



Niagara County Community Services Board  
 Minutes  
 Regular Meeting  
 Date: Monday, January 23, 2023  
 Time: 6:00 pm

**LOCATION:** Dept. of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Administrative Offices, Shaw Building, Health Department Conference Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 5467 Upper Mountain Road, NY. This meeting was also offered via Webex.

<u>ATTENDANCE:</u>	PRESENT	EXCUSED
Burt Marshall, Board President	X	
Annette Dobrasz, EdD, 1 <sup>st</sup> Board VP	X	
Stephanie Donovan, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Board VP	X-Webex	
Rosamond Siegwarth, Board Member	X	
Peter Butera, PhD, Board Member	X	
Jaclyn Bieber, Board Member		X
Thomas Gerbasi, MD, Board Member	X	
Candace Butcher, Board Member		X
Ronald Barstys, PhD, Board Member	X-Webex	
Suzanne Diez, Board Member		X
Robin Stevens, Board Member		X
Richard Abbott, Board Member	X	
Betsy Farkas, Board Member	X	
<b><u>Niagara County Mental Health Administration</u></b>		
Laura Kelemen, LCSW-R, NCDMH Director	X-Webex	
Myrla Gibbons Doxey, LMFT, NCDMH Deputy Director	X	
Lee Ann Cogar, Confidential Assistant	X	
<b><u>Guests</u></b>		
Avi Israel , President of Save the Michaels	X	
Josh Kellica, Director of Newfane location-Save the Michaels	X	
Jessica Petty, Save the Michaels	X	
Katie Burbee, Director of Clinical Program, Horizon Health Svcs.	X	
Brandy Vandermark-Murray, SVP, Horizon Health Svcs	X	
Dr. Elizabeth Botzer	X	

- 1) **Burt Marshall, Board President, called the Community Services Board (CSB) Meeting to order at 6:07 PM.**
- 2) **The Minutes for the December 5, 2022 meeting were reviewed.**

Dr. Annette Dobrasz motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Dr. Thomas Gerbasi seconded the motion; the minutes were approved unanimously.

**3) Membership Review:**

- **Membership Applications:**

**Board:**

- Donald Jablonski – Mr. Jablonski has been involved in Community Services for over 20 years, and is currently the Director of Niagara County Employment and Training. He has great knowledge with employment services related to disabled individuals. Burt Marshall and Director Kelemen have both spoken with Mr. Jablonski, and they feel he would be an asset to the Board.

Rick Abbott motioned to approve the Board membership application as presented, Dr. Annette Dobrasz seconded the motion; the application was approved unanimously.

**Subcommittees:**

- Alan Venesky – Developmental Disabilities – Mr. Venesky is a Niagara County resident and an employee of HH/CCO under OPWDD. He also serves on Erie County’s Disability Advisory Council. Deputy Director Gibbons-Doxey has spoken with Mr. Venesky and she feels he will be an asset on the subcommittee.

Rick Abbot motioned to approve the Subcommittee membership application as presented, Dr. Annette Dobrasz seconded the motion; the application was approved unanimously.

- Michelle Scheib – Mental Health – Ms. Scheib has been working in the behavioral health/human services field for over 20 years, and has participated on several different boards over the years. She currently works for Independent Living of Niagara County. Director Kelemen is also familiar with Michelle, and feels she will be an asset on the subcommittee.

Rose Siegwarth motioned to approve the Subcommittee membership application as presented, Dr. Annette Dobrasz seconded the motion; the application was approved unanimously.

Rick Abbott is interested in chairing the Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee.

Burt Marshall is interested in chairing the Mental Health Subcommittee.

Don Jablonski was suggested by the Board to chair the Alcoholism Subcommittee.

- **2023 Subcommittee Reappointments** – We do not have any members up for reappointment on the subcommittees, but have several members that have completed their second terms.

**4) Director’s Report**

- **Correspondence was reviewed by Laura Kelemen, Director.**

- **CON-Prior Consult**

- **Save the Michaels** – Establish a Residential Reintegration Program for men, to be located in the Recovery Center of Niagara Building in Newfane, NY, presented by Deputy Director Gibbons Doxey. This program is attached to the Recovery Center of Niagara location, but in a separate designated area. Save the Michaels is looking to establish a 12 bed setting for males, providing recovery and rehab services. STM is a not for profit organization that has provided non-licensed recovery services for more than 10 years in Western NY. This would be their first OASAS licensed program.

Rose Siegwarth motioned to approve support for the EzPar as presented, Dr. Thomas Gerbasi seconded the motion; approval of the project was recommended by the Board.

- **EzPar**

- **Horizon Health Services** – Establish a school-based satellite in the Newfane Central Middle School, presented by Deputy Director Gibbons Doxey. This satellite will serve middle and high school students grades 5-12 (ages 10-18). Approximately 20% of current students are in need of mental health counseling. The school will coordinate with Niagara County Crisis Services program, and after- hours coverage will be provided. The need has been demonstrated, and Horizon Health is fiscally viable.

Dr. Annette Dobrasz motioned to approve support for the EzPar as presented, Dr. Peter Butera seconded the motion; approval of the ezPar was recommended by the Board.

- **Corporate Compliance** – Presented by Deputy Director Gibbons-Doxey. Deputy Director Gibbons-Doxey distributed the Corporate Compliance attestation to the Board, acknowledging they have received and reviewed the updated Corporate Compliance Manual.
- **Programs / System Updates, provided by Director Kelemen. –**
  - Niagara County Suicide Prevention Coalition Annual Summary - Director Kelemen spoke briefly about the history of the Coalition, and touched on a few key items of the annual report. She also advised we are currently in the process of onboarding a new Planning Coordinator. One of her responsibilities is to make sure the coalition work continues. Director Kelemen extended a thank you to Myrla Gibbons Doxey and Heather Cruz for all of their hard work on the Coalition.
  - NCDMH Staffing updates – Director Kelemen discussed current staffing vacancies for Master’s Level Clinical positions. We are seeing the impacts of employee departures to private sector or employees leaving for private practice as other agencies have seen over the last year. We are working to strategically recruit to fill vacancies and to support staff who are taking on additional responsibilities. We have additional positions due to grant funded programs that we are cautiously implementing to ensure we don’t destabilize in other areas. We are currently using the County site, social media and outside agencies to post the open positions. We will also be attending some upcoming job fairs. Director Kelemen has also had some discussions with the County regarding a possible 4-day work schedule, allowing more flexibility. This will need to be discussed further with the union as far as how accruals will be used, hours vs days.
  - Hospital Systems - On-going concern with 9.39 hospitals being overwhelmed and over capacity or understaffed. For example, our 9.39 hospitals have not been responsive to

requests for individuals in need of psychiatric evaluations to be transferred from non-9.39 EDs in Niagara County. Lack of inpatient treatment beds is creating an issue. We continue to work with the hospitals to address.

- System Staffing – Impacts – Director Kelemen spoke about her recent testimony at the NYS Office of the Attorney General Public Hearing. It was a very humbling experience. She received several questions regarding the 730 competency evaluation process. She also received questions regarding hospital and staffing shortage problems, and how these shortages are affecting the communities. Emergency Rooms are full. System staffing problems are largely affecting services that are being provided. There is no longer enough staffing to provide these services.

**Additional Agenda Items** – No additional items to report.

**5) President’s Report** – Nothing to report.

**6) Meeting Adjournment**

Dr. Annette Dobrasz motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 PM; Rose Siegarth seconded the motion; the meeting was adjourned.

***Next CSB Meeting Date: February 27, 2023***