do that so there are things in place where to meet a specific need you could RFP, people respond just like they would for any other RFP it might not be on an individual basis but on a group basis to provide a certain product that you're asking them for so we would just have to sit down with Terri and see what exactly she's looking for in a contractor that's essentially what Clinton County does. In terms of working from home that's really a contractual thing we're preparing to go into contract negotiations those of you that heard from me we're meeting at the end of May. I don't know if that is something that the union is going to push as part of their concern in terms of what they would like for those individuals. The difficulty really is, is defining what titles could realistically do it and what titles can't right? Currently you've got to understand the county has hundreds of titles and to be able to just put a blanket policy out and hope it fits it would not be in our best interest because we're going to have a lot of issues in doing something like that but to be able to look at each individual department and titles in a way that makes sense, makes more sense and I don't think it's something we can simply do overnight we've all, I've heard from everybody in this room that they're still trying to get ahold of state agencies who have work from home policies and you don't get calls back you don't hear from them for weeks and it's a problem so much so that you're seeing those agencies start to do away with their work from home policies because the service that they are providing through that has not been effective. Try calling New York State Retirement and let me know how that works for you right? So, yes, there are some barriers in doing those sorts of things just so the boards aware, Terri and I this is the first time hearing of this, this year, Terri and I back in the fall this board did do some things for that department in terms of what they could do for their pay and currently they are really at their limit those individuals are at the highest end of our pay scale. You passed a resolution in December of last year and I think it's a great start, they are really at the end of our pay scale in terms of doing that. Understand anytime you make a move in a pay scale there are several titles in specific grades that it impacts everyone within those grades because grades and pay are based on qualifications and experience. It's hard to say we're struggling to attract an individual in any certain category and try to pay them more and not realize that everybody that's a grade 8 or everybody that's a grade 10 and above them are going to be impacted by that change in pay so it is a complicated type situation. I think Terri and I can sit down together. I think we can look at what she's really trying to do, what's she's, what her mission is, what she's mandated to do and hopefully come up with a plan that this board can look at for budget in 2024. You wouldn't want to do anything immediately and to agree with Mr. Holzer, I think what BRIEF is doing is awesome but recognize that's more of a paradigm shift that we've got away from and that's going to take time to –

MORSE: It's years.

MASCARENAS: Right, time to take a hold on a community to go back on those ways.

MORSE: But we can't not try it.

WINEMILLER: I just want to follow up in saying I can see you know, this remote type of therapy working well in schools where they can have dedicated space, they can have a lap top with headphones and the kids could actually immediately meet with someone possibly but also in your office as well if you had some small rooms with space where people need the services can come in if they don't have a computer at home or don't have broadband. I think there are ways we can expand the therapy and kind of meet with what's going on currently in the world and bring it here.

MORSE: I hope so.

WINEMILLER: I hope so too.

DEZALIA: Part of what I was looking at was a little bit of what Robin was also looking at when you started you started talking about the difference of three hundred and some unique individuals from 2019 to 2022, the number I'm concerned with is more March 2023 of 760, that's half of what we did all of last year in one month. Your people are going to be burnt out after a March like that.

MASCARENAS: I don't think that's a March total.

MORSE: You need to be careful about those unique individuals served so you can have one person that is served all of those twelve months and you can have one person come in and get served one or two months so those, it's not, you can't take 726 and add that accumulatively does that make sense?

DEZALIA: Right I was comparing it to your 1462 for the whole year of 2022, so looking at it –

MASCARENAS: That's through March I'm reading it as, not March alone. I'm reading it as your first three months, is that correct?

MORSE: No that is March. March 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> 760 people our staff were serving.

DEZALIA: Right and you had 1462, in the year of 2022, the whole year.

MORSE: Yes.

MASCARENAS: But March '22 is almost real similar so I'm wondering if there's a clerical error there? It says March '22 you had 726 but all of '22 -

DEZALIA: March is a uniquely high month that people come I think you have more.

MASCARENAS: Yeah, I don't know why.

MORSE: I will help you with those numbers in the future.

DEZALIA: Alright thank you.



GILLILLAND: Obviously with this amount of crisis I think we are going to have to do a desk audit for the department so I think we should get one or two members of personnel and I'll get a couple of the supervisors that are motivated to do this because it is going to be a lot of work to do a desk audit and we can actually get some ideas on proper staff and that we have also have the right grades in there. So I'm looking for two supervisors that are willing to do that. Alright, I'll assign two.

WILSON: So, to wrap this conversation up, Mike and I and Terri can follow up on the desk audit, the peer counselors, looking at an RFP for tele health and then the data. Okay thank you.

MONTY: I just want to say, great conversation. I think, it's been my experience we need to push that peer counselor on this because a lot of times it's easier for someone to talk to someone who has had the same exact issue than someone who may have never had that issue yet has that degree and they are the expert per text book in that spot but talk to someone who has been through it and lived it and now has recovered that's will go a long way in helping us.

MORSE: Exactly. You can take four or five conversations with that person with lived experience and they are set and they can go on their way. Absolutely. I appreciate it. I do have some resolutions.

WILSON: Let's move to resolutions thanks.

MORSE: We have a resolution #1 that is to contract with Stepping Stones Psychological & Behavioral Supports, Dr. Maria Rheume for developing a curriculum and training to provided team building, technical assistance and cross –training for individuals with severe emotional disturbance and autism spectrum disorder. This is an area that kind of Mountain Lake Services and DSS and other organizations including my own staff don't really have enough skill for working with people with autism spectrum disorder so we need some more training.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY CHAIRMAN OR COUNTY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH STEPPING STONES PSYCHOLOGICAL & BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS FOR CHILDREN WITH SEVER EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE AND AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$9,820.00, WITH FUNDS TO COME FROM THE SAMHSA GRANT. Harrington, Wood**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

MORSE: We received a carryover from the SAMHSA grant in the amount of \$23,012 that is actually, a portion of that is going to be used to pay for Dr. Maria Rheume that you just awarded so I just need to increase our budget.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$23,012.00, CARRY OVER OF YEAR (2) SAMHSA GRANT. Wood, Stanley**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

MORSE: The community services board has a new board member Bryan Bond and we want to approve him for the general board and also the mental health subcommittee.

**RESOLUTION APPOINTING BRYAN BOND AS A MEMBER OF THE ESSEX COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD FOR A TERM EFFECTIVE APRIL 12, 2023 – DECEMBER 31, 2025 AND AS A MEMBER OF THE MENTAL HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE FOR A TERM EFFECTIVE APRIL 12, 2023 – DECEMBER 31, 2026. Wright, Wood**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

MORSE: That is it. I want to thank you.

WILSON: There's one more.

MASCARENAS: Authorizing a budget amendment in the amount of \$205,816.00, opioid.

MORSE: Oh, thank you. Sorry it was on the backside, thank you. So, the community services board received \$205,816 of opioid settlement funding that was for years 2022 and 2023, it is earmarked to be utilized for programs and providers in the community and so we will be working with our community services board providers and asking them to provide us some ideas about how they would like to use some of that funding.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT IN THE MENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT INCREASING REVENUES AND APPROPRIATIONS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$205,816, CSB OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS. Harrington, Wood**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries. Thank you Terri.

MORSE: Thank you. I appreciate your time today and I apologize for dumping a problem in your lap but this seems to be ongoing and it is just not getting better so we need to relook at it, so thank you.

MASCARENAS: Thanks Terri.

WILSON: Alright, Public Health Linda Beers.

BEERS: Good morning everybody. Alright, I want to do the resolutions first but I want to answer a quick thing you asked about school health centers. School health centers are a very detailed things that's when an organization literally takes up shop so like Hudson Headwaters would open up a medical facility within a school and there's not enough children in our schools to warrant such a thing. There's only two or three that I even know of in New York State it's very trivial in large cities where there's huge diversity and access to care issues so our school nurses work with us and we have all kinds of mobile health units that go in and provide that care. That coupled with Hudson Headwaters and many towns and ECH and the nice thing around our area there has not been a need for an actual school health clinic which is really the legal term so hope that answers it and in the interest of time, if you have any questions please feel free to email me and I'll answer any more or tell me you want more information and I'll let you know next month. I'm going to do resolutions first and there's easy and they are fun ones so how about this. It's mostly WIC money and I would also tell you that my first one is to apply and accept for funds for year one of the five year WIC grant \$372,300.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT YEAR ONE (1) OF A FIVE (5) YEAR WIC GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$372,300.00, AND**

**FURTHER AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR THE SAME. Stanley, Harrington**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

BEERS: I just want to point out that the next three, two, three and four I want you to look at the funding. This is WIC and not a penny came out of county dollars this is philanthropy or some other provider that's giving us money to make sure all of these things are happening. So number two is to apply for an accept Adirondack for Kids funding from Excellus so Excellus is large in Essex County and they are giving us \$2000 to do the Farm Project.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT ADK FOR KIDS FUNDING FROM EXCELLUS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,000.00, FOR 2023 FARM PROJECT AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR THE SAME. Scozzafava, Wright**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

BEERS: Number three another one to apply for and accept funds for again Excellus in the amount of \$2,500.00, and that is for Farm Projects and get our people connected with food.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT INNOVATION FUNDING FROM EXCELLUS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,500.00, FOR 2023 FARM PROJECT AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR THE SAME. Stanley, Harrington**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

BEERS: Another one is one of the ones we love which is Adirondack Health Foundation it's called their Generous Acts Funds and that is another one about the Farm Project each one has specific details and that was for \$1,000.00.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT GENEROUS ACTS FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,000.00, FOR 2023 FARM PROJECT AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR THE SAME. Stanley, Scozzafava**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, any opposed – motion carries. Thank you.

BEERS: Thank you. I'm going to go quickly into my report. I want to also tell you the folks that are here, I gave you the Red Cross shelter packets. The Red Cross is trying, they have people ready to come to your towns to recertify your buildings. I only got one back. They are not coming because they didn't get their stuff so, I had staff come here and they gave you a packet there was a list of what you have with the Red Cross right now they'd like to come back and recertify those programs or if you want to add or remove just please do that. You can turn them into me. You can scan them into me and we'll get them to the Red Cross but at this point we're backing up the Red Cross. If you need me to resend it I can do it.

WINEMILLER: Those packets said that the Red Cross would fill out the information.

BEERS: Right but the first sheet said are you changing anything? They don't want to come to a

site if you don't want to keep it anymore so the first sheet said, this one sheet says, keep it, add it, delete it. That's it. I'm looking for that. Some people have new buildings since that was done. It hasn't been done in twenty years. You might have a new place that you find better that you should add, some of your towns have buildings that didn't even exist when that was. Some people have things on the Red Cross shelter that don't have town water, sewer or a generator and I question do you really still want that on there since you've generated other buildings so take a peek at it, if it's fine say it's fine and we'll send to the Red Cross to just recertify your places. If you want to add a place, add it and if you think that it's not so good anymore think about that. So that's that.

I'm just going to tell you my director's report, just call attention to the end of Covid per say the Public Health Act expires on May 11 and that the Covid report cases are down 92%, deaths 80% and hospitalizations 80%.

I want to call attention to Moriah and the rabies clinic. We hire a gal I talk about her often, Lindsey Java she is from Moriah. She is a hometown girl. She is our communication person. She came up with this fabulous thing called, Round of a PAWS. We take a picture of everybody's animal. People are loving it. Our Facebook page is blowing up which only means it's a great way of relaying information and you can see the amount of people coming with their pets for vaccination is increasing. I will also tell you so do rabies bites. I don't think there is any town that I haven't had a rabies bite or an animal bite by the end of the year and it really is always a problem.

School immunizations talking about taking it to the street, we're taking our mobile unit, we're going to every school in Essex County and offering school, not Covid immunizations. Kids are behind on immunizations so I'm really excited to offer that to parents in schools so we can catch our kiddos up. Also MPOX which is the vaccine. We never took it in Essex County. We've had a call for it and so we're going to purchase, not purchase it is free, we got it in so if you know anybody at all that is interested in getting monkey pox we will do it in Essex County and we will work hard to get people there.

There's updated Covid recommendations. There here, they are pretty easy to follow. Home health unit is there. Guess what I really want to tell you about the Home Health Unit is we lost a PT, retirement. We hired a PTA position physical therapy assistant so you approved that last month. We already hire them and the PT that left came back as a contracted PT, we let nobody leave anyway that's really good and on a fabulous note the State came in as they do unannounced and came to our certified home health agency they are hard, they go through every policy and procedure and I think they said something like we could write the book for it. We were found with really, really very few concerns so much so they didn't call me back from my vacation to do an exit interview. Bravo! I had Mike waiting in the wings so we really I think we really nailed it congratulations to Jennifer Newberry the Director of that program. That's my report.

WILSON: Thank you very much. Any questions for Linda? Alright, thanks a lot. Office for the Aging – Krissy Leerkes.

LEERKES: Good morning everybody. So you have copy of my report. I have a small report this month and just a few resolutions I will report but on the back of the front page you have a little flyer in regards to Blooming Health. Last month, either last month or the month before I brought up Blooming Health and that is the online platform that we're able to do mass outreach so we went live with that two weeks ago and it went off without a hitch. We only received one call questioning why they were getting these messages so that was really great because my staff did a lot of onboarding. We're following up tomorrow just as a follow up to opening and how we can move forward but we're going to roll out a lot of surveys, we're being able to do those messages in regards to any type of events we've got coming up and so on and so forth.

So the first resolution I have is proclaiming May 2023, Older American's Month and I have a

proclamation that is attached. It is something statewide we are using.

**RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING MAY 2023, OLDER AMERICAN'S MONTH. Wilson, unanimous**

WILSON: Thank you.

LEERKES: The next one is permission to hire a temporary 30 hour per week, Motor Vehicle Operator to help us transport older adults to and from medical appointments that do not have any other form of transportation. I've had a lengthy conversation with Mr. Dougan about this, Mr. Mascarenas. Our transportation program is derived basically from volunteers and about five years ago we were at maybe fifteen volunteers, right now we are just over a handful Covid really hit us hard in the volunteer area for transportation so we're really wanting to look at how we can meet those needs because if I don't have a volunteer than myself or one of my staff is out transporting. I have someone going to Canton on Wednesday because we can't find a volunteer. We kind of wanted to explore a taxi type of route but looking at costs in the past and what my counterparts are using which would be the same providers that we would get the cost could be, one trip could easily be four or five hundred dollars.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TO HIRE A TEMPORARY MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATOR (GRADE 5) IN THE OFFICE FOR THE AGING. Harrington, Scozzafava**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, any opposed – the motion carries. Thank you.

LEERKES: And the last one I have is we do have some American Rescue plan funds that we're looking to expend and vehicles are always a concern for our nutrition program. They are on the road every day so we're looking just to add to that fleet and add a SUV to our fleet to help this motor vehicle operator have a vehicle that they always have access to.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASING AGENT TO GO OUT TO BID FOR THE PURCHASE TWO NEW VEHICLES IN THE OFFICE FOR THE AGING, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$44,000.00 EACH, WITH FUNDS TO COME FROM AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDS. Scozzafava, Wright**

WILSON: Any questions? All in favor aye, any opposed – the motion carries. Thank you.

LEERKES: That's all I have.

WILSON: Thank you very much and further questions for Krissy? Alright, thank you. Okay that wraps up this meeting unless board members have anything else?

DEZALIA: I'm not on this committee but I wanted to recognize this week as Public Service recognition week. We are all public servants as well as all of our department heads are as well as all of our employees so this is National Public Service Week, May 7-13 and they recommend us, as leaders to recognize those that serve our public that work under us.

**RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MAY 7 -13, 2023, AS NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE WEEK. Wright, Scozzafava**

WILSON: All in favor aye, thank you very much. That concludes our Human Services committee

we've got a solid waste task force meeting coming up we'll give it five minutes to change over the room here. Thank you everybody.

As there was no further discussion to come before this Human Services meeting it was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Garrison, Clerk  
Board of Supervisors