

**Tioga County Department of Human Services
Advisory Board
March 12, 2025
12:00 p.m.**

Attendance: Chad Boyce, Roger Bunn, Amy Coots, Kristin Hamilton, Mark Hamilton, Brett Kennedy, Ben Largey, Trisha McIllwain, Irene Morgan, Mellissa Parsons, Sara Rice, Laurie Roof, Hazel Smith, Commissioner Sam VanLoon, Ashley Wagner, Diane Weed, Tanya Wilkinson, Mary Wilson

Call to Order: Sara called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence.

“The Tioga County Department of Human Services Advisory Board will facilitate the Public Hearing regarding the 2025/2026 Human Services Plan from 12:00p.m. -1:00pm. 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.”

Secretary’s Report: Sara asked the Advisory Board to review the minutes from the June, August, and November 2024 meetings. No voiced concerns, questions, or discrepancies. Ben made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Amy seconded. Motion carried.

Sara informed the board that we had Chad Boyce, Roger Bunn, Kristopher Kaufman, and Trisha McIllwain agree to join the advisory board. Introductions were made. Commissioner Vanloon made a motion to have all four members join the advisory board. Kristin seconded. Motion carried.

Amy made a motion to have Kristin Hamilton as Chair, Roger Bunn as Vice-Chair, Holly Lamonski as Secretary, and Sara Rice as Treasurer. Ben seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report: As of the end of February 2025, the Advisory Board balance is \$2,468.49. Chad made a motion to accept the treasurer’s report, Ben seconded. Motion carried.

Sara thanked everyone for being here and asked providers to attend today’s meeting so that we can get insight to what they are seeing in our communities and what needs there are to be met. Chad Boyce with Wellsboro Police Department began with concerns regarding gaps in between services for mental health needs. Officers are often tied up at the hospital due to security concerns with individuals that have mental health needs. Sara mentioned that Concern used to have a co-responder program for these types of situations however it was a difficult position to fill. Chad agreed that something like that would help.

Ben Largey from Wellsboro School District has concerns regarding lack of bed availability at mental health facilities for youth, lack of step down into the community, and follow up with outpatient services. Diane Weed said that Community Care Behavioral Health has recognized that the outpatient follow up has been a problem and has been addressing the follow-up services with the providers to make sure they are following up with case managers.

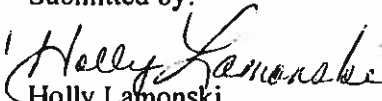
Hazel from Wellspring states that transportation is still an ongoing problem. Irene Morgan agrees and that it has been challenging for intellectually disabled individuals to get to and from work and appointments. Mark Hamilton from BeSt Transit has been working on a micro transport program that will hopefully help.


Concerns regarding affordable housing were raised. Kristin Hamilton states that the Department of Community and Economic Development was in Tioga County for small group meetings following up from the governor's work on housing. They are interested in very detailed recommendations that our area would like to see the legislature address in policy and legislation action. They were very honest that housing across the state is very much needed. Two-thirds of employers reported that it is hard to attract or retain employees due to lack of affordable housing. We currently have over one-hundred individuals in Tioga County on the waitlist for vouchers for assisted housing and the homeless shelter is full. Abby from the homeless shelter has extended the time of stay from thirty days to beyond sixty days. There is no easy fix however this is something we are actively working on.

Sara made a request to the Advisory Board to have one member attend the 2nd hearing for HSBG/HSS proposals. Amy Coots volunteered.

Kristin made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Roger seconded. Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Submitted by:


Holly Lamonski
Secretary


Sara J. Rice
Administrator of TCDHS