

**Health, Human Services & Housing Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: June 8, 2022 – 5:30 PM
LOCATION: Powered by Zoom Meeting, Meeting ID: 828 4422 9511,
By Phone (646) 558-8656
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chair Eve Walter
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Jay Mahler, Deputy Clerk
PRESENT: Legislators Corcoran (left at 7:00 PM), Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit (left at 6:00 PM) & Uchitelle
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Commissioner McDonald, Katrina Williams, Tomasine Oliphant – UC Department of Mental Health, Commissioner Smith, Dr. Eric Stutt, James Rodden, Tim Rose – UC Health Department, Commissioner Iapoce – UC DSS, Director Dawson – UC Youth Bureau, Nathan Litwin, Molly Scott, Ashlee Long – UC Resilience & Recovery, Deputy County Executive Contreras – UC Executive’s Office, S. Deacon Mennenga – New Paltz, Confidential Secretary Laurie Lichtenstein

Chair Walter called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Motion No. 1: **Moved to APPROVE the Minutes of the May 4th Regular Meetings**
Motion By: Legislator Uchitelle
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran
Discussion: None
Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 7
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Minutes APPROVED**

Resolutions for the June 21, 2022 Session of the Legislature

Resolution No. 290: Amending The County Budget To Include Federal Aid Funding To Implement The Mental Health In Schools Program – Department Of Mental Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution allocates \$750,000 in ARPA funding to implement the Mental Health in Schools Program.

Motion No. 2: **Moved Resolution No. 290 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Uchitelle
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion:

Chair Walter recognized Deputy County Executive Contreras and Mental Health Commissioner McDonald to give a brief presentation on the Mental Health in Schools Program.

See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, & Uchitelle
Voting Against: Legislator Walter
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 1
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 291: Amending The County Budget To Use Opioid Settlement Funding To Implement The Mental Health In Schools Program – Department Of Mental Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution confirms the appointment of Romero Duffy to the Community Services Board for a term to commence immediately and continue through December 31, 2025.

Motion No. 3: **Moved Resolution No. 291 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, & Uchitelle
Voting Against: Legislator Walter
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 1
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 139: Setting A Public Hearing On Proposed Local Law No. 4 Of 2022, A Local Law Enacting A Drug Take Back Program in Ulster County, To Be Held On Tuesday, July 19, 2022 At 7:00 PM

Resolution Summary: This resolution sets a public hearing to provide the public the opportunity to offer comments on Proposed Local Law No. 4 of 2022 on Tuesday, July 19, 2022 At 7:00 PM

Discussion: See attached transcript

Disposition: **NO ACTION TAKEN**

Resolution No. 200: Setting A Public Hearing On Proposed Local Law No. 7 Of 2022, A Local Law Amending The Code Of The County Of Ulster In Relation To Evictions, To Be Held On Tuesday, July 19, 2022 At 7:15 PM

Resolution Summary: This resolution sets a public hearing to provide the public the opportunity to offer comments on Proposed Local Law No. 7 of 2022 on Tuesday, July 19, 2022 at 7:15 PM

Chair Walter turned the meeting over to Deputy Chair Lopez.

Motion No. 4: **Moved Resolution No. 200 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Erner

Discussion: See attached Transcript

Disposition: **NO ACTION TAKEN**

Resolution No. 209: Setting A Public Hearing On The Sale And/Or Transfer Of Five Parcels Of Land Owned By Ulster County In The Towns Of Esopus, Kingston, Lloyd, Plattekill, And Ulster To A Local Development Corporation

Resolution Summary: This resolution sets a public hearing pursuant to Section 1411(d) of the Not-for-Profit Law of the State of New York to provide the public the opportunity to offer comments on the advisability of adoption of a resolution authorizing the sale and/or transfer of 5 properties owned by Ulster County to the Ulster County Housing Development Corporation

Motion No. 5: **Moved Resolution No. 209 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Uchitelle
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion:
Chair Walter recognized Planning Director Doyle for an update. See attached transcript.

Motion No. 6: **MOTION TO WITHDRAW Resolution No. 209**
Motion By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Nolan

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution WITHDRAWN**

Resolution No. 292: Confirming The Appointment Of The Medical Examiner For The County Of Ulster

Resolution Summary: This resolution confirms the appointment of Dr. Eric Stutt to the position of Medical Examiner for a term to commence immediately and continuing through December 31, 2025.

Motion No. 7: **Moved Resolution No. 292 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 299: Authorizing The Commissioner Of The Ulster County Department Of Mental Health To Enter Into An Intermunicipal Agreement With NYS Office Mental Health To Accept Funding From Community Mental Health Services (CMHS) Adult COVID Relief Block Grant - Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget

Resolution Summary: This resolution authorizes the Ulster County Commissioner of Mental Health to execute an intermunicipal agreement with the NYS OMH for the purpose of accepting funding from Community Mental Health Services (CMHS) Adult COVID Relief Block Grant in the amount of \$30,000.00 to support implementation of workforce recruitment and retention activities in Ulster County.

Motion No. 8: **Moved Resolution No. 247 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 300: Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget To Accept An Additional Allocation Of Adult Protective Services Funds From The New York State Office Of Children And Family Services – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution accepts an additional \$15,506 in federal funds through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021: Grants to Enhance Adult Protective Services administered by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) to be used to enhance, improve, and expand the ability of APS to investigate allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults.

Motion No. 9: **Moved Resolution No. 300 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Corcoran
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 301: Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget To Accept An Allocation Of Funds From The New York State Office Of Temporary And Disability Assistance To Support Activities Associated With Sheltering The Homeless During Inclement Winter Weather (Code Blue Plan) – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution accepts \$394,869 in state funding from the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) and Family Services (OCFS) to support activities associated with sheltering the homeless during inclement winter weather (Code Blue Plan.)

Motion No. 10: **Moved Resolution No. 301 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Erner

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 302: Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement With The New York State Office Of Children And Family Services For The Multidisciplinary Team Child Advocacy Center Program – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution authorizes the Chair to enter into an Agreement with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services to receive funding in the amount of \$447,774.00 from February 1, 2023 through September 30, 2025 for the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), Child Advocacy Center (CAC), and Child Fatality Review Team (CFRT) to improve coordination among law enforcement, child protective services, health care and other community agencies involved in child abuse investigations and the protection of abused and neglected children.

Motion No. 11: **Moved Resolution No. 302 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 303: Authorizing The Chair Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute A Contract With The New York State Department Of Health To Continue The Rabies Program – Department Of Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution authorizes the Chair to execute a three-year contract for the period April 1, 2022 through March 31, 2025, in the amount of \$120,594.00, with the New York State Department of Health to continue the Rabies Program.

Motion No. 12: **Moved Resolution No. 303 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 304: Amending The 2022 Ulster County Budget To Reflect Additional Funding For Brighter Futures Initiative’s Full-Time Assistant Youth Bureau Coordinator Position – Youth Bureau

Resolution Summary: This resolution amend the 2022 Ulster County Budget to convert the current part time Assistant Youth Bureau Coordinator at Ulster BOCES to a full time position at a rate of \$28.42 per hour on a full-time basis, at 35 hours per week.

Motion No. 13: **Moved Resolution No. 304 FOR DISCUSSION**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript

Motion No. 14: **MOTION TO AMEND Resolution No. 304 to include sunset language**
Motion By: Legislator Nolan
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Amendment ADOPTED**

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 6
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED AS AMENDED**

Resolution No. 305: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$111,435.00 Entered Into By The County – Family Of Woodstock, Inc. – Youth Bureau

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract with Family of Woodstock, Inc. in the amount of \$111,435 for services at the Family House Shelter from 1/1/22 through 12/31/22.

Motion No. 15: **Moved Resolution No. 305 FOR DISCUSSION**

Motion By: Legislator Corcoran

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Erner

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 6

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Resolution No. 306: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$69,557.00 Entered Into By The County – Family Of Woodstock, Inc. – Youth Bureau

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract with Family of Woodstock, Inc. in the amount of \$69,557 for Transitional Living Program services from 1/1/22 through 12/31/22.

Motion No. 16: **Moved Resolution No. 306 FOR DISCUSSION**

Motion By: Legislator Uchitelle

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Corcoran

Discussion: See attached transcript

Voting In Favor: Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Uchitelle & Walter

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 6

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: **Resolution ADOPTED**

Chair Walter moved on to Old Business on the Agenda and discussed the Housing Working Groups. See attached transcript.

Chair Walter moved on to Old Business on the Agenda and recognized Department of Mental Health Commissioner Tara McDonald to make a presentation on the Department.

Chair Walter asked the members if there was any other business and hearing none;

Adjournment

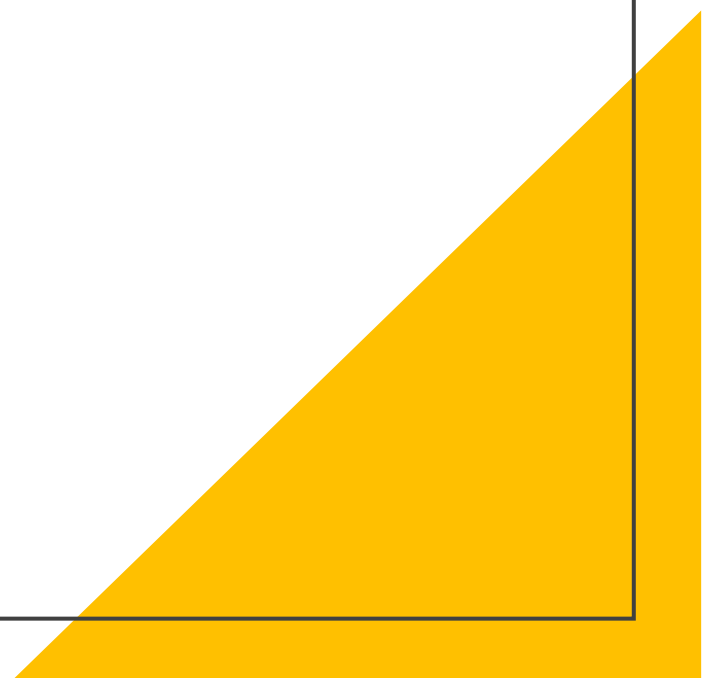
Motion Made By: Legislator Uchitelle
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Nolan
No. of Votes in Favor: 5
No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 7:23 PM

Respectfully submitted: Deputy Clerk Mahler
Approved: July 6, 2022

Mental Health in Schools

Supporting Ulster County Kids



Mental Health Supports for Youth are needed now more than Ever

'It's Life or Death': The Mental Health Crisis Among U.S. Teens

Depression, self-harm and suicide are rising among American adolescents. For one 13-year-old, the despair was almost too much to take.

Gun violence becomes leading cause of death among US youth, data shows

A report reveals a 30% increase in firearm-related deaths between 2019 and 2020, including incidents of suicides and accidental shootings

Teens in Distress Are Swamping Pediatricians

Around the country, the setting for adolescent mental health care looks ever more like this doctor's office in Kentucky, the next patient arriving every 15 minutes.

Surgeon General Warns of Youth Mental Health Crisis

The coronavirus pandemic intensified a rise in adolescent depression, anxiety and mental health distress that was underway before the spring of 2020.

Hundreds of Suicidal Teens Sleep in Emergency Rooms. Every Night.

With inpatient psychiatric services in short supply, adolescents are spending days, even weeks, in hospital emergency departments awaiting the help they desperately need.

'Growing Mental Health Crisis In Schools,' DiNapoli Warns

A State Comptroller's audit finds that many NY school districts are woefully unequipped to deal with the silent national emergency.

In Ulster County

- Increased number of SPOA (Single Point of Access) referrals for connection to mental health support services in the community
- Increase in number of youth struggling with anxiety to go to school
- Increase in youth struggling with school transitions

The Planning & Design Process

- In Spring of 2021, we initiated the planning process.
- We consulted with the following stakeholders:
 - Dr. Khoury, BOCES Superintendent
 - Pupil Personnel Staff from the districts
 - Individual meetings between DMH and school districts.
- These more in-depth meetings yielded the need to provide support but not necessarily clinically in nature.
- The support should also have the ability to occur off school grounds and extended into a youth's home/community.
- RFP developed based on the feedback received from the school districts.

Goals

- Buttress existing services available both in school and the community
- Provide intensive, time-limited clinical intervention and care coordination to Ulster County students.
- Will be a part of the school community at each of our 9 districts and act as a link between school, community, and family.
- Services will be targeted toward middle-school age young people identified by the school as being able to benefit from targeted support, brief intervention, and linkage to community resources.
- Will aim to promote overall wellness at school and home, build protective factors to offset the effects of trauma, and directly target social determinants of health to help make our communities stronger.

Staff Supports


- Operate teams of 1 Licensed Master/Clinical Social Worker (LMSW/LCSW) or Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC) and 1 Care Manager to work as dyads supporting youth, families, and schools. Teams will provide:
 - Weekly face-to-face sessions with the youth
 - Family support sessions with the youth and their parent/caregiver at least monthly
 - Ongoing communication and meetings with school staff as needed
 - Linkage to community supports and resources (for both youth and family)
 - Coordination with other involved providers including but not limited to mental health, juvenile justice, social services, primary care, etc.

Activities & Supports

- Teams will work with youth on goals related to:
 - Behavior at school, home and in the community
 - Mental health
 - Trauma
 - Substance use (prevention or intervention)
 - Academics
 - Community
 - Vocational
 - Family
 - Social (including extra-circular interests and activities)
 - Physical wellness and access to healthcare
 - Household economic stability
 - Housing instability
 - Food insecurity
 - Violence at home or in the community
- Other areas as identified by the youth and their families

Why now?

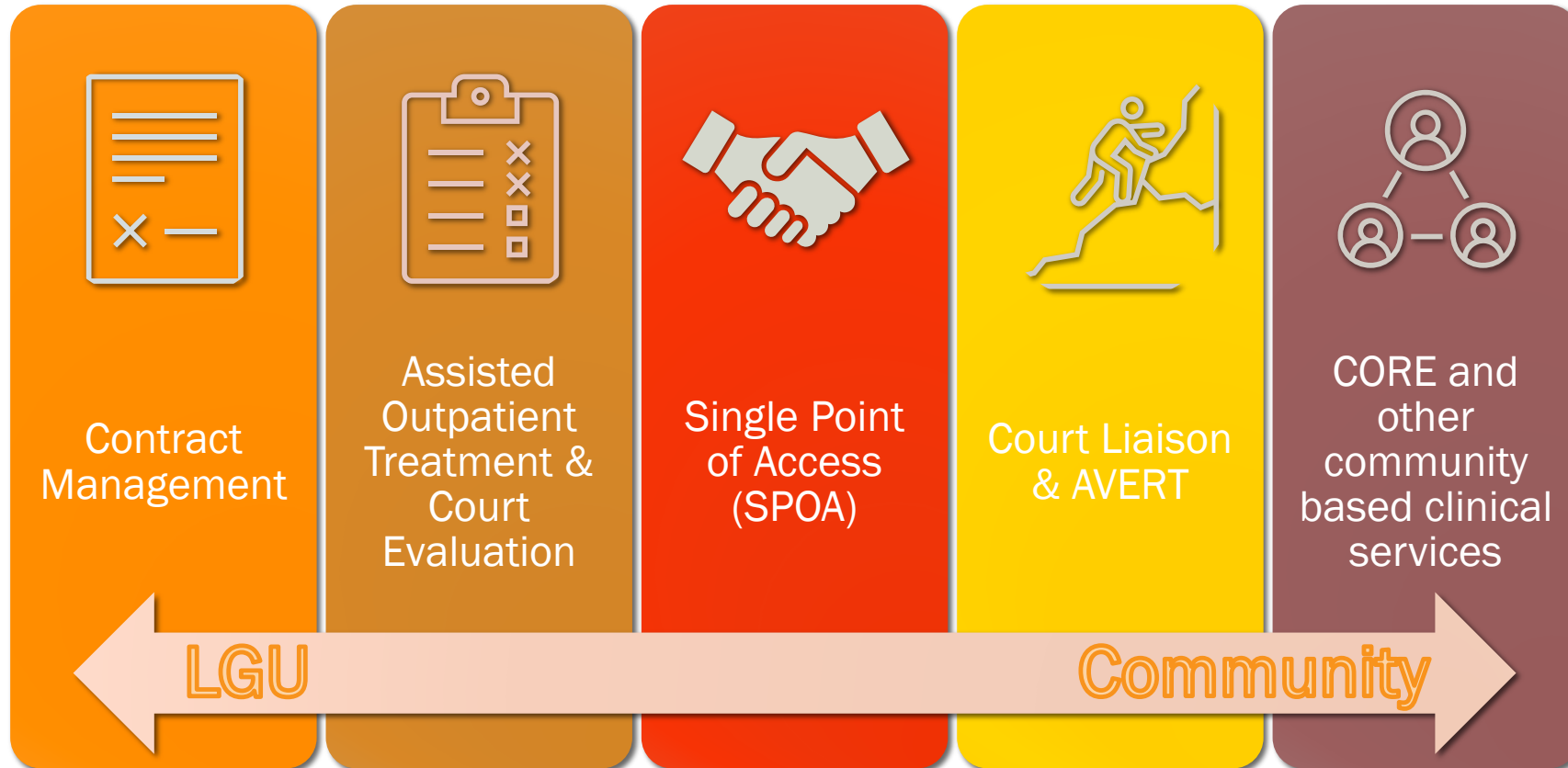
- Responsive to current need for greater mental health supports for youth
- Meets ARPA Criteria:
 - One of the primary categories of eligible use for SLFRF funds is Public Health, which includes Behavioral Healthcare.
 - Supports households and communities impacted by COVID
 - Serves underserved/vulnerable population
- Wide Community Impact
 - Developed with wide outreach to all school districts in the County
 - Serves the entire county
 - Strengthens vital public services
 - Tie-in to our Child System of Care and Single Point of Access (SPOA) work
- Timeliness
 - Approval is time sensitive in order to allow sufficient time to plan for a Fall launch.



Ulster County DMH Overview

TARA MCDONALD, LMSW, MPA
COMMISSIONER

Vision for DMH



New Staff



Separate Mental Health from Health under a full-time **Commissioner**

+4 additional new positions:

- Financial Analyst** (*hired May 2022*) Lucinda Kaiser
- Evaluative Analyst** (*hired June 2022*) Amaury Gonzalez
- Court Liaison** (*hired May 2022*) Jodi Cordray
- Special Projects Director** (*Onboarding now!*)

Behavioral Health Taskforce Recommendations

Workforce rate increases

Intensive Outpatient Program

Expand Partial Hospitalization

Expand Access to Methadone

Inpatient Psychiatric Treatment

Rehabilitation with Medically Supervised Withdrawal

Crisis Services

CPEP

Mobile Mental Health Expansion

Behavioral Health Urgent Care

Social Supports-Mental Health in Schools

Respite

Supportive/Transitional Housing

New Programs



New projects:

- Crisis Stabilization
- Crisis Respite
- Mental Health Support in Schools
- Jail Re-Entry Care Management
- Mobile Mental Health Expansion-New Paltz
- Children System of Care Grant

Current Needs

Suicide Deaths: **24** (*or 15 per 100,000 - state average: 8.6, US: 14.5*)

Overdose Deaths: **74**

Overdoses Reported: **386**

Psychiatric ED Visits: **2,992**

SUD specific ED visits: **304**

(2021 annual data)

Status of WMC Beds

HealthAlliance Hospital in Kingston is reducing their psychiatric beds (which have been closed since 2020) from 40 to 20.

This proposal includes a renovation of the existing psychiatric unit.

All services would be offered on the Mary's Avenue campus.

2023 Budget Considerations



Financial Analyst to Manager of Fiscal Operations- aligning title with job duties and responsibilities.

Administrative Assistant- To act as receptionist and assist with secretarial duties necessary to manage the department at the new site.

Community Oriented Recovery and Empowerment (CORE) Services?

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ABSENT: None
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OTHER ATTENDEES: Commissioner McDonald, Katrina Williams, Tomasine Oliphant – UC Department of Mental Health, Commissioner Smith, Dr. Eric Stutt, James Rodden, Tim Rose – UC Health Department, Commissioner Iapocce – UC DSS, Director Dawson – UC Youth Bureau, Nathan Litwin, Molly Scott, Ashlee Long – UC Resilience & Recovery, Deputy County Executive Contreras – UC Executive’s Office, S. Deacon Mennenga – New Paltz, Confidential Secretary Laurie Lichtenstein

Chair Walter called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Chair Walter

I'll call the Health Human Services and housing meeting for June 8 2022, to order. I'll take a motion to approve the May 4 regular meeting minutes.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

I'll move it

Chair Walter

Seconded by, I missed that completely. Who moved it, Legislator Uchitelle? Is that right? And second by Corcoran? Let's go with that.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

That sounds great.

Chair Walter

All right. I'm on my like 10th hour of meetings right now just for the record. Okay, all in favor?

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

All right. Any opposed? All right, perfect. So um, we're going to simultaneously do the presentation and move to resolutions. Because what we'll do is, we'll get the presentation from Commissioner McDonald on mental health in schools, and then move right to those two resolutions. So we could just hear her presentation, then we can make a motion to discuss the resolutions, and then you can ask the questions. Does that make sense? After we've made the motion to discuss the resolution? Great. So go ahead. Commissioner McDonald.

Director McDonald

Okay. Thank you. I'm so I'm wondering, I'm sorry, Jay. So you gave me the heads up to share my screen. Okay. All right. So I will share my screen. Okay, great. Um, and just while I set it to, hopefully I'm setting it correctly, sorry. We're going to have to wait for it. This will be a joint venture with myself and our children's SPOA, coordinator, Thomasine Oliphant, who can speak a little bit better to what it is that we're seeing locally, that head is or was a part of necessitating the need to be able to create the program in the first place. So I thank you all for allowing for us to speak to the mental health in schools program. I am going to try and set this I'm sorry.

Katrina Williams

So you want to go to the slideshow, and then

Director McDonald

Thank you, Katrina. Alright. So the first slide is really just a talking about some of the recent events that also speaks to how important it is for mental health to support our youth in schools now more than ever. And you'll see that between the distress of being a teenager and adolescence is a very difficult and tumultuous time, even for the best of circumstances. So our teams are really feeling it when you put it against the backdrop of this developmental period that they're in. In addition to gun violence and the prolonged period of the pandemic, our youth are really having a hard time and they're struggling and they're struggling, and they're showing up in emergency rooms and not necessarily getting the services that they need. And they're going to their school counselors and and their teachers and their parents. And they definitely it certainly takes a village to be able to raise kids in the best of circumstances. But we definitely all need a we need all hands on deck now. Go for sort of the national landscape. But I want to talk to seem to talk about locally, what are some of the impacts that we're seeing that will also necessitate the need for us to push some services into our schools? Thomasine, can you talk to the slide?

Thomasine Oliphant

Thank you, Tara. So I just wanted to share especially that we're seeing an increased number of full applications for children, not only our traditional youth that usually come through our system, but just youth across the board, from all socio economic backgrounds, especially in you know, all different types of circumstances. One of the most increased situations or is that the youth are struggling with anxiety with going to school. This is like getting, you know, from their house to school. And so though there is there are there many services, you know, the supports in school, we are struggling with making that connection for youth with services, you know, to work with them in the home to get them to school, because there's not many services that we have in the community now.

So I have been getting referrals across most of all school districts in the county and so we're seeing this really high need of school staff informing us that our youth are struggling with anxiety of going to School and, you

know, just this depression that they're also experiencing with also from coming from the pandemic, and you know, going from remote and back into school and the different social anxieties that they also have been experiencing. So that also goes into the schools transition piece. Definitely, that middle age group and junior high, are the highest need right now. And with those transitions from each school, like elementary to middle school, and then middle school to junior high, and then junior high to high school, that is, what we're seeing is an increase with that support that is needed. So these services that we're discussing, are really crucial, because it would provide more support in the home as opposed to just in the school, and I'll let Tara continue.

Director McDonald

Thank you Thomasine. Really briefly, the planning and design process that brought us to the development of this program in the spring of 2021, we initiated the process we consulted with stakeholders, Dr. Khory, the BOCES superintendent, pupil personnel staff from each of the districts, and we had individual meetings between the department and the school districts. The meetings were really to discuss, specifically for their districts, what are some of the needs that they think they would have, at the time because the kids were working, or going to school remotely, they were preparing for them to come back into the schools, physically for September of 21. So what we were hearing most, most times was that they weren't sure what they were expecting, but they knew that the kids were going to need some more supports.

The more in depth meetings yielded the need for support, as I said, and the support should also have to occur have the ability to occur off school grounds and extended into the youth community. This speaks to what Tom was saying was saying, the schools have put in some resources within the school buildings with the campus, additional social workers and even psychologists for testing. But the needs continues to have supports that bridge between the home and in the school, school. School avoidance is very normal. And sometimes, in certain levels of school, the school avoidance can be normal, especially when you put it against again, that developmental backdrop. But when it becomes exacerbated by the anxiety and the depression, and it goes on for long periods of time, then kids start to lose big pieces of their educational milestones. That's all connected to the school avoidance and so the hope is that this service will be able to help them to get them into the school building where they will have the additional supports that the districts have developed for themselves.

The RFP was developed and based on the feedback we received, developed based on the feedback we received from the school district's. Goals at the surface. But just existing services available both in the school and the community provide intensive time limited clinical intervention and care coordination to Ulster County students. Again, it will be a part of the school community in each of our nine districts, we did get buy in from 100% of our districts, which is so wonderful, services will be targeted towards middle aged young people. And we aim to promote overall wellness at school and at home to build protective factors to offset effects of trauma and directly target social determinants of health. It wasn't necessarily built to be a clinical service. And yes, there is a clinician that is a part of the team. But that is so that they come with the skills to be able to assess and to identify when there are deeper issues. But really, we're we're just looking at the family and the youth and we're saying what do you need? Where do you need support and it doesn't always need to be in another therapy session. The staffing is one Licensed Master clinical social worker per team or they could also be a licensed licensed mental health counselor and one care manager to provide the support. And the support will be provided through weekly face to face sessions with the youth. Family support sessions with the youth and the caregiver or parent. ongoing communication meetings with school staff as needed, linkage to community supports and resources and coordination with other providers.

That coordination is truly key. Kids are generally not a family of one, they have a community around them. They have a school, they have parents they have maybe they have a job, they have siblings, and it takes a lot of coordination to make sure that these are all working together to be able to support someone. Some of the activities that were included in the RFP as goals. The youth would have goals around their behavior in school or in or in the community. They'd have goals around stabilizing mental health or trauma responses. Substance use the social including extracurricular activities, physical and wellness, access to health care, housing instability, food insecurity, violence at home, all of those things that necessarily won't come out in the during the school day, but impacts their ability to be able to be educated and function within the school day.

So why now? We were wanting to be responsive to the current need for greater mental health supports for youth. It meets the ARPA criteria, and that is one of the primary categories that eligible use for SLF RF funds as a public health crisis, and supports the households and communities that are impacted by COVID. There's a wide community impact developed with wide outreach to all school districts serves the entire county, and strengthen strengthens vital public services. Approval is time sensitive in order to allow for sufficient time to plan for Fall launch. That's the end. And I certainly would love to open it up to any questions, feedback that anyone may have.

Chair Walter

Before you do, I'll take a motion to discuss. So the first resolution and we can, we'll take these separately, even though the discussion will probably happen more the first one, and we won't need to repeat it. So resolution 290 amending the county budget to include federal aid funding to implement the mental health in school program, Department of Mental Health. A motion to discuss?

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

I move that.

Chair Walter

Okay. So you should tell second Corcoran. I will say that the ARPA committee has not made a decision, they they have done their calculations on this, but they have not voted it, voted on it in their committee yet. We do traditionally not vote on something until they have had a chance to I'm not suggesting one way or another. I'm just saying that has been our our approach. And I just wanted you to know that they have not actually voted on this yet. Okay, so I'll open the floor to questions, discussions, comments anything. Legislator, Lopez, is that a hand up? Oh, sorry, Legislator Uchitelle

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Yeah, I I know, this wasn't that you weren't trying to ask a leading question. But it did lead me to wonder if this is time sensitive, or if it would be appropriate to let the ARPA committee have a vote on this.

Chair Walter

So I don't know, Tara, do you want to respond to that?

Director McDonald

It is time sensitive. The hope is that the support if it does pass this committee and it would be supported that perhaps it would be helpful in allowing the ARPA to come to a decision, we are hoping to have a fall launch, which would mean that we have to start to prepare in the summer.

Chair Walter

Legislator Lopez.

Legislator Craig Lopez

Sure. Thank you. I might, my wife, she's a special ed teacher in the Monticello school districts. So she deals with this every day. She sees it everyday firsthand. And most of what's really frustrating for her is what you're trying to address here is that bridge that gap between the school and the home. So, you know, what also further frustrates her is that she has these parent teacher conferences, where the parents don't show up. They're not there. They're not interested, you know, and what's going on in their, in their children's education. And, you know, my question is, how do you address the situations where the parents are unwilling to participate or unwilling to take that step or, or, you know, participate in this type of program?

Director McDonald

So, I believe that it would start with offering the opportunities to support not just the youth but the parent as well. So what is the cause of them not being able to and I phrase it, I'm sorry, what is the cause of them not participating? Is it because they're not able to because they weren't aware that the parent teacher conference was coming up, because they don't have transportation, because they don't understand what their absence means for their young person's success? It would be that Case Manager or social worker meeting with the schooling saying, Oh, I see that you you refer Johnny to me, one of the questions or the issues is that Johnny's parents do not appear to be engaged.

That's the first part of their work is to be able to explain this to Johnny's parents and then try and figure out what are the challenges or barriers that is keeping them there could be that Johnny has several for siblings that are in different stages of education, they've got to be able to split up their time. And perhaps Johnny, as a middle schooler, has had me going to their school as an elementary student, and I'm paying more attention now to my younger children. It could be a number of things. But it is this person's this staff person's responsibility and job to say, this is our reality. How do I help you to get to Johnny school because he's missing you there. And that's that bridge.

Legislator Craig Lopez

Thank you.

Chair Walter

Other questions? I have Legislator Nolan and Legislator Erner.

Legislator Kathy Nolan

Thank you very much. I think my internet bounced me out for a minute. So I assume we've had the motion and second to be in discussion at this point?

Chair Walter

We have

Legislator Kathy Nolan

Thank you. And I heard the initial presentation of this proposal at the ARPA committee earlier this month, and was very, very impressed with it. I think that it sets up teams that can go investigate, evaluate some of the questions that were just being discussed about what the barriers are to accessing the system. I think it responds to the increased stress on students and families from the pandemic, which is one of the specified uses for the ARPA fund funding. And I think it will serve as a pilot for us to know whether we need this type of program in an ongoing fashion, it may very well be that this program would be something that we would want long term. During my prior term as a Legislator, we had people from the school board asking us to help plug this gap between what was happening at home and what was happening at school, and to provide a greater network for support around social determinants of health, which are the underpinning for the child's own school success. Do we need the program in the form that it is presented here or some other form?

I think we'll learn that by funding this program with ARPA money with money from the opioid settlements, and really have this funded from outside the county initially, with the idea that we might eventually either build it into the county, or perhaps into the school system, and into those respective budgets. And we might have a better idea of which of those budgets would make more sense, given how the services are used and how the program functions best. So I think we're presented here with a fantastic opportunity to provide services while we learn better how to provide services, and do it with monies that are coming in as added monies to our existing budget lines.

So I'm, don't have a question. Other than, you know, how do we go ahead and move forward? One question that did come up, I think from Chair Walter at the ARPA committee was about the RFP going out before funding was secured. I support that, because I think if we have that process moving along, and we're ready to go, then we we find the funding for it. And so I endorsed that course of events having taken place.

Legislator Phil Erner

Thank you, I would support moving ahead on this tonight. And I noticed we got a an update with the ARPA score sheet here. And it seems like the the concerns are mainly about some of what Legislator Nolan was just talking about, that could be addressed in when it goes back to the ARP committee or ways and means as well. So I'd be a yes if we if we vote to move ahead.

Chair Walter

Legislator Erner, others? All right. Um, so I honest, this, I'm completely supportive of this program, in every way that it was articulated in this PowerPoint in every single way, except for one element. And that was the RFP to a third party. And the fact that it was given to a lowest bidder of a third party organization that's not in Ulster County. So I'm going to just say my concerns here.

First of all, this is a major, major endeavor. It's important. It's hard work. These social workers will, it is a very, I've done a lot of work with social workers in my life and it is very, very challenging job that this is and worth every penny that we can put behind it. A third party organization that's outside Ulster does not have a history of experience in our schools, with our departments with our social services. And so that's one concern I have with having this be a third party organization outside of Ulster County. While if this was internal and done by us in

Ulster County, then it would be people like Thomasine who does know our schools and does know our organizations and does know our other departments so that that coordination of work and effort is actually feasible. The second part is supervision, social workers have to be supervised by someone. So this is going to be supervision by someone outside of Ulster County, which means that if there's a problem or a challenge that's happening, we are only going to find out about it later. Because there's, it's, it won't be one of our people who on a regular weekly basis, check in with these social workers necessarily, as a social worker, supervisor should and identify that, you know, social workers usually log their work, they talk about what's working and what's not. And that high level of supervision that's required. I'm very concerned about it happening outside and away from us. I understand that Thomasine could also serve in some supervisory role, but it is not the same as being the lead supervisor. Also, it's important for the social workers that they have a licensed clinical social worker, if they're supervised because many of them are new in the social work field, and they are looking for their licensure. So they need to have a supervisor that has that.

The second is we the third is we talked about that schools have different levels of of, of services that are similar right now. Some of them have psychiatrists, some of them have social workers. So we really need to understand for this to be successful exactly how this integrates with them. Because if the same clinician is seeing someone with the kids in their home, and then there's another clinician working with the kid after school, how does that integrate? How do they work together. And that model has to be really, really succinctly put be put out, especially because they're getting paid at very different levels. Because this, these social workers are being paid by a nonprofit organization as opposed to our in school social workers.

And so I want to implement this when we know how that integration is exactly going to work in these different schools. The next is sustainability. If we were if I was to think of what I want this to look like, in five years, it is not to be continuously paying a third party company to deliver this care. We lost our mental health services by giving it off to third party companies and taking it away from us. And we've regretted it ever since as the Legislature and as a county. And so if the long run is not to be continuously paying some third party company outside of Ulster County to do this, then why not start with a pilot and model here, where we're paying the people, we're hiring the people, and we're doing it here, we could pilot it in a different way, by making it smaller. There's like, like, the presentation said some schools have the services a little bit more than others, or have more of a support system. But I again, this if we're talking sustainability, and piloting it, this isn't a model that I would want to see in the long run.

I'm almost done. Five, right now it is a we have a crisis in hiring social workers. There are no social workers to hire. Many social workers have quit and moved on to other things, because the overwhelmingness and stress that probably occurred with COVID. They're especially leaving nonprofits because the pay is not as good. In fact, I talked to a couple of social workers in Ulster County who have left their nonprofits and wish they had a county job. Which brings me to the idea that this is not the kind of thing I want to give to the lowest bidder. This is the kind of thing that is absolutely something we get behind in terms of money and resources.

So I want a model that has county committee commitment, continuity, our own supervision, allows job growth that integrates with the colleges in the schools of social work. It strengthens the relationships with the schools. If we mess up in a partnership with the schools, it's very hard to recover from that. And I've been in those situations where schools, if the schools are not happy with how things are it's very hard to to remedy that we need to do it exactly right with them from the very beginning. And we I want to pay the social workers the way they need to

be paid because this is grueling work. This is very, very difficult work. So I I will for me, I would like to postpone. I understand the September was the goal but I've been having these conversations back and forth with the deputy executive Contreras now for months and months and months and months. So it's not like it's I'm just choosing to postpone this in the last minute. But I want this model, I want us to be doing it, I want us to be leading it, I want us to be paying the social workers what they need to be paid, we can take I'm fine taking ARPA money and opioid money to start this, but it's giving the money to us, not to a third party organization, who doesn't have its roots here. And knowing that we are gonna have a very hard time, but they're, they're gonna have a hard time finding, finding social workers as it is like the September goal of having 10 social workers is probably pretty unlikely anyway.

And so what I'm proposing and I have put this out there to Deputy Executive Contreras, I've talked to Tara too, for months now is, is that we do this 100%. But we do it internally, we get our mental health department, we all voted to have the separate mental health department so that we can be really doing the services and be on top of the services and not handed off to someone else who may or may not do a great job. And so I would like to postpone this, I would like to have a model where we're delivering it. And again, fine using the ARPA money fine using your opioid money, but we're delivering it and then I'd like to see it in our budget. And so that this is got sustainability, though, because I do not want to go into the schools and deliver this for a year and then pull it out. That would be terrible. So I want this to be a sustainable part. And I have, I feel, and I imagine you all support me, that this is something that the Legislature will absolutely be behind. Even if it's a little more expensive to do it internally. All right, Legislator Nolan.

Legislator Kathy Nolan

Thank you. And I I understand those concerns. However, the Legislature did not come up with this program a year ago, or two years ago, or three years ago, that would have it in place, meeting the needs that are actually there right now. And to switch it to the approach that that you're proposing would set it back a year, at least. Because as you said, it's going to be hard to do it the way it is. In addition, I think some of the points that you make argue for doing the pilot as a pilot from outside the county. But one of the factors being that the program will be judged, and it will be refined. But if it comes from us, and it doesn't work well, then where do we go from that? It can be much harder once you build something into the structure of a large municipality, the county and the school districts in this case.

So I think that if we had started this program, and moving towards it quite a bit of time ago, the approach you're talking about, you could sell me, but it wouldn't necessarily be like this is very, obviously better for the first year of the program that we we can't do 10 I mean, I wouldn't recommend doing 10 new salaried positions within the county. So do we under shoot what the program actually needs? If we find out we need 10 people to run a program like this, then I think we can decide whether we you know how we get that into the budget, but just on kind of a hunch or a guess as to how much we need and which district needs what I like the flexibility that comes from an independently funded independently run program. It's it's like getting a consultant in to do an assessment of the system needs. I think those needs are very great. And I'm really uncomfortable with waiting another year, which I think is a realistic estimate of how much trying to switch to this approach would be and the fact that there's been conversation about it might be better to do that way. Doesn't mean that it's better to do it that way it just means that there there's room for difference of opinion on this. And I would hope we'd go ahead and have a vote on this rather than have, you know, just differences of opinion, kind of meaning that we don't move forward. If there's differences of opinion, but enough support to try it, then I certainly would want to go that way.

Chair Walter

I'll go to Deputy Executive Contreras and Legislator Uchitelle, I just want to clarify it is not going to take a year. These there's not changing the model. It's just changing who's doing the hiring. So it's, it's a misnomer to suggest that it would put this off a year to make this internal. deputy executive Contreras

Deputy Executive Contreras

Yeah, um, I was gonna say I actually do think that it would set it back by a long time because it does take time to develop these programs. And like even this program we had, we were hoping to get it off the ground in this past September. But just the process, the design process, everything that is involved, it does end up taking time. So I think especially if we were to wait and have it be part of the budget process, I think I would be concerned that we would be pretty far into next year before we had something that we all agreed on. I think the other comment I wanted to make was the the outside of Ulster County comment.

I so I did speak with Deputy with Commissioner McDonald, about all of the concerns that that you raised. And my understanding is that the nonprofit does have an existing footprint in Ulster County. And I wanted to bring that over to Tara at some point to describe further. And also just to describe how we see this working in the schools with the existing resources that are in schools. The second, the other piece is about the lowest bidder, I just want to to, to make the point that it they were the lowest bidder, but that's really not why we chose them. We chose them based on the proposal and what they the strength of the proposal and how excited we were to work with them. So it really wasn't based on who was going to pay their physicians, social workers the lowest.

And then, on the sustainability piece, I agree, I think the reason that we wanted to do it with a nonprofit and a contracted model is to give us the flexibility to refine it to continue it not continue it, continue it in a different scope or scale, instead of deciding to in house people right now and be kind of locked in to that shape. And I think that that's that's it for now. But I would love to hear Tara speak more about the nonprofit in the schools

Director McDonald

Sure. So the provider that we thought their proposal most aligned with what the goals were, is a long standing provider in the Albany County area, yes, but they also have a small footprint here and that they do aftercare services for individuals that are returning from residential to Ulster County. So if I can speak just a little bit about that, what they do mainly is they are a residential treatment center. They're a school, a residential school for young people that are having specific issues that they're not able to be at home safely. So they have a high degree of both of behavioral needs and psychiatric support. And they are on that campus, getting that treatment until they're able to come back to the community, when they come back to the community to the aftercare worker to figure out how do we mimic and support this young person that used to having 24 hour supervision to home. So that's a huge bridging that they're doing.

And this agency has a lot of experience doing that they also have a license, a co-license OASAS and OMH clinic to be able to provide both integrated SUD and mental health services, all of their experience is what we're hoping to be able to infuse into a program like this.

So the other piece that I will say about a provider that doesn't have their headquarters or where it isn't necessarily Ulster County run is that it allows for families to have some choice in terms of services, we have one main child

serving provider, and they've done a lot of great work, but it's one provider that's basically doing the majority of the work. If you're a family member that has three kids and two of your kids have been to this provider, maybe you thought that they were successful success, maybe you'd like to try something different. This allows for a family to have choice of who would be giving them some support. So yes, they don't have a very large footprint here, but they are helping some of our highest needs and highest risk individuals remain safe in this community.

Chair Walter

Can you just say the name of the organization?

Director McDonald

Sure. LaSalle, the LaSalle school?

Chair Walter

That's what they're called up in Albany as well?

Director McDonald

Yes.

Chair Walter

Legislator Uchitelle.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Thank you. So I'm typically a pretty big proponent of of doing things in house particularly in in social services, health, mental health. And I look forward to many fights ahead to bring things in house that might be outsourced right now. That's part of why I submitted legislation to really understand the cost of you know, and the the, you know, labor costs for contractors that we work with, so we can really have a good understanding of this. And even despite that I'm willing to support tonight. And you know, and in this program in general, doing this through a vendor, because it's a pilot, I actually, I actually see the the argument of, you know, if there's a hiccup with a school district, it could be detrimental, I actually see the vendor providing a certain you know, that this arrangement providing a certain level of security with that, because we can always bring it in house down the road, we're going to have to get good at bringing things in house that exist in the wild already.

And I think that will, we'll look to opportunities to improve if this program brings us far enough that there are opportunities to improve, and we can bring it in house, then once it's established, I would definitely support that. I, you know, considering some of the challenges that we've some of the friction that we've had in our body, around hiring in general, and creating new positions, particularly outside of the budget, which if we want to get something in the in place for the fall, this has to be done.

You know, this isn't going to be a position that we can build into the budget. So there's just no way this can happen in the fall. If we did it in house, I just don't see how that would be possible. You know, I think this actually is a, you know, the strongest I actually commend the the executive branch for bringing what I think is the strongest program to win our support here, I actually don't know that they would win our support if this was an in house program for all of us, even though I generally support those.

So I'm comfortable moving this forward tonight, even despite the fact that ARPA hasn't moved on it. And I would just say I don't completely agree with the assertion that a vote in the affirmative tonight would lead to a more affirmative vote for ARPA, I think they should follow their process and not be swayed by our vote. You know, I just wanted to make that point as well.

Chair Walter

Anyone else? So I'm just going to, again, clarify, this was never a suggestion, my suggestion that we wait until the budget I am, was supportive of using the ARPA money and the opioid money to start it here in house. I will also reiterate, if something goes wrong with this with this third party company, it will be very hard for us to have the school's confidence.

I'm going to vote no on this. Not because I don't completely support the program, and the initiative and the effort. But because I don't think this is the right approach. I think we are looking for trouble with this. I think we're going to have regrets. I think moving it in house afterwards is going to be even harder. We're giving a million dollars to this company. Just keep in mind, it's a million dollars for them to do this, instead of us keeping this million dollars and paying people and the issues of how people are paid in their salaries that they're going to be paid and, and our oversight, it's going to come back and haunt us. So I'm voting no for that reason.

And I'm also voting no, because to Legislator Nolan's point, I have been trying to work with Commissioner McDonald and Deputy Executive Contreras for many months on this and on moving it in house. I'm not just bringing it up now, this has been a concern. These have been a concern, including how they're going to staff it because we do have a major deficit in social workers. So I can bring it to vote. And I just want to explain my No, because it has absolutely nothing to do with my desire to do the best for our kids. It's actually my no is because I want to do the absolute best for our kids.

So with that, all in favor.

Committee Members

Aye.

Chair Walter

Opposed? Okay. And that's for the ARPA, part of it. The next is resolution 291 amending the county budget to use opioid settlement funding to implement the mental health in schools program. All in favor, or sorry, motion to discuss. I mean, if there's any more discussion.

Legislator Kathy Nolan

Move it

Chair Walter

Nolan, second. Corcoran. Any discussion on this? All right, all in, oh sorry. Deputy Contreras. Do you want to say something? Deputy Executive Contreras? No. Okay. All in favor of resolution 291.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Opposed? All right. Resolution 139 Setting up public hearing on proposed local law. So, unfortunately, Legislator Petit, is not here. She has been taking, you know, postponing it. We did get information from the attorney saying that it, we're legally not allowed to have it. Plus, it just came out today that they it's kind of interesting. The state has hired two organizations to implement drug takeback in all the pharmacies. We're not sure what the timeline is on this. I don't know if Dr. Smith, you know, the timeline on it. I did respond earlier to ask if they know the timeline, but it looks it's kind of interesting that here we go, again, hiring third parties to do what the pharmacy is probably should just be doing themselves. But that is the progress there. Dr. Smith, do you know when that is supposed to take place? Like start?

Dr. Smith

Well, you know, this provision had actually passed several years ago. So I mean, it's taken them years to get to this point.

Chair Walter

Right. But that hiring of the two companies that they just did.

Dr. Smith

I do not know that timeframe on that.

Chair Walter

Checking my email, see if I got a response. Okay, so I mean, I don't know, I think we will take no action on this, if that makes sense. Since again, Laura's not here to postpone it officially. So we'll just take no action. Next. Oh, so the next I'm going to recuse myself. So, Deputy Chair Lopez, will you take the next one please?

Legislator Craig Lopez

Sure. This is, hang on, I lost it here, one second

Chair Walter

Just so you, we're up to 200.

Legislator Craig Lopez

One second, please. Got it. Okay, resolution 200. Setting a public hearing on proposed local law number seven, a local law amending the code of the County of Ulster in relation to evictions to be held on Tuesday, July 19. Move for discussion.

Legislator Corcoran

Move it.

Legislator Phil Erner

Second,

Legislator Craig Lopez

Second. Any discussion?

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

If I may?

Legislator Craig Lopez

Yep.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Yeah, I, you know, it pains me to be approaching the the anniversary of having introduced this the first time. But I think this is I'm going to request that the committee take no action on it. You know, there had been some conversation today about, you know, maybe we can move it forward. But, you know, considering the state of recusals both in this committee in potentially laws and rules, when we get to the floor, you know, we have a new ethics law that clarifies the interpretation of conflicts of interest, not just for this, but for a variety of, you know, for what I think is, you know, kind of more in line with the way that it's been interpreted for every other topic. Because this topic does seem to have a certain level of scrutiny that other topics don't have, but such as it is, I think that you know, as the bills author, I would ask that we take no action on this again.

Legislator Craig Lopez

Okay. We will take no action. So it does not require a vote. We'll move on.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

I think we do have a question from Legislator Erner

Legislator Craig Lopez

Legislator Erner

Legislator Phil Erner

Thank you. I'm incredibly disappointed at how this is turning out. And at the same time I I'm I've been elected to to be an optimist and to say we can do things. So we have to do something else, if we're not able to do this to keep our communities together to keep housing stable for tenants and to prevent displacements of all kinds in our counties. So I'm looking forward to us working as a committee, along with the working groups that we have to determine exactly what that is that we're willing and able to do. Thank you.

Legislator Craig Lopez

Anybody else? All right, Chair Walter.

Chair Walter

All right. resolution 209, setting a public hearing on the sale and or transfer five parcels of land owned by Ulster County in the town of the Esopus, a motion to discuss.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Move it

Chair Walter

Uchitelle. Second.

Legislator Corcoran

Second

Chair Walter

Legislator Corcoran. Dennis, do you want to give a little update?

Director Dennis Doyle

Thank you, Chair Walter. Appreciate that. We have this resolution went in. And we're now looking at some of the issues that have been raised by the Legislature and also looking at redemptions by others and are looking at some of the other properties that are available. So we now have some some changes to this resolution in terms of the properties that are involved, as well as the discussion at the last meeting with respect to the need for an RFEI or request for expressions of interest or an RFP, no matter how you put it to be done before a public hearing has been held. And given what we're seeing with respect to the changes of the numbers of properties. And in the RFEI, our suggestion would be is that rather than postpone this resolution, if the committee is amicable to actually withdraw it, and when we have a firmer handle on what actual properties we have interests in, as well as what properties are available to us will resubmit with those with those properties.

Chair Walter

So will is it in your intention also to is there a policy that's being created, kind of making the decision which properties to return? Which ones to keep, which ones to convert, how they should be converted? Will we be able to have some kind of is there some kind of policy associated with that, that you're working on on that end?

Director Dennis Doyle

I know that there's a discussion with respect to some of the issues as it relates to tax foreclosed properties and working working with those. There is a there is some good discussions in terms of the criteria that we use to take the properties moving that into a formal discussion and a formal resolution for the Legislature is something that's being discussed internally. And I know it's being discussed in a number of different venues. So the short answer is the short answer is yes.

There are properties, however, that we have pulled from the auction that are available to us. Because they're not they haven't been auctioned that we can we can move forward on what we're looking at is essentially some of those properties are actually being redeemed relative to those current owners that hadn't paid their taxes. So they won't be available if they're redeemed. In addition, one of the properties that we had pulled the county is looking at for its own purposes, particularly for a respite house.

Chair Walter

You just said that just to make me happy didn't you?

Director Dennis Doyle

No, actually it on and as you know, we've also we've also reached out to you and and others with respect to a potential respite house in Ellenville, as well.

Chair Walter

Yes, actually on that, I mean, at one point, we're going to go tour, a couple of those, but it had to get changed. But I will put out to the rest of the committee. Hopefully, Deputy Executive Contreras we could reschedule looking at some of those areas. And you can see if other members are interested in looking at them.

Director Dennis Doyle

We're working with the current owner to find an appropriate time to visit the house.

Chair Walter

Okay, so then we're going to, is this a motion to withdraw this resolution number 209? Can I, can someone make that motion? That's on the request of the planning board

Legislator Kathy Nolan

on the request of the planning director. I'll make that motion.

Chair Walter

Okay. Second

Legislator Corcoran

I'll second that

Chair Walter

All right. All in favor

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Okay. The next we have is resolution 292 confirming the appointment of Eric Stutt as medical examiner motion to discuss.

Legislator Kathy Nolan

I'll make that motion.

Chair Walter

Second. Legislator Uchitelle. Dr. Stutt. I believe you're here with us.

Dr. Eric Stutt

I am

Chair Walter

Would you be willing to introduce yourself to us?

Dr. Eric Stutt

Sure. I'm Eric Stutt. I have graduated medical school back in 1972. I have practiced as a physician ever since. Initially, my training was in family practice and then I evolved into doing emergency medicine. I came to Ulster County in 1982 and began practicing emergency medicine in Dutchess County initially, then became director of the emergency department at Benedictine hospital, subsequently, Director of Emergency not director but Associate Director of the emergency department at Kingston hospital and medical director of emergency department at Margaretville hospital, just out in Delaware County.

I have maintained my interest in that but have given up the practice of Emergency Medicine. I'm actually trained in family practice. It found that emergency medicine suited my needs better. And gave me an interesting career. I've been doing medical examiner type of work since 1985 as an emergency physician in Putnam County, where the county coroner who required a physician to represent the medical aspects of the coroner's office, required to have a physician on staff. And so I became coroner's physician from 1985 to 1990 to 2015. And then joined, interviewed for this position in not in this position, but actually, as a medical examiner, one of the deputy medical examiner's, in 2016, I met with Dr. Smith was appointed for 2017 tenure. And in this past in January, I was appointed chief medical examiner.

Chair Walter

Anyone have any questions for Dr. Stutt? All right, seeing none all in favor of resolution 292.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Opposed? Unanimous. Okay.

Dr. Eric Stutt

Thank you

Chair Walter

Welcome Dr. Stutt.

Dr. Eric Stutt

Thank you. Glad to be with you.

Legislator Kathy Nolan

Thank you for your service.

Chair Walter

Resolution number 299, authorizing the commissioner of the Ulster County Department of Mental Health to enter into an inter municipal agreement with New York State Office of Mental Health to accept funding from the community mental health services for adult COVID related block grant a motion to discuss.

Legislator Kathy Nolan

Second

Chair Walter

I think it was Uchitelle, second, Nolan. Any discussion? Legislator Uchitelle.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Yeah, I had a question about this. Just in reading through the resolution. There was a mention of workforce development and where it was a, sorry, workforce recruitment and retention. But it was the rest of it was regarding mental health. And I was wondering, I just wanted to understand that better. The work, though, specifically the Workforce Recruitment and Retention component of it

Chair Walter

Would this be Commissioner McDonald? Yeah, go ahead.

Director McDonald

Thank you, I'm sorry, I never know when I can speak and I don't want to speak out of turn.

Chair Walter

I appreciate that. Go ahead

Director McDonald

So, these particular dollars were really the function of our past designation because the Office of Mental Health receive these federal dollars made the decision about which programs these monies can go to and what specific activities would be would meet eligibility criteria to use them. So we received information that said, we're going to be putting this money in your state aid letter, there are three different agencies that have the ability to apply for that or not apply three different agencies that have the ability to receive this funding because they operate the particular programs, the county has the ability to make the decision about how much each agency gets. But that's it, we don't have any discretion in terms of what are some of the activities that they can use it for, I can say that it's you know, part of it is training and career development so that folks can be retained because they know that there is a career path for them in a particular agency. And one of them is the residential realm, they really struggle with that 24 hour day staffing. And so they want to be able to retain the staff by saying, If you come on board, we'll be able to get you trained and get you education so that it can further your career ladder. But we didn't have any ability to weigh in on this at all we receive pass through dollars and we pass them on.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

So if I may Chair Walter?

Chair Walter

Go ahead

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

So would it be fair to say that in in this type of program with these types of services, you have to always be in addition to investing in the program, you have to be investing in recruiting and retention of the staff in the program?

Director McDonald

Yes.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Great. Well, I definitely appreciate that. As Thomasine, will attest. I'm a huge proponent of workforce development. So I was delighted to see that included in this program.

Chair Walter

All right. Any other questions? All right, all in favor, and I've completely lost track of where I am, of resolution 299

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Opposed? I believe it's unanimous. Next we have resolution 300 amending the 2022 Ulster County budget to accept additional allocation of adult protective services from New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Motion to discuss? Corcoran, second Uchitelle. Any questions or discussions on this. All right, all in favor of resolution 300.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Unanimous. Resolution 301 to make Ending the 2022 Ulster County budget to accept allocation of funding from New York State Office of temporary disability assistance to support activities associated with sheltering the homeless during inclement weather cold blue plan. Motion to discuss

Legislator Kathy Nolan

I'll move it

Chair Walter

Nolan, Second. Second Erner. Any discussion, Legislator Erner. Oh, your muted sorry.

Legislator Phil Erner

Thank you. So it looks like we're the Catholic Charities and and family who do this together at the warming center might be paying \$18 an hour to some folks if the day and night shift. And as folks know, I had hoped to raise our contractor wage, I believe it would have covered this sort of service up to \$20. And I still think they should be paying more. That's all I wanted to say, thank you.

Chair Walter

Okay, any other questions or concerns related to this one? All in favor of resolution 301.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Opposed? Okay, it's unanimous. Next we have resolution 302, authorizing the Chair of the Ulster County Legislature to execute an agreement with New York State Office of Children and Family Services, for multidisciplinary team child advocacy center motion to discuss.

Legislator Kathy Nolan

I move it

Chair Walter

Nolan, second, Uchitelle. Any discussion on 302? No, all in favor 302.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

All right, Unanimous. 303 authorizing the Chair of the Ulster County Legislature to execute a contract with the New York State Department of Health to continue the rabies program Department of Health. Nolan

Legislator Kathy Nolan

Move it

Chair Walter

Second, Uchitelle. Any questions?

Legislator Kathy Nolan

I just, again, will offer to tell my story of treating rabies from San Francisco in Nepal from a snow lion bite for anybody who wants to hear it anytime, any place.

Chair Walter

Okay, not this time or place, but another time or place. Legislator Erner. Oh, you're muted again.

Legislator Phil Erner

It's that spacebar thing. I thank you. Can someone explain. I see it was 30,000 for this year 40 for each of the next two years, and then just 10,000 I guess that's an average of 30 per year. But what's the I wasn't able to understand that? Anybody can explain that.

Chair Walter

So that would be Dr. Smith.

Dr. Smith

Yeah, then the New York State Department of Health provides local health department's basically a type of grant money in order to execute our responsibility to control rabies in the county. You know, we do have to respond to any calls regarding bites from wild animals, etc. If we deem during that conversation with the emergency room that the person does indeed fit the criteria for needing not only the wound treatment that they get through the hospital, but the rabies prophylaxis utilizing a shot of immune globulin a shot of the rabies vaccine to be subsequently followed up by several doses of the vaccine as per the schedule for vaccine delivery, then we say to the state, we have, you know, X numbers of cases it cost us so much and it's seeking reimbursement from that grant.

And what the state does is looking forward they decide how much we have in the past, say utilized of this rabies grant money and then authorize us to submit for reimbursement for the upcoming years. It's critical. I mean, it's supports our work dealing with rabies, potential rabies cases and basically making sure that the people in our community who encounter wild animals and so are bitten by bats or rats or foxes or wild dogs or cats, that they would be able to receive this treatment, which is really expensive treatment and to deliver that through that grant program. So that's it in a nutshell.

Chair Walter

Legislator Erner, did that answer, go ahead Legislator Erner

Legislator Phil Erner

I guess, um thank you for that Dr. Smith and I was just do we expect in 2025 we might be able to get more than the 10,000 because we're getting 30,000 this year and 40 the next two years.

Dr. Smith

Well, we can advocate for it for sure you know, but again, it is a little bit hard to project out that far, how much wax will we need. But potentially we can certainly look for that. Should our need for that money exceed that amount or it's a reimbursement exceed that amount. Yeah.

Legislator Phil Erner

Okay, thank you.

Chair Walter

All right. All in favor of resolution 303.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Alright. Unanimous. Next we have resolution 304 amending the Ulster County budget to reflect additional funding for Brighter Futures Initiative full time assistant, youth Bureau. Motion to discuss Nolan. Second, Uchitelle. Legislator Erner, do you have questions. Oh, you're muted again.

Legislator Kathy Nolan

I'll move it

Legislator Phil Erner

I'm sorry. I believe there's just a typo on the last line for the additional revenue dollars, I believe it should say 2022 and not 20,232. That's all

Deputy Clerk Mahler

that was brought up in the Chairs meeting and has been corrected, there should be an updated version in the online packet. And that's what it'll say moving forward.

Legislator Phil Erner

Thank you very much.

Chair Walter

Other so um, I know I spoke to you Deputy Executive Contreras. Although now I'm sort of understanding it a little bit differently. So I'll ask the question a little bit differently. Because I recognize that the position is funded is funding this person in the youth bureau. And maybe this is to you, Nina. But it supports a program that's funded outside by grants.

Nina Dawson

Correct.

Chair Walter

If grant programs stuffed, would it be your expectation to continue this person at the Youth bureau, or with this person, is this person's role only tied into the grant?

Nina Dawson

The last part you said, I'm sorry?

Chair Walter

It was the opposite. So it is this person's role only tied into the grant? Or is it your expectation that if for some reason, and the reason I ask is when we do have a position that's grant related, we typically have a caveat that says if the funding was to run out or stop, the position would position would be terminated. However, since we're paying for this position, not the grant. I'm just wondering if your expectation is if for some reason, the program went away and wasn't funded by this outside source, would we keep this individual at this level continuing?

Nina Dawson

It would be my hope, sincerely that we would continue to have this position. Because this program is probably one of the best programs I've been involved in. We are actually looking into other grants. And that's one thing I don't I don't know, what was discussed prior to Johanna, do you want to say something? I don't want to speak to so. Okay.

So I've done a lot of things in the City of Kingston and beyond. And I this program is amazing. It's really, It delves into, there's a there's a dual capacity format that I actually follow where I'm dealing with the educational system, the student, but we delve really deep into the family engagement piece. And that is the magic of this component. And I don't see it anywhere else. I mean, people say they do it, but we do it, I do it. And I'm very, very deeply involved myself, because I know that that's where a lot of the problems and the issues resonate, you know, there's a gap between the school, the educational system, whether it's BOCES, or the high school, and the home, the home component, and we're bridging that gap more than I've ever seen. It's amazing.

There have been tons of parents that they say she's never going to come that kid's, not that kid isn't going to make it and they make it. Last year the principal, [inaudible] of Kingston High School, asked me Nina, can I actually bring the student on the stage because literally she waited until the last month. Like she had been a problem all through high school, her family there was a lot of home component issues, you know, that were they were challenging even for me and I, you put me in a box with a pitbull, and I'll make it work. But this was a really, really tough family and I didn't give up. I mean, they they call me five in the morning, sometimes screaming, but I didn't give up so and the the mentors component is they go into homes where most often people don't want to go. So,

Chair Walter

Thank you. So just again, Deputy Executive executive Contreras. It's a question of whether we need to have an amendment or not because if the position is would stay, we don't need the amendment. So go ahead.

Deputy Executive Contreras

Um, I think we had talked about it, we would be fine with that amendment, because it's not saying that the person would necessarily go away just the specific position tied to the Brighter Futures Initiative, which again, for the record, we very much support continuing. But if it doesn't, for whatever reason, it's, we would be comfortable with saying that that specific position,

Chair Walter

I guess my change was seeing that it's, it's not titled, the title is not, does not have the name of the program. The title is just assistant youth Bureau coordinator. And so if that's the title, and that this program stopped, but this person would stay assisted youth Bureau coordinator, then there's no need for the caveat, if that makes sense. So like, they're not called, you know, the Code Blue coordinator, and then id code blue stops it wouldn't they're just a youth Bureau, not just, but you know, they are youth bureau coordinator. So

Deputy Executive Contreras

I don't know that that was intentional. I mean

Chair Walter

Oh, okay. that's what I didn't notice when we're talking before

Deputy Executive Contreras

Yeah, Director Dawson, you could correct me if I'm wrong, but I don't know that that

Nina Dawson

Yeah. Just been. Because it you know, I'm always honest, that's one of my downfalls. When this is, this was such a new program. But it was such a program that is very relatable to me, and what I've done, when it came to that title, we actually were dealing with the county, and what the concept what we could actually title this person. So I actually dealt with personnel and let them do whatever. And when they came up with the title, I was like, great. I don't care what you call it, to be honest. So just as long as I can have this person in position, or these people in position to help different segments of the county, we're actually doing it in much more in Kingston, so. So, Eve, to answer your question, um, it was listed as assistant youth Bureau coordinator, because it made sense because it fell under youth bureau. So that's kind of why there wasn't a specific plan to not name it brighter futures coordinator.

Chair Walter

Got it. Thank you. Legislator Nolan.

Legislator Kathy Nolan

Yeah, so I think this is a happy occurrence. And in light of our prior discussion about programs being in house in the county, and if we did have difficulty with obtaining brighter futures funding, for whatever reason, that program, having difficulties itself, or we didn't qualify or something, I think we would need to have somebody working as an assistant youth Bureau coordinator to find alternative funding to provide some support for the youth that were in the in the program. So I, you know, it's a it's a position that I think we can benefit from having, even if we don't have the outside funding, so I'm fine with it the way it is, if there are Legislators who are troubled by our funding a \$51,000 position, you know, from the county, then I would support the amendment as well. But I think I think we need the staffing for these youth. And this puts it there and puts it there in a stable way.

Chair Walter

So I guess I'll leave it to you, Deputy Executive Contreras, to Legislator Nolan's point, I know I'm personally comfortable and would be perfectly happy with this person staying on no matter what the program is they're implementing, but you also have to think about whether you feel like that [inaudible] at all. So I would, I would allow you to make the decision on whether you would like to add that caveat that amendment and one of us can make the amendment here or whether you will, we could proceed and just under the expectation that this position is we're establishing this position.

Deputy Executive Contreras

Right, so my understanding is the position would go away if the grant funding the, amendment means that the position would go away if the grant funding expired, but not the person necessarily. So I'm fine with that because I don't want to have any risk of of this not being funded.

Chair Walter

Okay. So, we have a specific sentence Jay. Do you have it handy, that it's just one sentence that adds on that says, should the grant funding no longer be available for this position, the position will

Deputy Clerk Mahler

Well, you you all have kind of transition from that more hardline language to should funding for the position be discontinued the Ways and Means Committee in conjunction with the department head overseeing the program would reevaluate.

Chair Walter

We made it that long?

Deputy Clerk Mahler

You, well, I'm paraphrasing, but

Chair Walter

Does somebody want to make a motion

Legislator Kathy Nolan

I make that motion

Chair Walter

And Jay, you're writing the motion. So it's whatever you just said it was

Deputy Clerk Mahler

I'll make it the standard language that you use when funding tied to a position or a grant is discontinued.

Chair Walter

All right. All in favor the amendment?

Legislator Kathy Nolan

We need a second

Chair Walter

Oh, sorry. Second on the amendment.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Second

Chair Walter

Uchitelle. All in favor of the amendment.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

All right. All in favor of the of the resolution as amended. Okay. That was easy. All right. Um, next we have resolution 305, approving the contract of 111,435 entered in the county for family of Woodstock for Youth Bureau, actually, well, yeah. Okay, motion to discuss.

Committee Members

Aye

Legislator Corcoran

I'll move it

Chair Walter

Corcoran second, Erner. Any discussion? So the only question I had had was just clarification because the timeline what happens is somehow it seems like we're, we're approving these for work that has already occurred in the past a little and somewhat in the future. I guess the the I get that the state is slow. And the process is slow. I just wonder, whatever, I mean, what will you do if one year, you started it for six months, and then you don't get the funding?

Nina Dawson

Well, you know, we have I'm actually a member of the Hudson Valley Youth Bureau Association. And this must come up every year, especially with COVID. We were paranoid like, because the state cut us they were like, okay, we don't know what's going to happen to the world, we have to cut things. So we actually were cut severely only for them to find that money and put it back. But it happened at the end of the year. So we were like trying to figure out how to make things work. Because for years, this process has happened like this, because the state loves funding youth programs. It's a necessity. And that's one of the things I'm grateful for, I'm seriously grateful for. But I'm uncomfortable with the way that when I started here, I said, wait, what do you mean? Like we're so they're gonna run the program from January to December. And we don't even get our first allotment amount until like, June, July sometimes. And the second allotment, which adds to the first allotment happens in last year, it was ridiculously late, like November, December.

So for years before I even came here, it was an understanding that these programs were running, knowing that pretty much they were going to pay their people with the funds that they had previously. And then they will get reimbursed, I guess, I don't know. But it is uncomfortable. But is it actually always worked out to the benefit because the state always comes up with more. I've had to do amendments because they come up with more money. So I haven't seen it where it's been an issue. My, it's very challenging, because the state also wants us to do get new outside of the box programs. And how do we explain that to somebody that hasn't experienced that? So it's both positively actually more beneficial. It's just a backward system.

Chair Walter

Right. Well, I assume because executives office puts this through that should anything ever go wrong. They are standing behind it and will support continuing. You know, we can't unpaid people who've been paid so great. So we'll, we'll look forward to wondering about this every single time. All in favor of resolution 305.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Unanimous. Resolution 306 another contract for 69,557. Also for Family of Woodstock, with the Youth Bureau. Motion to discuss.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Move it

Chair Walter

Uchitelle. Second Corcoran, any discussion? All in favor of resolution 306

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

Alright. Okay. Um

Nina Dawson

Thank you so much

Chair Walter

So moved. So um, we have some old business and new business. So before we get to the new business, the the the working groups, the housing working groups, I had the pleasure of sitting through on all three of them. I was really, I'm really excited about how they're going. I think they're terrific. I think a lot of really good ideas are out there. I'm offering a couple of thoughts and suggestions that you can ignore if you want.

One is I noticed in a couple of them you the offer was made for other people to Chair. But then nothing real, no one really jumped in and then the conversation moved aside. My sense is, especially after you've had your first meeting, some people have risen up as being very active in the group, that if you are actually interested in in someone else possibly Chairing it, I would encourage you to reach out to them separately, and ask them and then bring it up at the meeting because it's very intimidating, I think for someone to be like, Yeah, I'll do it. So I, you know, again, I noticed, like Marissa McClinton was very vocal, you know, there, there are several people who might be very willing to do this. So again, if if that is something that's of interest, if you don't want to continue being the Chair, it's, you know, no judgement, if you feel you'd like to offer it, I encourage you to talk to them privately. And then if they say they are, then you could make the motion, and it's probably going to vote in favor. So that was one little thing.

The other one is, as, as Legislator Nolan pointed out, we we don't have legislative support to take minutes. You all kind of do your notes on the way that you do it. But another benefit of if you identify someone else to be the Chair is you might be able to take notes a little easier, or feel free to ask at each meeting if somebody wants to take notes and send them to you. So that might be a solution as if you just identify somebody to do that. And unfortunately, that was mostly for Legislator Nolan, who's now frozen. I think. Are you back with us Legislator

Nolan? Okay, so and then the the last piece of just suggestion if you could take or leave as you might wish is. So Legislator Nolan, did you, are you here? Is a few ideas were thrown out, as maybe we should, and maybe we could, what I would encourage you to do is when someone throws out an idea and says maybe we could to turn it right back on them and say that sounds like a great idea. Can you look into that, and report back to us on the next meeting? Because what ends up happening is the ideas, they might go down on paper, but like nothing happens and progresses with the idea by the next meeting. And I myself said to maybe we should and probably some someone should have said to me, okay, so Eve go do the homework and get back to us on it next meeting. So, you know, just so that things can progress along, I encourage you if someone has a good idea, totally ask them to encourage them to go and find out more information and report back on the next group so that you actually move along with that.

So that's just a thought, especially because I wasn't leading it, I got to just listen. So I got to sort of get the sense of some of those things. Any other feedback, comments from any of you about those groups? Legislator Uchitelle

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

I'd just say, I mean, I think I'm very encouraged by the starting point. And I'll just say, as is often the case, you know, we would really benefit from more representation from folks in southern Ulster County. So I say that to my colleagues who represent those communities, or perhaps in, you know, the minority caucus, who might have colleagues that represent those communities that you can put the word out to have, you know, folks come, you know, because I definitely want us to represent all areas of the county, because that's, that's everyone that we're legislating on behalf of. So, you know, I appreciate if anyone has folks that might benefit from or that we might benefit from their attendance, you know, please send them our way, we would love to have them.

Chair Walter

There were a few different kinds of population groups brought up and one including individuals who might be homeless or mental health or families, single parents, you know, really identifying if there are some group that really some individuals that represent an area that can speak for that that aren't in the room. So I don't know, Nina, if you are connected with this, but I imagine you would know some good families that or individuals who might be very useful to contribute, you know, ideas of how we can do better.

Nina Dawson

Yeah, I was thinking about that I actually have. One of my MBK mentors is a retired teacher, and she dives deep into homeless families. She might even be great for it.

Chair Walter

That'd be great

Nina Dawson

She is compassionate about it. Like she introduced me last week to two girls that have been in a homeless shelter for years.

Chair Walter

So if you just get that get that information to Jay, Jay can send out an invitation or Laurie I don't know who will be doing it now.

Nina Dawson

Who, who do I give that to?

Chair Walter

Sorry, Jay, is it you or Laurie who will send out the reminders of the next meeting.

Deputy Clerk Mahler

We'll flip a coin.

Chair Walter

Okay

Deputy Clerk Mahler

So, you can send it to me

Chair Walter

Get it to Jay for now, and Jay can invite and anyone else who has ideas of people can send him over to Jay for now. Any other comments on this? Okay, so the next thing is I, I've asked Commissioner McDonnell, and I will be asking the other department heads. So stay tuned for yours. We really wanted well before budget time, to have a sense of where do you see your department going? What kinds of changes do you see, what kinds of advancements or expansions maybe some reductions, but just so that we hear from you, before we see that those budget numbers where your vision lay. And this is very helpful for us, because, you know, sometimes the vision doesn't get realized by the time it gets onto paper, but we can also advocate for that vision if we are supportive of it. And so Commissioner McDonald, I will give the floor back to you again.

Director McDonald

Okay, thank you. Got the go ahead from Jay so I can share my screen. And I know what I'm doing this time. Okay, so Thank you, Chair Walter, it's very helpful that you gave it the frame because we're new to the budget season pieces. So right now what we have are ideas in terms of vision for what we'd like to be able to accomplish. So we're not really sure quite yet what we're what we will be asking for. And the budget process will definitely take on its own shape. But this is sort of what we're thinking about. In terms of the vision for the department, we still are very much steeped in our responsibilities as the local governmental unit and our designation as the LGU. It takes up a lot of our time. And it is very important in that that LGU function represents the management of the \$9 million worth of state aid that is passed through us. But what we're hoping to be able to do is to see if we can balance out our functioning as the LGU and push us towards more community direct sort of service work and how that's going to look is not necessarily in the traditional like clinic service work.

But even our system is in itself is pushing towards having things, services be in the community where folks are. And we definitely want to see ourselves as a part of that transition. How that'll look, there's still a lot of discussion for that to be had. But we're really hoping to move in that direction. Based on the support that we've gotten from the Legislature and from the county execs office and having some additional resources within the department, we're already moving towards that direction.

So we contract management is always a fundamental, fundamental responsibility of ours. And that's around managing those those pass through funds. Then we have some other legal mandates that are unfunded, but still legal mandates around the assisted outpatient treatment, court evaluation 730s, 390s, all of the numbers were responsible for that. And we're still keeping on top of that. Single point of access is, again, a huge part of what it is that we do, but it was always our linkage into the community SPOA we have the residential, the adult case management and the Children's SPOA, folks come to us via application or telephone call looking for linkages to services.

And that's what we were on the phone all day, with, with residents themselves with parents, with advocates for residents wanting to make sure that they're supported in some way. But that SPOA also is our bridge into things that are more community oriented. So this month, we were able to bring on a court liaison who will also be shared staff with the sheriff's office and doing the AVERT program, which is that community violence program that's helping, hopefully going to help to reduce violence in our communities. And the court liaison, she's been on board for maybe two or three weeks now and has spent the majority of her time in the community going to court different courts and having conversations with the judges to be able to sell what it is that we can do in terms of support for not just the judges but for the folks that come before them. So we're already putting our feet into those waters.

And then there are some other services that I'll get into a little bit later so that this can make a little bit more sense in terms of core and other community based clinical activities. So the staff that the Legislature approved and our county executive asked for we are really moving forward there was a little bit of time when we were a little concerned with regard to our recruitment process, but things have definitely picked up.

I was officially appointed as the full time Commissioner. Then in addition, there are the four new positions of financial analysts, we were able to promote a long time 18, 18 year tenured accountant, Lucinda Kaiser who has agreed to take on our lead fiscal role. And Lucinda as account was responsible for our state aid, and all of the management of the state aid functioning. So with that being that \$9 million that we are build everything on, she already came in with having so much mastery over what keeps us running. So that was a coup in getting Lucinda to be promoted for this position. Our validated analyst started on Monday, has already taken on doing some revisions of our database, and will be really the person that we look to, to garner that data that helps us to inform even more change. So that's very exciting.

The court liaison I spoke about, and the special projects director, we are recruiting and pulling together all of those personnel functions that need us to be able to get someone into the seats, but we are definitely moving forward. Before switching to the slide though I also did want to introduce Katrina Williams and me going on to the commissioner position, we appointed Katrina as our Deputy Commissioner. And she was very helpful in bringing these slides together. And you'll see Katrina, who may have to stand in my stead when I'm not available so thank you Katrina as well.

Okay, so in making the decision to separate out the departments, our county executive impaneled, the behavioral health task force and look to the task force, which was a cohort of community stakeholders with content expertise around substance use disorder and mental health service provision in our community. The task force met for about four months and came up with a plan, a five year plan, and recommendations of areas that needed some expansion or assistance, or definitely to have some areas of focus. These were the recommendations from the task force. And the highlighted pieces are pieces that we've made significant progress on, and that's more than half, which

makes me just really excited and happy. I will be able to talk a little bit more about to each one of them, but the ones that are not highlighted requires more community collaboration in terms of community based organizations, and their willingness to be able to offer some of these programs. So we're working on those but the workforce rate increases was something that the state put into their budget, and we're helping through our pass through functions.

To get out to our programs, we in having the regular provider conversations that we have with different sets of providers. We are hearing anecdotally that some of the limitations and some of the challenges around recruitment are appearing to ease. So that's also very helpful. We expand to access to in in methadone is how they should read. And Lexington Center, which is a long standing substance use disorder provider throughout the Hudson Valley, was recently awarded a SAMSA grant to be able to do some satellite methadone work and have agreed to be able to do a satellite here in Ulster County. There are many, many steps between the award for the dollars and actually getting the service implemented, but at least we have funding and that's a great place to start. So we will hopefully be able to open up some access on methadone. The inpatient psychiatric treatment I'll talk about a little bit later, but just so I'm going to preface it by saying that there's some good news there. The crisis services. We put in put out the RFP for the crisis stabilization center. And I'll give a little bit more information on that in a later slide as well.

Mobile mental health expansion with the hope is to be able to get a third team in the New Paltz area and we are working with the operator access supports for living in that, behavioral health Urgent Care has been up and running a year, I believe, as of this month, and their numbers are increasing in terms of the folks that they the lives that they're touching. And the folks that they're seeing on a daily basis. supports, social supports and under the social supports were mental health in schools, respite and supportive transitional housing, respite, we spoke about a little bit earlier in which we're starting to do some site selection. So hopefully that goes well. Mental health in schools, we had great discussions. I don't need to touch on that anymore. And supportive transitional housing is um, RUPCO has taken the lead on working with the quality in transformation. So we are really making a lot of progress on the task force recommendations.

So the new programs and projects. As I mentioned the crisis stabilization center the New York State Office of Mental Health and Office of Alcohol supports I forget OASAS, sorry, has an RFP that is due tomorrow. For regional 12, I believe of crisis stabilization centers within the states. There will be at least one in the mid Hudson region, the Ulster County Department of Mental Health in conjunction with our county exec's office, put out an RFP for a local crisis stabilization center. And then we will support the providers for the statewide RFP. The hope is that that statewide RFP gets not just capital funds, but also it gives some operational dollars for the first two years before the billing becomes sustainable. So that would be a coup for us. But regardless of whether the provider, if a provider receives the award for the state RFP, we're definitely going to have a crisis stabilization center within our borders. So that's very exciting.

The crisis respite again, spoke about, mental health in schools spoke about, jail re entry care management, there is an RFP that the that Ulster county released in terms of getting this care management program up and running. And really, the hope is that we're still not the hope we're still losing folks as they walk from the jails and come back into our communities. Despite the fact that there is case management in the jail. There's discharge planning in the jail, there are these great plans that happened when they're there. But the plans aren't being executed to its fruition in the community, and then folks have a higher level of recidivism, because their needs aren't getting met

or not because, but part of the reason is because their needs aren't getting met. So we really need to be able to help and identify what are some of the barriers that are keeping folks to be in the community and not getting caught within the criminal justice system. Some of those barriers, like I said, are identified when they're in jail, but we're not making bridging that gap and this case management service, we'll be able to, to do that. So we will be reviewing the RFPs when they come in and hopefully make an award sometime within the summer.

The new policy expansion I spoke to in the children System of Care grant, I'm wondering if, Katrina, since I didn't give you much of anything else to discuss. Would you like to talk about the children, the System of Care grant since you were one of the spearheads in getting it awarded?

Katrina Williams

Sure. Yeah, so this was a small as a \$25,000 grant that also came through block grant funding through the state that we were awarded the very end of last year. So the funding will run through 2022. And in our proposal, what we decided that we wanted to do is really use it as an opportunity to not only reinvigorate our child's system of care work that's really an extension of our integrated Ulster initiative, but use it specifically as an opportunity to engage youth and families in really ensuring that their their voice is what's leading the work. So the way that we did it is we Thomasine co Chairs, our child system of care work with Michelle Hirsch, who is a Kingston Alderwoman, and also a family peer advocate and the director of the program there at family of Woodstock, so a parent with lived experience. And they have been doing a tremendous amount of work, a lot of it in collaboration with Nina Dawson, who has just been amazing and kind of also supports the youth end of things. And really like being out in the community engaging families.

So a lot of it is collecting information, a bit of needs assessment and really engaging our residents in conversations about like what the needs are and what they would like to see. So there's a lot of really fun stuff happening on that will hopefully cumulate into things like us having a Youth Advisory Board to truly guide the work that we're doing and having parents and caregivers you know, leading all of our work in an oversight role to ensure that, you know, the work that we're doing is really it's really including their voice. So really exciting. I'm hoping the system of care is a long standing initiative in the Office of Mental Health.

So it's something that the county has been more involved with thank in the years past and we're really hopeful that now that we've got our, you know, put back in the game that we can, you know, maybe look at larger opportunities to continue to implement that approach.

Director McDonald

Thank you Katrine

Katrina Williams

Sure

Director McDonald

Also looping back in terms of the system of care work, it really does necessitate that we do a lot of our work or at least half of the work in terms of making sure that the system of care is successful outside of these walls. And so Thomasine has been spending a good amount of time in the schools, which is exceedingly helpful.

And we will see the outcomes of that in increased referrals when she comes back into the office after having some time with direct conversations with students with teachers. And again, that's the direction that we're hoping to be able to move in. Current needs.

So just to give you a snapshot of some of the data that we have, with regard to some some challenges, our residents are experiencing, suicide deaths, and this is all 2021 data. Suicides deaths, we had 24 deaths by suicide in 2021, 74 overdose deaths, 386 overdoses that were reported 2,992 psychiatric ED visits, and 304 SUD specific ED visits. And that brings us into the conversation about the status of the Westchester Medical Center beds, my hope is that you're all aware that Health Alliance, it will be reducing their original capacity of, from 40 to 20. But we will have 20 inpatient beds that are here at the Mary's Avenue campus.

The other piece that I really want to be able to emphasize is that it's not just that we'll be getting these beds that there'll be returning, but they're going to be returning in a state of the art facility, a facility that has the ability to keep folks safe with, you know, safety, safety equipment, and in beds in single wounds when needed, and the ability for having appropriate space for observation, all of those things that are required. So we're not just getting the old beds back, we're getting better beds. And so that at least is quite exciting. The hope is that when the renovations are done for the psych unit, it'll probably be 2023, before folks will start to come back to that, that unit for for stabilization.

So 2023 budget considerations, like I said, we just have a few things right now, because we're really trying to be able to manage what we've got on our plates and being having new staff and having the creativity that all of these staff are coming along with and say have we thought about this, and maybe moving in that direction, just really garnering all of that expertise and bringing it to bear. But as of right now we have three things that are on the table. Currently our financial analyst. Currently our fiscal lead is under the title of financial analysts. Her duties, however, are most appropriately aligned with manager of fiscal operations. It's a small adjustment in terms of budgetary concerns, but it is something that we would like to ally for the future.

And then we will be looking to add an administrative assistant to act as a receptionist and to assist with some secretarial duties. Right now we have one administrative specialist that that is the support for the department. But that specialist also takes care of contracts and helps to do the scheduling for our 730s and is the person that is responsible for the phones, when the department moves into the 368 building we'll will hopefully have a receptionist area, it's impossible for our current administrative specialist to add the reception duties to her to her list of duties. Certainly there'll be all of our duties to make sure that everyone is welcoming and engaged from the time that they walked through the door. But it would be nice to have a specific step that is that what is the that is what they do most of the time, and we would support them to be able to do that. So those are the two positions that we're looking at.

And then to go back to that first slide when we talked about that final piece of the that transition into the community and balance out our LGU time with the community time and I had core there. The core is a stands for community oriented recovery, empowerment services. And this is these are community level services that are under the Medicaid package. And it's under the Medicaid waiver and that allows for us it does focus on Medicaid only, but it does allow for us to be able to provide both supportive and clinical services to residents with Medicaid in the community. This is a transition from home based community services because HCBS services did not work for us we had designated agencies that were able to provide the service on paper, but never provided it in reality

core the transition between HCBS and core allows for some relaxation in the way that someone can meet criteria for and be eligible how they can be admitted into the program, things that we knew were going wrong and limited access to the previous home base services. And now would hopefully open up to that, even though it has a relaxed some of the regulations, we still only have a limited amount of agencies that have agreed to be designated for Ulster County. And there are some real clinical opportunities that come along with these core services.

So the question is, is this a way for the county to be able to provide community based services, clinical services, with a small cohort cohort of staff, maybe a social worker and some psychiatric time and be able to support some of our higher need higher risk individuals in the community? Again, it's a question that we have out there. But we're looking to see how are we going to be able to support directly some of our higher rate individuals. So we're thinking, we're talking, we're wanting this is a part of our mission, to balance out the LGU, the administrative, and really get us into the community.

So that's it, thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to give you guys an update on how the Department of Mental Health is going.

Chair Walter

Thank you so much, Commissioner McDonald that was so helpful and useful. And it also gives us a nice perspective so that when we do see the budget, we understand even of existing programs, like what those numbers and words all relate to, because oftentimes, it's sort of a little mystery to us. So I will put Commissioner Iapoce on guard that it'd be nice to get this from you next and, and you as well, Nina and Dr. Smith, but you're on your on the on deck, but maybe for the next month, if we could get DSS that sort of similar piece of any kinds of enhancements, changes, expectations. I will say, Dr. Smith, I really want to see lead poisoning abatement on your budget when we come in to the next year. But um, so, so yeah. Unless anyone, does anyone have any questions for the commissioner for Commissioner McDonald before we adjourn? Oh, sorry. Go ahead, Legislator Erner.

Legislator Phil Erner

Thank you. And yes, thank you, Commissioner McDonald for your presentation. I had some have had some conversations over the past month. And I'm trying to get a little handle on the history, for example of how there used to be more clinical services that were provided by the county directly. And I appreciate you kind of wrapping up your presentation wondering about how that might look going forward. And I've spoken with some some veteran mental health care providers who had worked for county, and one, and I've also spoke with members of the community services board. And can you comment on anything about funding or lack thereof, from the state or others with respect to an 11-15 waiver? And if there's anything we need to be doing to try and get more funds, as we think about pulling more things back in house, expanding what clinical we can do as we're getting this new facility and so forth? And I apologize, it's a bit of a rambling question.

Director McDonald

It's a very good question. And I'm not necessarily sure that it's a matter of more funding, the 11-15 waiver provides a lot of opportunities within it. A lot of dollars have been committed under under the waiver. But it's not just the funding for the particular service. It's the way in which the billing rates are and you know, I'll give you an example. One of the reasons that they were particular issues for the home based community services was because at least on the children's side, that you can get someone to provide the service but you're not paying them for travel. Well, that's very difficult, especially when you're talking about, you know, gas being five and \$6 per gallon, but the rate

structure didn't allow for the agencies to include that in their, in their hiring practices. So all of those things need to be able to align. It's not just the money itself, but how it's able to be distributed so that the services can actually work. There are billions of dollars that are out there.

And I can say that for Ulster County despite the fact that they were money, there was money, there were Medicaid eligible individuals, we still didn't gain the access for it, because those fundamental pieces about rate structures, and all of that was a challenge. The state is working on it, which is how we ended up with core. And I think that core will be a definite, a better iteration of all of this. But it's not, I wouldn't say that it's about advocating for more money, but the way in which the whole structure of the whole [inaudible] bills.

Chair Walter

Other questions for the commissioner? I, I have one, we had talked a while ago about this idea that across our entire county, we do have licensed therapists, private licensed therapists, and then we have lots of people who need it, and often the two never meet. And typically, it's related to reimbursable insurance. And that for many of these one off therapists, the concept of getting into the system and being able to take Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance, it's very complicated. And so we had talked about this model of not necessarily increasing clinicians at Ulster County, but actually creating a support system for the individual clinicians in helping them, how do you do this? How do you be able to take insurance, maybe helping them and how you file and how you do it, so that it's something more feasible for them to do, because I've heard from many of them, like, I just it feels so overwhelming. And so I would love if you could give some thought to what that would look like from your department of some kind of infrastructure maybe an individual administrator, who is particularly there to both serve to support the clinicians all over our county, and then they can also serve as a liaison. So you find out someone has a need in Ellenville, because they're adolescents. And that's, that's specific, you'll actually have this sort of army of potential people who don't have, they don't have to pay out of pocket to go see. And so I would love to see some kind of, if it feels like it fits within your model, some kind of approach like that,

Director McDonald

It definitely fits within our model, what we do is at the baseline is to be able to support different parts of our systems so that the system is healthy, and that there's there's ongoing ease of access. So whatever that means is, wherever that challenge is, is how we're meant to support. We started to bring in if this is pre pandemic, and the hope is that we can get back to this. When we're in a more stable place, which you know, we should be soon to bring into our office, the therapist, we had done some work, I think it was like two or three meetings that we planned with therapists that were not necessarily in licensed clinics so that they can know it and it was twofold. One is that they know that we're here and we are a support two is that they understand that when they are dealing with a private patient, there are linkages beyond what they can provide that patient in that hour, or that hour and a half, and that they can lean into us for that support.

We continue to try and have these sort of ongoing communications and definitely was lapsed around the pandemic when we shut down and there were no meetings and we only did the the meetings that we had already continued. And we're able to pivot to zoom or what have you. But it's hard to be able to keep these folks engaged because they're business people that utilize their time to be able to provide the service. So to say come to a meeting for an hour, that's difficult. However, we all of the staff here have the ability to add to add to act as a resource in terms of how do I help with insurance and all of that stuff. But that is definitely a part of our plan moving forward.

Chair Walter

That's great. If you could find ways of being proactive about it. That would be terrific. [inaudible] Nina?

Nina Dawson

Really quick. That's such an important point, Eve. I'm sorry, Chair Walter. I think we have on staff in the brighter future program and LMFT and she's a gift to us. I mean, there are so many stigmas with families that we deal with that mental health is like not in the picture at all. So we're actually introducing and there's been a whole educational process that I had to take families through just to get them to allow one consult with the either their child or with them themselves and all the therapist that I have is an LMFT. And she's amazing, amazing. And after me educating these families that are like, no, like, I'm not doing that, when I bargain with them, okay, you do a visit and take that your childhood one consult, and come back to me and tell me what you think. And every one of them has come back and said, Oh, my God, I love her. And they're still seeing her when she's very, very expensive. And she is private. So like to bridge that gap, which is an amazing, amazing, amazing point, you brought up. Thank you for that.

Chair Walter

It's fine Anyone else? All right. Thank you. And I'll just say one last point. And this ties back into the whole school conversation, I think you can feel confident that you have very strong bipartisan support from the Legislature to think big. Because as much as you've done so much in such a small amount of time, we have so far to go with mental health, that I encourage you, and I know that there was some intimidation about that very project of hiring a third party because of the fear that the Legislature wouldn't get behind doing it internally. And I just wanted you to know that we we are I think you will find many advocates, if you think big, and this is a good time. This is a time where there's some money, you know, we're not and there have been other years, especially when COVID started where we were so worried about everything that you everyone had to make cuts. And so that we there's there's we could be ground breakers in this state in how we respond to mental health. And I really hope that you trust that this group of Legislators, have your back and really, you know, support the work you do because it's really, really great and impressive.

Director McDonald

Thank you.

Chair Walter

All right. And with that, I'll take a motion to adjourn. No one wants to go.

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

I'll make that motion.

Legislator Kathy Nolan

Second

Chair Walter

Second Nolan. All in favor.

Committee Members

Aye

Chair Walter

All right. Thank you all, have a good night

Legislator Kathy Nolan

Thank you very much

Legislator Abe Uchitelle

Thank you. Take care everyone.