



COUNTY OF SOMERSET DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

OFFICE OF OPERATIONS & PLANNING

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Human Services Director
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Planning Administrator
ZACHARY BERLINER

Mental Health Administrator
AFN Coordinator
MEG ISBITSKI

Addictions Services Director
LISA FEDERICO

Aging & Disability Services
JOANNE FETZKO

Community Development
KIMBERLY COWART

One Stop Career Center
Juvenile Institutional Services
MONICA MULLIGAN

Richard Hall Community HWC
NICCI SPINAZZOLA

Rutgers Cooperative Extension
LISA ROTHENBURGER

Veterans Services
PETER NIEMIEC

Volunteer Services
WILLIAM F. CROSBY

Youth Services
LINDA M. PORCARO

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wednesday, November 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Meeting held via Zoom

Council Members Present:

- Vice-Chair Pastor Tim Wolf, Pioneer Family Success Center
- Secretary Diann Robinson, Adult Day Center
- David Walker, Visions and Pathways
- Joanne Kemp, Board of Social Services
- LuAnn Dias, Catholic Charities Diocese of Metuchen (CCDOM)
- Dr. Mark Avery, Zarephath Christian Church
- Michelle Dufour, Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P)
- Nicci Spinazzola, Richard Hall Community Health and Wellness Center
- Paul Grzella, The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB)
- Rajni Chopra, Martin Luther King Youth Center (MLKY)
- Richard Schumann, Family and Community Services (FCS)

Council Members Excused:

- Andrea Strack, Legal Services of Northwest Jersey (LSNWJ)
- Michele Boronkas, Safe + Sound Somerset
- Mike Frost, Director of the Department of Human Services
- Nancy Good, Alternatives, Inc.

Council Members Absent:

- Chair Mary Jane DiPaolo, Community Child Care Solutions
- Daniel Powell, Community Visiting Nurse Association, (VNA)
- Lucy Forgione, Bernards Township Health Department

Council Officials and Liaisons:

Somerset County Department of Human Services (SCDHS) Staff:

- Coordinator Rheanah Johnson, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
- Angelica Sandi, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
- Antonietta Phelan, Office of Youth Services
- Jennifer Guyette, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
- Kim Cowart, Community Development
- Kristy Soriano, Office of Youth Services
- Lisa Federico, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)

Meg Isbitski, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
Monica Mulligan, Juvenile Institution Services & Greater Raritan One Stop
Stephanie Billitz, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)

Guests:

Brendan Ward, Big Brother Big Sister of New Jersey (BBBSNJ)
Cecilia Genao, NORWESCAP Career & Life Transitions Center for Women (CLTC)
Christian Baresic, NORWESCAP
Christina Martinkovic, The Learning Gate
Jeff Phillips, Freedom Trail, Collaborative Support Programs of NJ
Maria Marnell, Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission
Reggie Rosarion, Tri County Care Management Organization (CMO)
Shaina Sherman, Jewish Family Service of Somerset (JFS)
Steven Nagel, Home Sharing Inc.

I. Call Meeting to Order & Introductions

Tim Wolf called the meeting to order at 1:37 PM. A quorum was established.

II. Approval of the October 26, 2022 Minutes

Motion to approve the October 2022, meeting minutes was made by Richard Schumann and seconded by LuAnn Dias. Motion carried.

III. Pioneer Family Success Center - Tim Wolf, Director

Mission Statement: The Pioneer Family Success Center (FSC) of Somerset County provides an environment to strengthen and empower individuals and families; and builds connections among families and the community.

There are 57 grant funded Family Success Centers in New Jersey. The centers began in 2007 in New Jersey. The purpose of the centers is to establish a neighborhood gathering place and strengthen neighborhoods and families. The focus is on primary prevention with a strengths-based approach. Each center has a **Parent Advisory Board** which represents various cultures in the community. They are comprised of community members and influence the development of activities and programs/services. There is no needs testing for services.

What FSC Offers

- Parent/Child Activities
- Parent Education Programs & Services
- Health & Wellness
- Steps to Economic Self-Reliance
- Life Skills Enrichment
- Housing Related Services
- Advocacy
- Information & Referral

Contact:

[PIONEER Family Success Center \(pioneerfsc.com\)](http://pioneerfsc.com)
50 Division Street Suite 303 Somerville, NJ 08876
908-722-4400
fsc@empowersomerset.com

IV. Committee Reports

a. Planning Committee- Rheanah Johnson

- The planning committee drafted an advocacy letter addressing the processing delays of mental health related licenses. The council voted to accept the letter and submit to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and other legislators, and the vote passed.

b. Membership Committee- No report

c. Executive/Advocacy/Legislative Committee – No report

d. By-laws Committee – No report

V. State and County Agency Reports

Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) – Michelle DuFour

2022	October
Families	358 (67% intake cases)
Children	668
Children in Placement	44
Referral Type	
Child Protective Service Referrals	153
Child Welfare Referrals	22
Allegation Type	
Neglect	176
Physical Abuse	86
Sexual Abuse	12
Emotional Abuse	5

Ms. DuFour shared that March and October are typically the months with the most referrals.

Department of Children and Families (DCF) - No Report

Human Services Director’s Report – Mike Frost

The Human Service Divisions have completed their submissions for the 2023 budget. Staff vacancies at Richard Hall have been reduced, although still higher than desired. Staffing at other HS Divisions have improved as well. We have received permission to provide some supplemental funding from ARP to some of our non-profit agencies who utilized their previous allocations and are in need of extra data driven support.

VI. New Business

Rheanah Johnson- The Executive/Advocacy/Legislative Committee is currently collecting information via survey for an internal contact database. The purpose is to compile a list of participating agencies and to establish a reliable point for contact for information and referral purposes. Members and guests are encouraged to fill out the survey.

VII. Agency Highlights/ Announcements

- Kim Cowart – The annual point in time survey is scheduled for Wednesday, January 25, 2023. This is the date we try to capture census or snapshot of all of those experiencing homelessness in the county. We send a survey that agencies use to upload information regarding people they are aware of that are experiencing homelessness on the night of January 24, 2023. More information will be shared as the date gets closer.
- Meg Isbitski- Rutgers IBHC has opened their Early Intervention Support Services program (EISS). The program is for any resident in Somerset County that is 18 and older who is trying to access mental health services quickly. The program is for people who are not at the level to be seen by Psychiatric Emergency Screening Services (PESS) but are looking for short-term therapy, medication, support groups, and connection to longer term services. The purpose of the program is to alleviate the need for individuals to go to the hospital or having to contact PESS. Representatives will be presenting at the December 5, 2022, PAC/PACADA meeting. There will be a brick-and-mortar location in Manville with an opening date TBD. Currently individuals are being seen at the location in Piscataway and via telehealth. For more information, please contact Luz Oramas, LCSW, Program Manager at oramasln@ubhc.rutgers.edu.
- Mark Avery- Zarephath Christian Church is still collecting Christmas presents for families. The church can absorb about 70 gifts across a distribution of ages and genders. If you have families who need gifts, please contact mavery@zcc.live.
- Paul Grzella- All the career offices are now open for walk-in services. Appointments are encouraged. The unemployment office is not returning to Somerville or Hunterdon County. Appointments can be made online at various locations in NJ. Please be advised the waits are long.

VIII. Meeting Adjourned

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mark Avery and seconded by LuAnn Dias. The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM.

The next meeting will be held on January 25, 2023, at 1:30 PM via Zoom. The link will be sent out a week prior via email.