

DSS/OFA/PUBLIC HEALTH/COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
April 18, 2018

Director of Community Services Pat Fralick

Pat had met with CREDO administration last week to discuss ongoing financial concerns. Their first quarter revenue is 29% above the same period last year. Their staffing has become more stabilized and there is no waiting list. Ongoing monitoring will continue.

The 2018-2019 State budget includes \$3.7 million for substance abuse services for jail inmates, which equates \$38,000 for each county. Pat participated in an initial meeting with other County Directors where she learned that the transition services are tied to the NYS Office of Mental Health, to be used County-by-County instead of a regional approach. Pat has met with Jefferson County representatives who are receptive to sharing a staff member for the respective services. She invoked the fact there have been no OASAS funding for jail inmates in Lewis County.

The Cost of Living Adjustments have been allocated for the 3 Lewis County agencies through the CCSI.

When the State closed over 100 in-patient St. Lawrence Psychiatric beds for children and adults, the estimated \$11 million savings were supposed to go to communities to assist with projected increased local services. That center was the regional facility for surrounding counties. Pat relayed an instance where a child remained in an emergency room bed for over 30 days before the State could identify and transfer the child to a facility. Pursuant to requirements, emergency room personnel contacted the State each and every day until they located an open bed for the child, the closest being in Syracuse. There have been many changes for insurance companies to acclimate.

Pat has an open dialogue with school districts and agency leadership to identify children in need and connect them with available resource services.

The Jefferson County Director of Community Services related her tour experience to Pat of the Dutchess County crisis center that is operated on an in-kind basis, where personnel from various sources devote a certain amount of time to services at the facility. She continues to research whether Lewis County may benefit from a similar partnership with Jefferson.

The Carthage Behavioral Health Clinic has been providing services at the Beaver River Central School District for the past 9 months. Currently, there is a counselor on-site 4 days per week, which has proven beneficial. There is no waiting list to see a counselor.

Ryan Piche stated ongoing discussion about services for school districts. He had a preliminary discussion with the new Transitional Living Services Executive Director Maureen Keene, who will submit a proposal for school district services.

Legislator Lehman relayed concerns/complaints from some of his constituents about CREDO services and their substantial meeting/class requests and obligations. One person stated he would have to quit his job to meet their requirements.

Ryan Piche cited the historical issue with scheduling and staff turnover that are standard throughout that sector national wide. Legislator Moser said that more evening scheduling is needed, although he understands the staffing challenges for recruitment and retention of counselors.

Pat stated that many individuals have child care issues. Also, the State prohibits an individual from being counseled at an alternate location, even though owned by the same agency.

Public Health Director Penny Ingham reiterated the need for more evening hour services, while noting the personnel restrictions imposed by union contractual agreements that make changes very difficult.

Ryan Piche cites this as another topic for discussion during deliberation and formulation of the Board of Legislators' mission and vision statement, concluding that it is very difficult to modernize government.

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Public Health Director Penny Ingham

Penny reported a weekly declining number of influenza cases, and that the numbers are below this same period last year.

She reminded of the planned Emergency Preparedness drill on 4/26/18 from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Lowville Academy auditorium, and thanked Ryan Piche for authorizing county personnel to participate to assist with the numbers needed for their desired goal.

The first quarter Board of Health report will be prepared and reviewed next month.

As Penny had requested, on 5/1/18 Board Chairman Larry Dolhof will present the Certificate to Supervising Public Health Nurse Ashley Waite for attaining the NYSDOH 2018 Public Health Works Honor Roll status.

Legislator Chartrand left the meeting at 9:37 a.m.
