

Monmouth County Youth Services Commission

Tuesday, October 3, 2023

Minutes

Agricultural (Ag) Building, Conference Room # 2 / Hybrid through Zoom

4:00 PM

Attendance:

YSC Members: Trude Arnette, Wendy DePedro, Thomas Fichter, Amy Fischer, Laurie Gerhardt, Ivan Kaplan, Chanta Jackson, Geoffrey S. Perselay, Raymond Santiago, Lynn Seaward, Kaitlyn Silagyi, Desiree Whyte.

Staff:

Ellen Cohen
Dustin Knoblauch

Guests:

Ashley Lobbato, Caitlin Mejia, Steve Massell, Sandra McDonnell, Albert Weedon

I. CALL TO ORDER: OPEN PUBLIC MEETING'S ACT

Amy Fischer called the meeting to order in the Hon. Ellen Torregrossa-O'Connor's absence. A welcome and self-introduction of those present were made. The Open Public Meeting's Act statement was read. A motion was made, seconded and carried (Gerhardt: Perselay) to approve the Youth Services Commission minutes from August 1, 2023.

II. YSC CO-CHAIR REPORT

Geoffrey S. Perselay reported on the various resolutions, authorizing applications and budgets, that were acted upon at the September 28, 2023, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of County Commissioners. He highlighted the Resolution authorizing contracts to provide various opioid use disorder prevention, treatment and resident centered elements for the Monmouth County Division of Behavioral Health within the Department of Human Services for the period October 1, 2023, through December 31, 2024, with three (3) one-year renewal options, at a cost not to exceed \$809,438.

Desiree Whyte shared information on the award of funds from the Opioid Settlement Fund, and the establishment of an Opioid Settlement Advisory Council. Desiree Whyte described the process utilized to identify service priorities that included a needs assessment, focus groups, and information gathered from key informants. The 2023 Monmouth Opioid Settlement Contracts included a County-Wide Substance Use Awareness Campaign- to Mercury Public Affairs LLC, Enhancements to New Hope IBHC, CPC Integrated Health, Inc., Discovery Institute for Addictive Disorders, Inc., Preferred Behavioral Health Group; and Innovation- to Preferred

Behavioral Health Group, Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey, Inc. and Tigger House, Inc..

Geoffrey Perselay indicated for inclusion in the YSC minutes but, not reported out due to time, will be some other actions taken by the Board of County Commissioners.

- A Resolution authorizing competitive contracting to procure various youth services contracts, administered by the Monmouth County Office of Child and Youth Services- Youth Services Commission.
- A Resolution authorizing competitive contracting to procure various substance use treatment, prevention services and recovery support services with emphasis on client-centered and recovery-oriented elements for the Monmouth County Division of Behavioral Health within the Department of Human Services.
- A Resolution to execute fiscal year 2024 grant agreements with various municipal governments concerning the Alliance to Prevent Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. This included Colts Neck, Eatontown, Freehold, Hazlet, Holmdel, Keyport, Manasquan, Middletown, Millstone, Neptune Township and Wall for a combined total of \$209,479.20 to provide alcoholism and drug abuse prevention services for the period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, with \$52,369.80 as a cash match made available from the various municipalities.
- Resolution exercising the renewal of a competitive contract between the County of Monmouth and Brookdale Community College, to provide GED Program Services to Out- of -School Youth, administered by the Monmouth County Division of Workforce Development for the period of October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, at a cost not to exceed \$275,000.

Geoffrey Perselay stated that Monmouth County initiated a recruitment process to find someone to fill the vacant Director of the Human Services Department position that he has been filling for the interim period. He stated that the person selected would assume this position on October 16th and that there would be a transition period. Geoffrey Perselay indicated that he would stay on for the remainder of this year and serve as a support through next year.

III. YSC ADMINISTRATOR'S UPDATE

Ellen Cohen indicated that there were two electronic votes taken by the Youth Services Commission that needed to be ratified. The 2024-2026 Monmouth County Comprehensive Youth Services Plan was approved through an electronic vote taken by the Youth Services Commission and the 2024 allocation of funds per program category and funding source for the State Community Partnership Grant and the Family Court Services funds, to be included in the Public Announcement Request for Proposals led through the Competitive Contracting Process, was approved by the YSC through an electronic vote. A motion was made, seconded and carried (Perselay:Whyte) to ratify the two aforementioned electronic votes taken by the Youth Services Commission. (See Attachments)

Ellen Cohen indicated that the Juvenile Justice Commission approved the modification request to our 2023 grant application requesting a shift of \$25,000 in Family Court Services funds from the Probation Offenders Program to the Probation Multi Treatment Program. Both programs are under IEP Youth Services, Inc. Purchase orders were amended.

Ellen stated that a power point was included in the meeting handouts that highlights some of the recommendations in the Youth Services Plan by points in the system (prevention, diversion, detention/detention alternatives, disposition, and re-entry).

IV. Office of Child and Youth Services

Dustin Knoblauch shared information on the results of the Prevention Coalition of Monmouth County survey that included 163 respondents, who were mostly school personnel, on the problem areas and service needs that students are facing. She indicated that mental health, emotional regulation and social connectiveness were among the top concerns. In addition vaping, vaping marijuana and consuming edibles, as well as underage alcohol use were noted in the survey findings. Depression and anxiety among students appear to be increasing.

Relative to NJ4S, Dustin provided information on how the program is shifting at the state level. Tier 1 services will be for students, Pre-K through 12th grade, and will be delivered as a one-time presentation; Tier 2 will be multi-sessions for grades 6th through 12th and require a referral request by the school for the service using the state's salesforce program. Tier 3 services will be for mental health clinicians for individual students referred by the school using the state's salesforce program. Tier 3 services are intended to be brief and are not psychiatric emergency screening services.

Dustin Knoblauch stated that the VNA conducted a focus group with 7 students from the Asbury Park High School- School Based Youth Services Program known as the SPOT with the theme of Positive Youth Development on June 12, 2023. The focus group was conducted in collaboration with Monmouth ACTS and was shared with the YSC Planning Committee. The students were asked, what were the top service-related challenges in their community. Their responses included homelessness, drugs, and gangs. Another question asked -what, if anything, limits you from getting the services that you need? Several responses were transportation. One youth indicated concern for safety having to get to school earlier, for it is dark and streetlights do not work. Dustin shared that the Positive Youth Development Hub of Monmouth ACTS will be reorganizing and plan to meet soon to discuss strategies to address some of the youth concerns.

V. Prosecutor's Office

Prosecutor Raymond Santiago and Thomas Fichter updated the membership on the *Strategies For Youth* training for law enforcement on policing the adolescent brain, and the Juvenile Justice Jeopardy sessions that were held at the Boys and Girls Club of Monmouth County. Prosecutor Santiago indicated that he attended the Juvenile Justice Jeopardy session and found it insightful. Tom Fichter stated that there were 25 participants from the community who attended. The intent is for those providers to utilize the program as an enhancement in their own settings, to expand the reach to more youth in the county. The Prosecutor's Office has continued to offer a monthly cyberbullying presentation as a referral resource for law enforcement station house adjustments. The cyberbullying presentation held on September 14th had 14 referrals. Both the juvenile and parent must attend so there were 28 participants in total. The evaluations are anonymous indicated that 90% found the program excellent. They are considering pushing the

program out to the schools as a resource for Harassment Intimidation and Bullying. Tom Fichter stated that a meeting with Juvenile Officers was held that morning and that there were 30 + officers in attendance from a cross section of Monmouth County. Court staff addressed the group, to talk about the importance of fully completing information on the juvenile complaints to court and the use of stationhouse adjustments.

VI. Detention/Detention Alternatives

Ivan Kaplan stated that backpacks filled with a wide range of school supplies, were distributed to the JDAI participants, to help them get ready for the start of school. There was also a graduation-encouragement dinner held at Macro Bites in Asbury Park that 5 families attended. An art contest was included. Ivan Kaplan noted that he has observed a trend of more homelessness situations with the families with a youth on detention alternatives. He reported that he completed more installations of the electronic monitoring bracelets at hotels and motels or the shelter than in the past. He finds transportation still an issue and that often there are many trips, back and forth to the shelter.

VII. Court & Probation Updates

Caitlin Mejia highlighted the great work that the Probation Division is involved with. She stated that a Gun Reduction Task Force was recently formed and will meet monthly. At their recent meeting, 8 clients were presented. Caitlin indicated that she found the taskforce helpful in identifying potential resources for these individuals. Caitlin Mejia described the various enrichment activities and workshops that the Probation Division has conducted or held. There was a joint resource fair held that included 25 vendors at their Ocean Township Probation Division location. Workshop topics have included developing positive relationships, and budgeting. Caitlin Mejia reported that currently probation has 74 youth on juvenile probation supervision and 61 juveniles on deferred disposition.

Amy Fischer stated that Kathleen Wardlow, Assistant Family Division Manager participated in the Juvenile Officers training coordinated by the Prosecutor's Office. She helped officers know what is needed in complaints. Amy Fischer indicated that quarterly meetings would be useful.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. YSC Planning Committee

Trude Arnette stated that the YSC By-Laws were updated to reflect the changes in the state statute governing Youth Services Commissions and our new regulations. Language was taken from the regulations and inserted into our existing YSC By-Laws. Copy of the older and newer version of the YSC By-Laws were e-mailed to the membership for review. Changes are highlighted in red and mostly reflect some changes in membership and committee structure. A motion was made, seconded, and carried (Arnette: Perselay) to approve the amended YSC By-Laws as prepared. A consensus vote will be taken.

Trude Arnette reported that the YSC Planning Committee appreciates the support of the YSC Membership to approve the 2024-2026 Monmouth County Comprehensive Youth Services Plan and the 2024 Service Priorities by Service Category and Funding Source for the State

Community Partnership Grant and the Family Court Services funds. A Public Announcement Request for Proposals led through the competitive contracting process (#CC-9-2024) will be issued. It will be posted on the county's Purchasing Division's website under competitive contracts. Trude reported that the YSC previously approved through an electronic vote the service priorities by service category and funding for the State Community Partnership Grant and Family Court Services. There is \$350,000 or 36% of the total allocated for Delinquency Prevention, \$420,394 or 44% of the total allocated for Diversion, and \$195,000 or 20% allocated for Disposition.

Trude Arnette stated that along with the 2024-2026 Monmouth County Comprehensive Youth Services Plan, a CY 2024 Comprehensive County Funding Application has been prepared for submission. Monmouth County's Comprehensive Funding Grand Total is \$1,055,394. This grand total includes \$578,640 in State Community Partnership Grant -Program Services, \$90,000 in SCPG- Program Management, \$254,960 in Family Court Program Services and \$131,794 in Family Crisis Intervention Unit (FCIU). The CY 2024 Comprehensive County Funding Application includes the following items:

- CY 2024 Comprehensive County Funding Application Checklist
- Signed Cover Letter with Executive Summary from County Youth Services Commission Chair(s)
- Cover Sheet
- Attachment A: Programs at a Glance
- Attachment B: CY 2024 Line-Item Budget and Program Management/Administrative Cost
- Attachment C: Program Profiles
- Attachment D. Youth Services Commission Membership
- Attachment E. Partnership 1/3 Set-Aside Justification with required attachments

The YSC Minutes approving the Plan and Application will be included. Following the competitive contract process and awards, the program profiles will be completed with more detail and the results will be presented to the full Youth Services Commission at the December meeting.

B. YSC Proposal Evaluation Committee

Trude Arnette also gave the following YSC Proposal Evaluation Committee Report. She indicated that Monmouth County submitted our 2024 JDAI IF application to the Juvenile Justice Commission and expects to receive a response regarding the results of the application review no later than October 6, 2023. We have received a positive indication that Monmouth County's application was favorably received and will be awarded.

Trude stated that Monmouth conducted a Public Announcement Request for Proposal led through the competitive contracting process, CC-6-2023, that awarded the Mental Health Association of Monmouth County the JDAI IF contract for the Family Navigator-Partners with Families Program. The Family Navigator-Partners with Families Program was amended mid-year, to include community and youth engagement. 2024 is the first, one year renewal option to our competitive contract. Trude Arnette stated that the Mental Health Association of Monmouth County submitted a 2024 streamlined funding request renewal application on September 25,

2023, for the Family Navigator-Partners with Families Program with community and youth engagement to the Monmouth County DHS Office of Child and Youth Services / Youth Services Commission. A joint local CJJSI and YSC Proposal Evaluation Committee met on October 2, 2023, to review the application. Serving on this committee were Trude Arnette, Ellen Cohen, Dustin Knoblauch, Jennifer Hoffer, Elizabeth Williams, and Danielle Worthy.

The streamlined funding request application included an opportunity to indicate if there were any changes to their project/program description. Questions pertaining to their 2023 Performance were included that allowed the programs to highlight how the project/program is being evaluated and what the results have shown; how the program is making a difference for the youth and families served; (i.e. their positive achievements, areas for improvement and lessons learned) and whether the agency was on track to reach their 2023 Youth Services contracted level of service or exceed it and if they anticipated any unexpended funds. The funding request application provided an opportunity for applicants to indicate what additional resources would be helpful; the methods used to gain youth input and engage families; how they coordinate services and collaborate with other service providers; and if any gaps in service have been identified.

The YSC Proposal Review Committee recommends the renewal of the Mental Health Association of Monmouth County's Family Navigator-Partners with Families with Community and Youth Engagement for the period January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, for \$105,000 in 2024 JDAI Innovations Funds. Following the official receipt of the 2024 JDAI IF award, this recommendation will be forwarded to the Monmouth County Purchasing Division and the Board of County Commissioners for award and a re-certification letter will be prepared by the YSC Administrator. A motion was made, seconded, and carried (Arnette:Seaward) to forward the recommendation to Purchasing. A roll call vote was taken (see attachment).

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Chanta Jackson inquired about a new child trauma initiative that Asbury Park was involved in related to the police and DCP&P that the school was contacted about. Additional information regarding the specific program referenced would be explored.

X. OLD BUSINESS

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned.

Upcoming YSC Meeting Date- December 5, 2023-Virtual v

