

**Tioga County Department of Human Services**  
**Advisory Board**  
**March 16, 2022**  
**12:00 noon**

---

**Board Attendance:** Commissioner Roger Bunn, Jack Eckman, Timothy McBride, Saira Olson, Sara Rice, Drew Simcox, Seth Watkins

**Guest Attendance:** Robin Adams, Jen Bowen, Janice Chamberlain, Jennifer Cheddar, McKenna Christman, Nancy Clemens, Amy, Coots, Gwen Deyoung, Bill Dinger, Christa Hilfiger, Kelly Irwin, Nichole Luckovich, K.Irene Morgan, Marcie Reese, Diane Weed, Katie Wheeler, Tonya Wilkinson, Mary Wilson

**Remote Attendance:** Brenda Fry, Shara Garipoli, Lori Hartman, Jim Schu

**Call to Order:** Chairman Roger Bunn called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

**Secretary's Report:** Sara Rice asked the Advisory Board to review the minutes from the November 2021 Meeting. Sara asked if there were any questions, concerns, discrepancies. No voiced concerns. Roger made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Sara Rice states at the end of February 2022 the Advisory Board balance is \$12,194.52. We have received a generous amount of donations of over \$2000.00 in our annual appeal. The money is used to help families and children where needed and assists in foster care programs. Jack made a motion to approve the treasury report as presented. Motion carried.

**Agenda Items:**

- Sara states that Bob Wirth has submitted his resignation from the Advisory Board after serving 20 years due to moving out of the area. Jack motioned to accept Bob's resignation, Roger seconded and expresses gratitude of his service. Motion carried.
- Sara announces that we have been outreaching to recruit new Advisory Board Officers. Saira Olson has graciously agreed to the role as Chair and Seth Watkins has agreed to the role of Vice-Chair. Sara nominates Saira as Chair, Jack made a motion to accept the nomination, Roger seconded, motion carried. Sara nominated Seth Watkins for Vice-Chair. Roger motioned to accept the nomination, Jack seconded, motion carried.
- Sara states that we also have been recruiting to fill positions on the board that we have been lacking. We reached out to the following people to fill these positions and they have graciously accepted to be an asset on the Advisory Board: Ben Largey to represent the Professional Field of Psychology, Sue Sticklin to represent the Local Health and Welfare Planning Organization, Kristin Hamilton to represent Local Business, Industry, and the Labor Community, and Amy Cootes to represent the Professional Field of Education. A motion was made by Roger Bunn, seconded by Jack and unanimously carried upon vote of 7 ayes and no nays to accept those individuals on to the Advisory Board. Welcome to the Advisory Board.

- Sara would like to take a moment to appreciate and acknowledge Marcie Reese and after serving 34 years with Human Services and Sam, Inc. she is retiring.
- 2022/2023 Human Services Block Grant Public Hearing- Katie Wheeler begins by stating “The Tioga County Department of Human Services Advisory Board will facilitate the Public Hearing regarding the 2022/2023 Human Services Plan from 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM. The purpose of these hearings is to inform the public and solicit stakeholder input. During the Public Hearings any member of the public is invited to provide testimony, verbally, or in writing, regarding the plan.”

Sara states that this is a good time for our Drug & Alcohol, ID, and Mental Health providers to solicit input to enhance our community. This year, we are doing things differently. In previous years we have posted this hearing in the local newspaper and we didn't get much attendance or input, so this year we sent invitations asking those providers to attend that can give input in MH, ID and Drug & Alcohol. Sara continues, I can't make any guarantees with funding but we want to give providers the opportunity to voice their needs.

Gwen Deyoung from Wellspring begins stating prior to the pandemic, we were poised to develop mobile psychiatric rehabilitation for young people age 14-16 years old to begin. Marcie asks if the transitioning youth that are currently in RTF, it could be part of their discharge plan? Gwen affirms. Psychiatric rehabilitation for the elderly entering into hospice care was also a priority prior to the pandemic. This is a peer program where we try to visit the elderly that don't get any visitors to help them connect with meaningful activities.

In the context of public mental health and drug and alcohol: the hourly wage we are able to pay, is not a living wage so getting individuals hired has been difficult. Tonya Wilkinson mentions that she supervises the staff and the staff are with us because they love the work and have passion for it, however they are struggling financially.

Wellspring expresses technology divide an industry problem as a whole and they do not have electronic records yet which can make things difficult. Mobile servicing/work cell phones are critical however the ability to pay the ongoing subscriptions can be challenging so they have started to discuss this with CCBH.

Bill Dinger from Wellspring states the last block grant was really appreciated and it had helped a lot. The COVID pandemic is still ongoing and we are operating at 50% right now as well as doing teleservices. We are currently seeking curriculum for trauma-informed.

Shara Garipoli from SAM, Inc. states a theme we consistently hear is that some ID individuals struggle with support for early behaviors and getting one-on-one support. We have to seek supports outside of Tioga County so if there is anything we can do to help expand services for our county, it would be beneficial.

Jenny with Concern shares in Berks County, they are developing an In-School Resource Coordinator. Schools are asking if there could be a county partnership for these services. They are looking to do this per district and to have someone embedded in the school directly. They are in the very beginning stages in developing this. Sara requests an update as it progresses. Nancy states that we are working with Jenny Bowen because we recognize that there is a great need for interim mental health. We are exploring different avenues to provide and meet the needs of all the consumers.

Irene Morgan from Partners In Progress states they are struggling with staffing along with everyone else. The majority of people we serve have a waiver and they never really cover the needs of the individuals, for example housing/residential when coming out of high school. Partners In Progress serves about 200 individuals and that includes those that are in camps. We feel like we make a positive change in community and we feel our processes are fair. Jack expresses that he hears a lot of good reports regarding Partners In Progress. Seth has concerns with those that graduate from high school and a need for a transition plan once they graduate. Marcie questions if there is a disparity if they have a waiver as in is it more difficult to receive services? Irene responds that's correct, it's difficult with waiver dollars. Family members think waivers are great when in reality, they aren't as far as a job and a residential place to live. Marcie asks if it would be helpful if money was to be given to supportive employment expansion. Because of COVID, Partners In Progress has had employers begging them for people to employ due to the lack of employees they have. Jack clarifies that ID individuals are able to stay in school until 21 correct? That is correct but if you talk to the schools to help fund for them to stay until age 21, it's a different story. It also depends on the individual, it is not always helpful for some to stay in school until age 21. Jack asks if they get disability. Yes, most people get social security but depending on how many hours they work, depends on the amount that they get for social security. Marcie remarks even if they work 6-8 hours a week it is good for their mental health however it effects their social security benefits. We have people on SSI, with limited experience and they will quit their jobs because they earn too much money. If they earn too much money, they have to pay social security back. Ben Largey added to Irene's point regarding the ID individuals transition period after graduating school. It is not an

exact science or formula for those individuals. Everyone is protecting their budgets, etc. We do encourage those individuals to go to school until age 21, but it is difficult to figure out budgeting, what is optimal for the student, and what is required by law. Gwen asks if Tioga County has a Benefits Counselor for those that are on disability to help them manage their disability and employment income. She suggested that it could be a useful resource for those individuals. Irene would like to develop a plan for those individuals and have everyone split the costs.

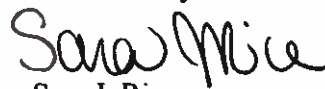
McKenna Christman from I'mPACT would like to speak regarding their CASA program. This program assists those children who are dependent and going through the court system. The last two years have been difficult. We are trying to reach more children and we are looking to add another staff person to be an advocate for the children. We look for networking and community support for these children and families. Gwen DeYoung asks if they work with adults. McKenna responds no, primarily children however they can assist parents if it's in the best interest of the children.

- Sara has requested the Advisory Board to host the second Public Hearing/HSS Presentations on May 3, 2022 at 9:30 AM. and for one of the board members to volunteer to attend this meeting. Commissioner Bunn volunteers.

Roger requested a moment in silence for those in Ukraine.

Roger made a motion to close the Advisory Board, Jack seconded, motion carried. The Advisory Board was adjourned at 1:12 p.m.

Submitted by:



Sara J. Rice

Secretary/Treasurer of the Advisory Board  
Administrator of TCDHS