



# COUNTY OF SOMERSET DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

## OFFICE OF OPERATIONS & PLANNING

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Human Services Director  
MICHAEL FROST  
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, May 24, 2023 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)  
Mike Frost, Director of the Department of Human Services  
Nancy Good, Alternatives, Inc  
Nicci Spinazzola, Richard Hall Community Health and Wellness Center  
Paul Grzella, The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB)  
Richard Schumann, Family and Community Services (FCS)

### Council Members Excused:

Lucy Forgione, Bernards Township Health Department  
Chair Mary Jane DiPaolo, Community Child Care Solutions

### Council Members Absent:

Michele Boronkas, Safe + Sound Somerset  
Rajni Chopra, Martin Luther King Youth Center (MLKYC)

### Council Officials and Liaisons:

Paul Drake, Somerset County Commissioner

### 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)  
Ellen Russo, Office on Aging and Disability Services  
Kristy Soriano, Office of Youth Services  
Meg Isbitski, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)  
Sandra Avellan, Office on Aging and Disability Services  
Stephanie Billitz, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)

**Guests:**

Andrea Strack, Legal Services of Northwest Jersey  
Bob Uhrick, Mayor, Rocky Hill Borough  
Brendan Ward, Big Brother Big Sister of New Jersey (BBBSNJ)  
Christina Martinkovic, The Learning Gate  
James Parauda, Tri County CMO  
Steve Katz, Food Bank Network of Somerset County  
Steve Nagel, HomeSharing, Inc.

**I. Call Meeting to Order & Introductions**

Tim Wolf called the meeting to order at 1:33 PM. A quorum was established.

**II. Approval of the April 26, 2023, Minutes**

Tim Wolf announced the correction of Joanne Kemp being switched to excused from absent for the April 26, 2023, meeting. Motion to approve the April 2023, meeting minutes was made by Mike Frost and seconded by Diann Robinson. Motion carried.

**III. Presentation – Opioid Recovery & Remediation Fund/Behavioral Health System Navigator Program (BHSN) – Lisa Federico, Addiction Services Director, and Stephanie Billitz, BHSN**

- The State of New Jersey will receive over \$641 million in settlement funds, that will be paid through 2038, and will fund state and local programs focused on treatment, prevention, and other strategies to combat the opioid epidemic in the state.
- Opioid Settlement Advisory Council (OSAC)- The Somerset County Department of Human Services will serve as the lead agency responsible for consulting with an advisory council. In 2022, the Opioid Settlement Advisory Council (OSAC) was created.
  - The OSAC will provide input, advice, and recommendations to the County and the 13 participating municipalities.
- Connection to Recovery Housing (CRH)
- Peer Recovery Pop-Up - Peer Recovery Pop Ups are a temporary resource site without walls; offered on a monthly basis at predetermined locations. The PRPUs will serve to supplement Somerset County’s Community Peer Recovery Center.
- Behavioral Health System Navigator (BHSN) - assists Somerset County residents and community partners by providing information, brief support, referral, consultation, and liaison services.
  - The Navigator serves as a point-of-contact for individuals who live or work in Somerset County and need help accessing an often-complex behavioral health system (substance use and/or mental health treatment).
- Somerset County Opioid Settlement Survey
- **Contact**
  - **Lisa Federico, MA, LPC, LCADC, CCS**  
**Addiction Services Director, Somerset County**  
Office: 908-704-6309  
[lfederico@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:lfederico@co.somerset.nj.us)
  - **Stephanie Billitz**  
**Behavioral Health System Navigator, Somerset County**

Office: 908-203-6130  
 Cell: (Call/text) 908-963-0116  
 8:30am-4:30pm, Monday-Friday  
[sbillitz@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:sbillitz@co.somerset.nj.us)

**IV. State and County Agency Reports**  
**Board of Social Services - Joanne Kemp**

2023	April
TANF	183
GA	220
Food Stamps	5,627
Medicaid	15,982
Temp Rental Assist	102
People Facing Homelessness	152
Single People	86
Single Families	36

All Medicaid waivers conclude on June 30, 2023. All participants have been notified since April to renew.

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

2023	April
Families	369 (71% intake cases)
Children	727
Children in Placement	33
<b>Referral Type</b>	
Child Protective Service Referrals	130
Child Welfare Referrals	22
<b>Allegation Type</b>	
Neglect	167
Physical Abuse	70
Sexual Abuse	20
Emotional Abuse	0

Tim inquired about the number of substantiated cases in investigation phase. Michelle will investigate substantiated cases for January – February 2023. Michelle provided the link for the data hub for DCP&P and CSOC information <https://njchilddata.rutgers.edu/portal>

## **Human Services Director's Report – Mike Frost**

- The adoption of the budget is scheduled for June 13, 2023.
- The position for the Community Police Alliance Coordinator in Bound Brook, NJ is posted but the response has been minimal. Due to the requirements of bilingual and licensure the Department will be taking their time in identifying candidates.
- The Office of Operations and Planning has concluded a very successful 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Stigma Free Conference which was held on Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup>.
- The Somerset Helps Mobile Outreach Van debuted at the Stigma Free Conference. The van will be used for targeted outreach to vulnerable populations to mobilize much needed services and resources. Operations will be coordinated by Zachary Berliner, Planning Administrator. The team is in the process in procuring a rechargeable generator for the van.
- Mike Frost and Chairperson Mary Jane DiPaolo met with Howard Pine, Deputy Director of Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and Cari Fais, Acting Director of DCA regarding the social work licensure advocacy letter on May 17, 2023. The meeting was very positive. Optimally licenses for LSW candidates should be turned around in less than a month and LCSW candidates within two months. A big concern was to identify how much of the issues are due to lack of resources/staff. Additional staff have been added to the efforts. There were talks to set up a virtual meeting with heads of agencies to have dialogue sessions. Mr. Pine offered to work with the Department locally to establish the meeting.

## **Committee Reports - None**

### **V. New Business - None**

### **VI. Agency Highlights/Announcements**

- Brendan Ward – Big Brother Big Sister of New Jersey had their very first year of Mentoring Program at Central Jersey Prep Charter School. 30 elementary students are paired with high school students and there has been positive feedback. The organization is looking to expand into Middle School age children.
- Tim Wolf - Social Work PRN agency may be helpful for seeking social work staff.
  - New Jersey Kids Count 2023 County Pocket Guide has been released. It has helpful information of the State of our Counties regarding children. [New Jersey Kids Count County Pocket Guide 2023 - Advocates for Children of New Jersey \(acnj.org\)](https://www.nj.gov/education/child-care-and-early-learning/kids-count-2023-county-pocket-guide)

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mark Avery and seconded LuAnn Dias. The meeting was adjourned at 2:32 PM.

**The next meeting will be held on June 28, 2023, at 1:30 PM via Zoom. The link will be sent out a week prior via email.**