



Tompkins County
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD

Tompkins County Whole Health
201 East Green Street
Ithaca, New York 14850-5421

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Substance Use Subcommittee

Substance Use Subcommittee Meeting
February 8th, 2023, 12:00 pm **Via Zoom**
Meeting Minutes

Approved 3.8.23

Present: Stu Bergman; Ron Schoneman; and Jacob Parker Carver

Excused: Marley Brooks

Unexcused: Molly Murphy

Guests: Stacy Cangelosi, ADC Gabby Ayers, Catholic Charities; Briggs Seekins, Challenge; and Penny Green, CARS

Staff Present: Harmony Ayers-Friedlander, DCS; Zoe Lincoln, TCPH; and Karan Palazzo, LGU-Administrative Assistant, TCMH

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The meeting was called to order at 12:03 p.m. by Stu. Introductions were made. A quorum was not met and the January 2023 minutes could not be approved.
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Privilege of the Floor: None

Announcements/Correspondence: Harmony reminded everyone that next month's meeting will be a tour of ADC's new Detox Center on 2353 N. Triphammer Road. Stacy added that they are in the process of hiring key staff for the center.

Housing Challenges and Needs for those with Substance Use Disorders Presentation: Dave Sanders, Executive Director at Opportunities Alternatives Resources (OAR) shared data on their clients:

Collected data

816 unduplicated people through the front door
906 overall unduplicated individuals for services
33% women
39% were people of color

A survey deducted from ninety people

Fifty-three percent are homeless
35% have no income and no DSS
27% have not been arrested for 8 years or longer
38% have not been arrested for 5 years or longer
9.2% is the average number of arrested

Individuals coming out of jail are faced with more challenges (finding employment, employment gaps, and stigmas) with an average salary of \$11,500 putting them in the extreme poverty mark affecting the clients even more with COVID. Since COVID the number of visits went from 200/month to 606/month.

The Sunflower House is a newly planned transitional housing program designed to provide comprehensive wraparound services to people in reentry in order to facilitate their successful reintegration into the community. It is a collaborative effort between [Opportunities, Alternatives, And Resources of Tompkins County](#), an organization that helps formerly incarcerated people integrate back into the community, non-profit housing provider Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services (INHS), and Ultimate Re-Entry Opportunity for Tompkins County (URO), an organization partners with Cornell Cooperative Extension that seeks to reduce

barriers to re-entry by providing programming and resources. Sunflower House opened in December 2021, and 70 applications were received in 2022. Sunflower housed 30 residents with an average stay of 126 days; stays ranged from 2 to 293 days. All but one resident is in recovery.

The overall goal of the program is to promote independence for clients working to rejoin the community by reducing the stressors associated with regaining their footing as independent, stable members of society.

Housing Units:

The Sunflower House program targets people that are motivated to improve their lives and provides:

- Safe, affordable housing for people in reentry, with easy access to services.
- Structure through house programming and oversight coordinated by a paid full-time house manager.
- Computer training, assistance/resource finding and sustaining employment, and related services.
- Daily check-ins
- Communicate with agencies to maintain clients' compliance
- NARCAN kits
- Ensure legal representation
- COTI Peers

Challenges:

- Limited staff
- Collecting only 23% of rent due to 48% of clients being homeless and 38% coming from jail
- Financing programs - \$146,976
 - \$70,000 Human Services Coalition for 2023
 - \$200,000 in federal grants for staff only (1 Coordinator, 2 Outreach workers, and 1 housing coordinator/evictions over a five-year period)

The Endeavor House is owned by OAR and the program provides:

- Priority to those coming from prison and African Americans.
- Accepts sexual offenders
- Always accepting applications; there is a waiting list; and preference is given to residents of Tompkins County.

Dave said trauma is a concern/focus in the programs. Harmony encouraged Dave to use utilize 988 as is the quickest way for the Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) to respond to those facing mental health concerns. She stated that there is also daytime coverage at the MH clinic. Ron shared that Rich Shaw at the MH clinic is another excellent resource. Harmony stated that the linkage between substance use, and trauma is significant, and the MH clinical staff has received emphasized training on co-occurring disorder treatment and trauma to create a solid trauma-informed care environment.

Harmony clarified that the MCT triages situations that they receive from either law enforcement or 988. Some situations do not arise for MCT to go out into the field. The MCT will correspond with law enforcement when needed in separate vehicles. Dave was asked to contact Harmony to discuss this in more detail to work on improvements in communication. She said a new co-response pilot program will be starting in a few months funded by the government.

Dave welcomed all partners to help accomplish their goals with better communication to better understand the treatments. He is actively working out kinks with the housing programs.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

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**The next Substance Use Subcommittee Meeting
will be held on April 11, 2023, from 12 – 1 pm**