Substance Abuse Committee
June 16, 2021

Present: Brian Hart, Nicholas Moffe, Glenn Jarvis, Erin Doyle, Erica Robinson, Jennifer Emery, Desiree Rogers, Kate Lewis, Stanley Johns II, Heather Holmes

Excused: Bailey O’Rourke

Minutes:

Approved without changes.

Director of Community Services Report – Brian Hart

➢ **Future Meetings in Person?:** Due to the Governor lifting COVID-19 restrictions Brian asked everyone if anyone had any objections to returning the Committee Meeting to In-Person meetings. If you are vaccinated you do not need to wear a mask during the meeting. None of the Committee members had any objections, so Brian stated that starting August 18, 2021, all of the Substance Abuse Committee meetings will be In-Person at the DSS/HRC Building – 425 Pennsylvania Ave, Elmira, NY 14904 in ROOM 319.

➢ **Services In the Jail:** Brian stated that Trinity has provided limited clinical services in the jail sense April of 2017. In 2017, they were seeing an average of about 12 people a month. In 2018, they were seeing an average of 12 to 14 a month. In 2019, they were seeing an average of nine people a month. In 2020, they were seeing an average of 14 people a month. In 2021, they are now seeing an average of 24 people a month. Brian stated that it unusual as we are now in the middle of Bail Reform and the numbers are increasing. A committee member from Trinity stated that she would try to get information from a staff person who is involved in providing services at the jail and share that with Brian. Another committee member stated that it would be interesting to hear what might be the reason behind it from the staff who provide the services. A committee member from Drug Court stated that they have not noticed much difference, but does know that they are finally catching up with defendants and they are being remanded to the jail for not keeping in contact and/or not showing up for court. The Drug Court just received a Training Grant called Tune-Up that helps with high-risk cases. There are cases that are dealing with severe mental health and addiction issues. Brian said that at one point during the pandemic the jail was limiting on the number of hours Trinity could be in the jail. A committee member asked if referrals for Trinity Services come from the correction officers in the jail or from the inmates. Brian stated that the referrals are from corrections and/or medical. A committee member asked why won’t the Chemung County Jail allow an inmate to take Suboxone, when it has prescribed to them. It is hard to see the inmates suffer from withdrawals. Brian stated that it is up to the Medical Director to approve what medications can be allowed in the Jail. It is a discussing you would have to have with the Medical Director. Another committee member said that in some jails it is the logistics of having the necessary staff available to administer the medication as well as a
cost issue. Brian said that cost is a big factor as there is no offset to the cost of medication in the jail; it is 100% County dollars.

- **Impact to date of Legalization of Marijuana? OASAS Website:** Brian said that the OASAS website has a lot of information on their website, but he could not find anything on the website on cannabis and how they are tracking the impact since the legalization. Brian went to the Office of Cannabis Management website and there really is not much on that website, but he did find a fact sheet that they posted. The last thing that it states on the Fact Sheet is that if you want treatment go to the OASAS website. However, the OASAS website does not have anything posted about cannabis treatment. We need to keep a close eye on this as a committee. We need to know the impact of legalization of cannabis use in our community. We need to come up with some recommendations on how we are going to be watching and tracking the information. What are the social impacts and what is showing up at the different agencies (Drug Court/New Dawn/Family Services/BSU/etc.) doors? What are they saying their drug of choice is? What about the secondary impacts such as evictions and preventing those from receiving housing? A committee member stated that their coalition is eager to gather information and engage in community activism but they are waiting on a Tool Kit from OASAS, and they cannot do anything until they hear back from them. Everything has to be approved by the Office of Cannabis Manager. Brian said that he did find information from 2018 on its potential impact, but this information is three years old and does not help at this point. Another committee member said that during their monthly meetings with OASAS there has been no mention of tracking or the use of any monitoring tools. The State has been very quiet. Brian’s take on all of this is that anything that OASAS and the Office of Cannabis Management puts on their website is allowable to utilize as a tool. Is the Fact Sheet evidence based? No, but it can be utilized as a simple educational tool. You should be giving out the phone numbers and website addresses for the State Agencies for the individuals who have questions. A committee member stated that they had already shared the fact sheet with others in a staff meeting. It was stated that Family Services tracks drug use, but not specifically for cannabis use. Some staff wanted to know if they are to still do screenings for cannabis now that it is legal. They were told yes, as we still screen for alcohol even though it is legal. Brian would like to see everyone tracking more than previously on the impacts. The secondary impacts will be much harder to track. Let’s see if it can be linked back as a cause with the increase in the homeless population. A committee member stated that there will be more conflict with the drug treatment as the courts need to catch up. OASAS wants testing done as little as possible. If probation and Trinity are allowing medical marijuana, it will be challenging in Drug Court. A committee member stated that during a conference it came up that medically assisted treatment (MAT) is being allowed in some courts, but not here in Chemung County.

**Sharing by Community Members**

- No one had anything to share.
The next meeting is scheduled for August 18, 2021

IN PERSON - DSS/HRC Building – 425 Pennsylvania Ave, Elmira, NY 14904
ROOM 319