

LINN COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES

COMMUNITY SERVICES BUILDING
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LinnCounty.org



LINN COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD

Zoom

Tuesday, September 14 – 12:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Diane Daubenmier Bob Hebl Mike Hines Tricia Hoffman-Simanek
Erin Koehn Sr. Susan O'Connor Ben Rogers John Stuelke Mike Tiernan

STAFF: Nichole Baker-Jones Ashley Balius Jody Bridgewater
Erin Foster Chris Kivett-Berry Stacey Lietz
Dawn Schott David Thielen Gloria Witzberger

GUEST: Sara Becker

CALL TO ORDER

Bobl Hebl welcomed the guest, Sara Becker, who is an intern at Discovery Living. He called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST MEETING

The minutes of the August 10 meeting were approved. MSC: Hines/Hoffman-Simanek (9-0).

MONTHLY BUDGET REPORT

David Thielen presented the monthly budget report in Staci’s absentia. David again noted that the county has switched from cash basis to accrual. This is reflected in timing issues throughout the programs. Expenses are broadly on track but receipts show a little below due to these timing issues. General Assistance continue to show below on expenses due to the large number of community programs available. Ryan White expenses show high but these expenses will be covered by its grant funding. There is currently a conflict for JDDS between state code and allocation that is being discussed at Budget & Finance as well as changes in funding due to pandemic. Options is being treated differently due to challenges with how the accrual funding lines up with how the MCOs fund. Bob asked about how the surplus is treated and what the timing is for spending it. This is available to spend through \$800,000. This is to be spent prior to June 30 with the intention that funding go to local projects and programs. The monthly budget report was approved MSC: Hebl/O’Connor (9-0)/

MENTAL HEALTH FINANCIAL PRESENTATION

David presented information to explain the different pots of money available for funding the access center. Mental Health monies cannot be used to fund substance use disorder. \$3.5M was allocated to the access center as startup funding with the previously mentioned \$800,000 still to spend. The ECR approved \$1M per year to be spent between the Linn and Johnson County access centers. The fund

balance is the first area that will be spent down. Substance Use funding is through a county levy which was approved at \$660,000 for sobering and detox. This was reduced to \$520,000 for the FY22 budget.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

David presented the executive director update.

American Recovery Plan Act: The board of supervisors have completed their public forums for input as well as a public survey. The information that was received was in line with what committee members had discussed such as public health, infrastructure, child care etc. A plan for high level spending allocations will be developed and there will be a competitive bid process for agencies. This is still intended that the county and city will work together for their competitive application process to keep duplication of work from occurring. This money must be spent by December 2024

Emergency Rental Assistance 2: David noted that this is the second iteration of the program, and Linn County has \$5.4M to allocate in partnership in local agencies. Ashley shared that the program opened August 16. To date they have accepted 450 applications. 68 households have received funding. There are smaller amounts seeking utility assistance. There is a high level of need for back rent and back utilities, and the work with the vendor has been streamlined. David noted that there was a story on KCRG contrasting the challenges of the State program with the quick success of the Linn County program. There were 500 applications from the State program that will be transitioned to the Linn County program.

Linn County Strategic Planning: LCCS was ahead of the work being done at the County level regarding updating strategic plans. The full strategic plan will be available in a few weeks and the work being done by LCCS meets the expectations of the county plan nicely.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Bob noted a change in how the agenda will look moving forward, with departments rotating in who presents each month. This is intended to allow a fuller understanding of what each program is doing.

General Assistance/Community Outreach: Ashley Balias presented information for GA. She noted that there have been changes in the eviction moratorium over the past 18 months and these informed the decisions being made at GA regarding the Stopgap program. The eviction moratorium expired July 31 but was reimposed due to high transmission effective August 3. On August 26 the Supreme Court struck down the eviction moratorium. However, the Stopgap and ERA2 programs were already in place to assist those at risk of eviction. The information gained from Iowa Legal Aid has been that this has been very helpful. Only one family has been able to take advantage of the program so far, but this is due to the nature of the current evictions which are largely over a year old and have additional complexities. Sr. Susan asked how successful she feels the combined programs will be in preventing evictions. Ashley shared that she is relatively optimistic but that many landlords are feeling tired and burned. Many also applied through the State and never received assistance.

Ashley also discussed the overflow shelter and high homeless population. There are currently approximately 100 individuals on the street. She shared that the Filmore building is not sufficient for this population and work is ongoing to find a longer term solution. She is working with a commission across the City and other community partners with short term as well as longer term goals around

housing and addressing housing quality, availability of units and equity. Ashley also shared that the PATCH program won the state's innovation in housing award.

JDDS: Dawn presented the update for JDDS. They have a Covid positive youth at the center who was exposed through another individual at the center. This stretches staffing even thinner. Six of her 14 staff are working with physical restrictions currently and therefore this has been a challenge. Dawn and Jordan appeared on KCRG to promote working at the center. One of the interventions used has been time outs with a tiered system. Disability Rights Iowa informed the youth at the center that this was a violation of 14th Amendment rights and this has caused some chaos at the center with youth. Bob noted that this is a very unfortunate and challenging situation. Mike Hines shared that Dawn was recognized as one of the 2021 Women of Influence.

MHAC: Erin Foster presented the update for the MHAC. They have had an increase in services as of the last month. As of September 1 they opened their sobering unit. This is less than 24 hours. It's rare that someone stays a full 24 hours and it is a safe place for people who are intoxicated to come in. They have also opened up law enforcement referrals. They've had several law enforcement referrals since and they've been screening on site and calling to verify if someone is a good referral. Their average time in the center is 10 minutes. They will be having monthly meetings with law enforcement, fire and EMS to ensure good awareness of who is a good fit which will allow for good data collection. They have also seen what some areas are for staff training around existing and emerging needs. ASAC is not in the building all the time and there will be trainings around substance use disorder. Erin also stated that she is meeting with the surrounding counties in the ECR. The hours will be expanded soon with weekend hours to avoid Friday and Mondays being so busy. They've had 165 walk-ins, which excludes mobile crisis and those seeking services at Abbe. About 1/3 of these get referred to Abbe services and are eligible for crisis services. They've only had to send four individuals to the hospital and this was due to a very high risk of suicidality. They're at a 60/40 gender split.

Options: David noted that he will defer the Options update to next month.

NEW BUSINESS

David noted that there's a high level of recognition across the staff, with Dawn being a Woman of Influence, Ashley being recognized as a 40 Under 40, and Staci being recognized the year prior for 40 Under 40.

Nichole shared that she received funding to add another case manager which she has been seeking for some time.

Bob shared the dates of upcoming meetings. The meeting adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

Leah Coffman, Recorder

DATE OF NEXT LCCS BOARD MEETING

12:00 PM, Tuesday, October 12, 2021

Zoom

Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

MISSION: Linn County Community Services addresses local health and human service needs by providing direct services, community planning, and administration of local, state, and federal funds in ways that promote service availability, access, cost-effectiveness, and quality.