

# Cayuga County Community Services Board

Laurie Piccolo, Chair

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## PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

January 13, 2022

**Members Present:** Stephen Smith (Chair), Shannon Abate (left at 12:58pm), Katherine Dunchak (left at 12:59pm), Lorie Fischer, Kimberly Granato, Elizabeth Signorelli (left at 12:58pm)

**Members Excused:** Andrea Hansen, Timothy Donovan, Joan Meyers

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff/Guests Present:** Elizabeth Burke, CCCMHC Deputy Director; Dan Lesinski, Cayuga Centers; Shelley Farrell and Josh Overstreet, Prime Care; Michele VanGiesen, Mozaic; Becky Waldron, Cayuga Counseling; Beth Astramskas, DRRO; James Breslin, Gavras Center; Theresa Sheldon, OPWDD, Lauren Walsh, soon to be Director of Community Services; Meg Bellone, Person Centered Services; Joyce McGlynn, Lifeplan

- I. **ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER** – Called to order by Steve at 12:03pm. Introductions were made.
- II. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD** – None today.
- III. **REVIEW OF MINUTES** – Members were emailed a draft of the December 2, 2021 minutes. On a motion by Kim, seconded by Shannon, the minutes were approved as submitted. All in favor, motion carried.
- IV. **LOCAL SERVICES PLAN** – Not discussed.
- V. **PRESENTATION BY LIFEPLAN** – Provide care management services to people with disabilities. New and improved Medicaid Service Coordination. Connect people to services and monitor them once they're connected. Main difference is that Lifeplan is focused on the medical piece (doctor's appts, specialists, hospital discharge follow-ups). There is a medical department that care managers can ask advice from along with a nursing department that provides the team with education on different conditions along with COVID. Referrals can come from anybody; the care connection team is the first step of the process. Use the website or call 855-543-3756 to start the referral process. Member and family engagement department is another asset that Lifeplan has. Lifeplan covers the Central New York, Greater Mohawk Valley, Hudson Valley, Capital Region, and Southern Tier areas. Lorie asked about the process of getting people transitioned to OPWDD care; going through the care connection team would be the way to go. Steve asked what the big challenges are right now for care management. Shannon and Joyce both said it's the lack of services due to COVID. Many parents had to quit their jobs; finding respite was difficult even before COVID. Kim asked if LifePlan utilizes tier/number assignments; they do not.
- VI. **AGENCY REPORTS** – Agency reports were requested and sent prior to the meeting. Updated copies of the Agency Service Openings Chart were sent prior to the meeting.
  - **ARISE** – No representation.
  - **Cayuga Centers** – For the most part, close to full level of service has been maintained. Need more trained staff before accepting more people for services. Two more direct support professionals are starting next week and will be available to provide services in February. Rates have increased for staff and starting new staff with three weeks' vacation. Waiting list for some services. Letter into OPWDD regional office to extend weekend respite.

- **Cayuga Counseling** – Finished young adult social skills Zoom group in December, very positive reception. Looking forward to another one in March/April. Still doing service access. Working on future training offerings; if you have any suggestions for parent-focused educators who can provide trainings, let Becky know.
- **DDRO** – CSIDD (Crisis Services for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities) will be starting in the region; provider named YAI will have two hubs in region and a resource center. At the resource center, there will be two crisis respite beds and two planned respite beds for people in the CSIDD program. Hopefully these services will start in the next few months. Funding available for enhancing staffing, recruitment, and retention efforts. Agencies can still apply for this funding with attestation forms.
- **Gavras Center** – Early intervention program up and running with the help of Lorie Fischer. Great reviews from families. Daycare program has 37 families on a waitlist. Hired new childcare coordinator to help with backlog and potentially open up some new classrooms. Meeting with Playspace took place, looking at space tomorrow. Looking at co-locating with Placespace for the early intervention program, which will hopefully free up space for daycare or preschool. Opening new UPK class this month. If anyone knows any retired special education teachers, please reach out to James. Housing project moving along, applied for another capital grant (housing homeless assistance program grant), E-SHY grant extended another six months so that process can be completed. Eviction help: must be referred through Cayuga County DSS Eligibility Unit (315-253-1294), which can get people into the Homeless Prevention Program. Going to have the opportunity to speak with the new OPWDD acting commissioner, Carrie Newfield, about housing project and future of Cranbrook building.
- **Mozaic** – Supervised apartment openings; reach out to central intake or directly to Michele. DayHab without walls was primarily seniors; opening it up to adults of any age. Looking to serve seniors at a site-based program in the future. Primo program: partnering with Carter's Outlet – 400 items to donate, looking to work with not for profits (3 months to 14, male and female clothing) – looking to connect with families who need clothing for their children. Please reach out if you know families/agencies who could benefit.
- **Onondaga Community Living** – No representation.
- **Unity House** – No representation.

**VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT** – On a motion by Shannon, seconded by Elizabeth, director's report was tabled for this month; motion carried.

**VIII. INTRODUCTIONS AND Q&A WITH LAUREN WALSH AND ELIZABETH BURKE**  
 – Lauren will be the new Director of Community Services as of January 28, 2022. She shared that she's been at CCCMHC for nine years as a therapist. She's worked at a lot of different places in the community: mobile crisis, school districts, and DSS, as well as being the liaison between the two DSS and Mental Health departments. Lot of different relationships with people in the community and she hopes to gain that with this subcommittee and learn more about the systems and services in place. She looks forward to the job and she loves the community outreach and discovering what we can do to provide services to the people who need them. Elizabeth has been at the county for 12-13 years; was hired as first compliance officer. As the years have gone by, she's taken more of a role in managing the clinic. Participated in a team of people who created a strong children's system of care in the county as part of the LGU. Prior to working at the county, she worked at Cayuga Home for Children (now Cayuga Centers) for twenty years as a group care worker, therapist, supervisor, and program director of home-based programs. Has worked very closely with DSS and knows a lot of people in the community. Excited to learn more about PWDD services.

Steve praised the committee and their commitment to advocating for the wellbeing of people with developmental disabilities. Steve asked the committee to share issues they feel the PWDD community is facing. Kim shared that in talking with fellow parents to those with disabilities, COVID has caused behavioral issues that were not present before (due to disruption of programs/routines). Shannon agreed with that and added anxiety and depression increasing. Michele shared that Mozaic does provide psychiatric services and therapy through an article 16 clinic. Kate brought up staffing shortages and evictions. Shannon spoke about

the lack of crisis/emergency services for those with PWDD (example: a caregiver grandmother passed away, mother now forced to quit her job since child with developmental disabilities cannot be left alone).

**IX. OLD BUSINESS** – None discussed.

**X. NEW BUSINESS** – None discussed.

**XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS** – None discussed.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT** – Due to a lack of quorum at time of adjournment, Stephen Smith as Chair officially ended the meeting at 1:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Kelsey R. Marquart, Senior Typist