Present: Brian Hart, Pamela Overdurf, David Andreine, AJ Kircher, Kellie Traugott-Knoll, Carey Peters, Leisa Alger, Colleen Inthanongsak, Rene’ Snyder, Sean Eagen, Katrina Stanton

Excused:

Minutes:

Approved without changes.

Director of Community Services Report – Brian Hart

COVID-19 Updates: Brian asked everyone to give updates on their agency. What are your challenges, and have you seen any revenue reductions?

Able 2 – They are having the same issues as everyone else with trying to find PPE’s. The Office of Emergency Management and Department of Health assisted in providing some, so they are in decent shape. They have not experienced any confirmed cases. They did some pre-planning on staffing and have not had too many issues with them being out. There have been a few with doctor notes due to illness, but it has been a very small amount of staff. They are monitoring and keeping in touch with the Department of Health. Staff are involved as well as the families. Those staff who were not in residential have been redeployed into residential, and a very small amount of staff are working remotely. We have maintained our volunteer connections and have retained drivers for those clients in need of transportation. For the most part everyone is stable.

Capabilities – As a vocational agency, there is no funding relief. They are still making connections via phone, but most of lost their jobs. The custodial workers are at 60 to 70 percent. They applied for the Payroll Protection Program (PPP), and have been approved. There has been no assistance from OMH or OPWDD. For 1-2 weeks, a few were furloughed, but they are now back. There are a handful of people working in the office; the remainder are working from home. They are all taking this opportunity to work on professional development trainings. Our upholstery staff are constantly making different kinds of fabric masks from home.

CIDS – They have been very fortunate that everyone is still working and providing services remotely. They are doing screenings over the internet. They are continuing to get referrals on newborns from Guthrie, and it has been sporadic from Amot. They are receiving some referrals from private OB’s. Everyone has been very responsive to the outreach. They had one person who had questions about going into the homes but that was it.

AIM – They have closed the office to the public on March 16, 2020. They have a few essential staff in the office but most are working remotely from home. They have over 400 consumers and within 48 hours they delivered gloves, masks, and literature on
COVID-19. They are worried about their consumers being so secluded/isolated, due to social distancing. They are contacting everyone by phone once a week, and also using zoom. This to make sure they are staying healthy, using their safety devices, and staying connected. Last year the agency invested in new electronic equipment and it has definitely a good investment as it has helped through this time. Tele-Health has had some challenges with the older population who either do not have the equipment to do it or don't understand how to use it. Our agency is doing the best we can to assist everyone one and get through this. They have been doing some flex scheduling and the staff are very grateful.

ARC of Chemung/Schuyler - They have about 20 people still working, as three of the businesses that they work with are open. They are doing ok and are reviewing/watching reimbursements that are coming in. The staff are doing well, but it is an everyday search for PPE supplies for our residential services. Right now, we have about a 2-week supply. They wear masks in all of the homes, and have stopped all visitors.

The question was asked how we are doing as a County with PPE equipment. It was stated that there are pockets of people out there making their own fabric masks. The price for surgical and N-95’s are going up. Brian reminded them that price gouging is not allowed and needs to be reported. The County has received a lot of State Hand Sanitizer. AIM found a good resource and has had no issues with PPE equipment (masks/gloves) through an Industrial supply company. They will share the information with Brian and Brian will get the information out to everyone. Ordering masks has been a problem for the County. CPS/APS still need to go out as usual for home visits. DSS has been open through all of this, but have reduced the amount of people going through the door from 700 to about 60 – 70 per day. They have had complaints filed from staff to the County Executive and State office. After about a week and a half of complaints Brian made staff move to different locations around the building so the staff were not so close in proximity of each other, so that they were social distancing.

Person Centered Services – The Care Coordinators are having weekly contacts with clients via phone or video. They are going through the checklists with them. They have active enrollments and they had to tell OPWDD they were open. They have been dropping off masks and gloves to clients on their porches. The staff makes sure they come out to get them and wave to them (they have no direct contact with them). Some staff have been flexing their hours (doing early morning and late in the evening hours) to meet individual needs with those who are having childcare issues.

Southern Tier Connect – They are mirroring what Peron Centered Services are doing. They have been working from home sense March 16, 2020. They are working with the forms and assessment tools. They have a new one coming out on Monday. Looking at the risk of services and see which ones have high risks due to medical and changing how to contact them. They are looking at their behavior and mental health as well as respite needs. Achieve in Binghamton is now accepting emergency respite. There has been a reprieve on life plans and staff actions due to COVID-19. They can still do life plans and work on a case-by-case basis, and if anyone needs additional services. There has been a waiver approved for children to receive respite during school hours, due to schools being closed for COVID-19. There have been many changes and everyone is coming together for those we serve. The individuals we
serve have been rising to the occasion and really impressing the staff. COVID-19 has affected those who receive OPWDD services. There have been 173 deaths reported across the state, which is 10% of those we serve. The numbers are still rising in the Long Island and NYC area, as well as starting to creep into upstate.

SPOE/SPOA – They are constantly busy and only one staff member is working in the office. They are receiving and sending out referrals. There have been no approvals via the phone, only via email. It has been more difficult to work remotely, but we are continuing to get the referrals out.

Chemung County – They are doing their best. There are about 45% of the staff in the building. These 90 people are spread out throughout the building. Those working from home have either County laptops or County iPads. Our time card system was hacked over this last weekend. We have not had any offenders of social distancing from the public; it seems that only some of our staff need prompting to social distance. The County has had doctors pulling out staff on precautionary medical leave and FMLA. Staff are having daycare issues, even those who are working remotely. Staff are seeking to be paid and not have to work. The County Attorney has not said if we have to pay them or if they have to take their own benefit time for this.

Brian asked if anyone has received/accepted transfers from downstate. If not, keep it on your radar. It was mentioned that a nursing home in Hornell is looking to relocate patients who have tested negative for COVID-19.

**Local Plan:** The official date for the local plan has been pushed out to August due to COVID-19. During this delay we should see if new need have been created due to the pandemic.

The goals that we had were to work on Housing, Workforce, Transportation, and Services. Brian asked if anyone had any new ideas that they would like to add to the plan.

Technology has been a significant issue for some who do not have it. Maybe we need to look at the technology infrastructure for consumers. Also, look at agency technology that needs to be upgraded due to its age and not being compatible with new software. Will the current waiver for telemedicine go away once COVID-19 is over? Maybe we need to seek assistance to build our infrastructure for the technology. We need to see the needs of the community post the pandemic.

Under Housing, the objectives are to continue with mixed housing options and to have agencies/individuals purchase properties and become landlords to assist with the need in our community. We also need to ask for more supervised housing opportunities.

Under Workforce, the objectives are to advocate for the front line staff who have not had a cost of living increase sense 2010, and salaries need to increase. As for Direct Support Professionals, there are not a lot of good work force out there. We need to increase employment recruitment for attracting specialist (OT, PT, and Speech). We also need traveling doctors for those who are unable to go to a doctor’s office. It was mentioned that they are still having issues with finding qualified staff and retaining them. They are definitely looking for overall general stability and priority after
COVID-19. Nursing care has been difficult, as they cannot compete with Hospital salaries. CIDS has had three Nursing position available for the last 2 ½ years. Applicants are requesting to work three 12 ½ hour shifts, so they can go work at another place to supplement their income. After speaking with the Board members, it would not be conducive with families with small children.

Under Transportation, the objective was to join the Taskforce on Medical Transportation. Nothing was worked on with this objective. It was mentioned that this is something we value and this will be a continual need in the community. After COVID-19, we need to evaluate to see if the demands have changed, and if there is a greater need.

Under Services the objective was to find support for transitioning youth from Early Intervention, but do not qualify for OPWDD services. Perhaps we could utilize other supports, such as Family Support Services. Utilize redefined/consolidated waiver services and SPOA. SPOA meetings occur in Chemung County on a weekly basis. We need to bring all the possible players to the table quarterly to talk about what each offers. The system is not built for littles to age eight; there is not much to bridge the gap. There are needs for Children with Developmental Disability barriers to get approval for assessments. We need a lot of information from the school districts. It is important to be connecting with the school districts.

Sharing by Community Members

- **Brian Hart** - He wanted you all to know that he appreciates what you and your staff are doing during this time. He stated that this is a huge challenge due to being an essential service to the community. He would like you to convey this to all of your staff.

The next meeting is scheduled for **June 17, 2020**.