



Tompkins County
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD

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

Jan Lynch, Chair

Sheila McEnery, Vice Chair

Frank Kruppa, Commissioner

Harmony Ayers-Friedlander
Deputy Commissioner/DCS

Larry Roberts, Chair
Mental Health Subcommittee

James Beaumont and Jeff Boles, Co-Chairs
Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee

Marley Brooks and Jacob Parker Carver, Co-Chairs
Substance Use Subcommittee

Substance Use Subcommittee Meeting
January 10, 2024 – 12 to 1 p.m. Via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

Minutes Approved
April 10, 2024

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

Excused: Marley Brooks; Noah Valdez; Khaki Wunderlich; and Tom Lipa

Unexcused:

Guests: Briggs Seekins, Challenge; Myriah Dolson, ADC; Roy Murdough, St. John's; Eli Baez, St. John's; Stacy Cangelosi, ADC; and Brandi Remington, TST BOCES

Staff Present: Rich Shaw, TCWH; Zoe Lincoln, TCWH; and Karan Palazzo, LGU-Administrative Assistant, TCWH

.....
The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by Jacob. Introductions were made. A quorum was not met and the October 11, 2023, November 8, 2023, and December 13, 2023, minutes could not be approved.
.....

Privileges of the Floor: None

Announcements/Correspondence: None

New Sober Living Program Overview at St. John's Community Services: Eli gave an overview of St. John's which has been providing services since the 1800s, including housing and support for people with mental health, substance use, and developmental disabilities in multiple states. They continue to expand and empower individuals, prioritizing client-centered approaches and recognizing the impact of addiction on individuals from all walks of life with the main goal of achieving the highest level of independence.

The OASAS-certified sober living house has nine single bedrooms, and three shared baths located at 618 S. Albany Street. The renovated home includes a lift and biometric keyless entry for accessibility. The doors will be open to individuals 18 years or older who identify as having or having struggled with substance use in the past for months and lack access to housing or housing conducive to recovery under OASAS guidelines as an outpatient. This program is not appropriate for those in the beginning stages of recovery. The program is both clinical and residential and individuals will

This is a reintegration level of care into the community housing program that is soon to open, will be staffed 24/7 with client support specialists, case managers, a program director, and nursing staff for individuals transitioning to long-term recovery. Staff will be trained in motivational interviewing, DBT/EBT and incorporate creative arts therapy to empower clients to take pride in their living spaces.

The average length of stay is anticipated to be 6 months but can be expanded with clinical justification to up to one year. In keeping with LGBTQ-inclusive care, residents of any gender identity are welcome.

Questions:

Renovations to the house may allow up to 14 single beds

Individuals will be accepted from other counties

Possible opening Spring 2024

Referrals are being accepted and evaluated by the locator assessment to ensure appropriate levels of care

Under OASAS regulations they can not accept individuals who need 24/7 psychiatric crisis-level care (based on the severity of the mental health diagnosis)

Rich stated that coordinating housing and mental health services for individuals with co-occurring disorders remains a challenge. Individuals with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders face long waitlists and limited availability for appropriate housing. Eli agreed and although it is not an easy process for clients or staff, with the help of other agencies, individuals with both diagnoses can be placed with appropriate care needs. It was noted that insurance coverage/payment may also be an issue.

Eli said that they are encouraged to work closely with Vocational Education Programming, Access-VR, and other housing resources as the end side of the continuum of care before outpatient recovery supports.

They are looking to hire a part-time case manager, all-shift residential counselors, client support specialists, RNs, LPNs, and a medical director.

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

.....

**The next Substance Use Subcommittee Meeting
will be held on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, from 12 – 1 pm**