



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

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
LAURIE ROOME

Youth Services
LINDA M. PORCARO

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wednesday, April 24, 2024, Meeting Minutes
Meeting via Zoom

Council Members Present:

- Secretary Diann Robinson, Adult Day Center
- Mallory Dubuisson, Atlantic Adult Day Center
- 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
- Paul Grzella, The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB)
- Rajni Chopra, Martin Luther King Youth Center (MLKYC)
- Richard Schumann, Family and Community Services (FCS)

Council Members Excused:

- Chair Mary Jane DiPaolo, Community Child Care Solutions
- Vice-Chair Pastor Tim Wolf, Pioneer Family Success Center
- David Walker, Visions and Pathways
- Herardine Lacrete, Board of Social Services
- LuAnn Dias, Catholic Charities Diocese of Metuchen (CCDOM)
- Nicci Spinazzola, Richard Hall Community Health and Wellness Center

Council Members Absent:

- Michele Boronkas, Safe + Sound Somerset
- Steven Nagel, HomeSharing

Council Officials and Liaisons:

Somerset County Department of Human Services (SCDHS) Staff:

- Coordinator Rheanah Johnson, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
- Dameon Stackhouse, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
- Jen Guyette, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
- Kristy Soriano, Office of Youth Services
- Lisa Federico, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)
- Monica Mulligan, Juvenile Institution Services & Greater Raritan One Stop
- Stephanie Billitz, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)

Zachary Berliner, Office of Operations and Planning (OAP)

Guests:

Andrea Strack, Legal Services of Northwest NJ
Beth Kross, Community Child Care Solutions
Brendan Ward, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Coastal and Northern New Jersey
Christina Martinkovic, The Learning Gate
Danette Robinson, NJ4S/CFS NJ4S Hunterdon, Somerset, and Warren Counties
Debra Crossman, Community Hope
James Parauda, Tri County CMO
Jeffrey Phillips, Freedom Trail
Jonathan Davis, SSG-Fox Community Hope
Kiele Cruse, Montgomery Health Department
Lashonda Dumas, Division of Child Protection & Permanency (DCP&P)
Leslie Towns, United Way of Northern New Jersey
Maria Marnell, Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission
Nikki Bryant, Community Child Care Solutions
Steve Katz, Food Bank Network of Somerset County

I. Call Meeting to Order & Introductions

Rheanah Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:31 PM. A quorum was established.

II. Approval of the March 27, 2024, Minutes

Motion to approve the March 2024 meeting minutes was made by Mike Frost and seconded by Diann Robinson.

III. Presentation from the Community Police Alliance by Dameon M. Stackhouse, LSW

- Mission Statement
 - The Community Police Alliance Coordinator's (CPAC) mission is to bridge the gap between the Community and Law Enforcement and respond to Mental Health crises, substance use, domestic violence services, housing and food, childcare, healthcare, and other resident issues with Bridgewater Police Department (BPD) and Bound Brook Police Department (BBPD). The CPAC's focus is on reducing harm to the public, saving law enforcement resources, and creating a better community for everyone. The Community Police Alliance is here to ADVOCATE for our residents and ensure that they receive all resources available!
- What Does a CPAC do?
 - The Community Police Alliance Coordinator (CPAC) will receive, analyze, act upon, and follow-up on referrals provided to the coordinator by participating law enforcement agencies.
 - Provides information and referral, as well as linkages to community services, such as mental health and substance use, domestic violence services, housing and food, childcare, healthcare, etc.
 - Provides psychoeducation, linkage, and ongoing support to individuals and families in the community who have been identified by local law enforcement, whether because they appear to have acute unmet needs, or have a pattern of behaviors requiring law enforcement intervention.
- Contact
 - Dameon M. Stackhouse Dstackhouse@co.somerset.nj.us Phone:(908) 963-2745
 - Victor Flores-Lopez Vfloreslopez@co.somerset.nj.us (908) 421-7212

IV. State and County Agency Reports

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

2024	March
Families	337 (70% intake cases)
Children	662
Children in Placement	42
Referral Type	
Child Protective Service Referrals	132
Child Welfare Referrals	26
Allegation Type	
Neglect	189
Physical Abuse	55
Sexual Abuse	24
Emotional Abuse	0

This March has had unusually low reports. Traditionally March and October have an increase in referrals.

V. Human Services Director’s Report – Mike Frost

- Mike’s last day in the office is June 6th and the last meeting will be next month.
- Zachary Berliner has been named as the new Director of Human Services and will start June 1st.
- The Mental Health Administrator position is still vacant.
- The formal budget presentation for the County was held on April 23, 2024, and the formal acceptance will be May 28, 2024. The Department asked for an 8% increase from the last bottom line amount for the Non-Profit Purchase of Service and was approved. Formal allocations cannot be shared until the budget officially passes.

VI. Committee Reports - No committee reports

VII. New Business

- Rheanah Johnson shared that Chairperson Mary Jane DiPaolo has stepped down due to personal reasons. Rheanah along with other members of the committee thanked and acknowledge all the years Mary Jane has dedicated to the HSAC.
- Steve Katz discussed Unite Us which is an organization who presented at a previous meeting. The Food Bank Network of Somerset County has signed up to participate. There are very few organizations in Somerset County signed up. So, the referrals are limited. Steve encouraged other nonprofits to consider joining as it is at no charge.

VIII. Agency Highlights/Announcements

- Paul Grzella-
 - The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB) is hosting a Youth Apprenticeship Career event at Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC) on May 6, 2024 from 5:30 pm – 7: 30 pm. It is open to the public and there will be about 32 business present and food will be provided.
 - Greater Raritan Annual Job Fair Registration is now open for employers. It is open to all types of businesses. Typically, there at 70-80 employers and usually 300-400 job seekers. The link for job seekers will be open next week.

- May 3rd is the deadline for registration GRWDB received their Summer Youth Work Experience Program grant which allows for 90 youth to work. Criteria includes ages 16-24 in or out of school. The youth will be paid \$16 an hour for 200 hours. 180 hours are on site and 20 hours will be online work experience. The payment is a stipend and is tax free.
- Rheanah Johnson –
 - The Free Community Event is happening May 3, 2024, 4 pm – 8 pm and May 4, 2024, 10 am – 2 pm, at the Good Shepherd Lutheran church. Free household goods will be available for any resident in need.
 - The Somerset County Youth Council will be accepting applications for the September 2024-August 2025 season from May 1 to May 31. The application will be available on the website. Questions can be sent to youthcouncil@co.somerset.nj.us.
- Kristy Soriano -CIACC Education Partnership & YSC Education/Training Committee are co-hosting this FREE webinar on 4/26 from 10am-12pm. Attendees will earn 2 Professional Development Hours.
- Diann Robinson – On May 11, 2024, in collaboration with the Office on Aging, the Adult Day Center is having a special caregiver day in conjunction to our monthly caregiver support group. The support group and all the events for the caregiver day are open to the public. It will be a nice relaxing afternoon with massage, yoga, sea salt scrubs, and more.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Paul Grzella and seconded by Diann Robinson. The meeting was adjourned at 2:27 PM.

The next meeting will be held on May 22, 2024, at 1:30 PM via Zoom. The link will be sent out a week prior via email.