

**Public Health & Social Services Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes**

DATE & TIME: April 5, 2021 – 5:00 PM
LOCATION: Powered by Zoom Meeting by Dialing (646) 558-8656,
Meeting ID: 946 9085 3721
PRESIDING OFFICER: Chair Craig Lopez
LEGISLATIVE STAFF: Nettie Tomshaw
PRESENT: Legislators Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle
ABSENT: None
QUORUM PRESENT: Yes

OTHER ATTENDEES: Deputy County Executive Marc Rider, Veteran’s Services Director Mark Cozzupoli, Commissioner DSS Michael Iapoce

Chair Lopez called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

Motion No. 1: **Moved to Approve Minutes & Transcript of the March 1, 2021 & March 9, 2021 meeting**
Motion By: Legislator Petit
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Bruno
Discussion: None
Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: **Minutes/Transcripts APPROVED**

Resolutions for the April 20, 2021 Session of the Legislature

Resolution No. 162: Amending The 2021 Ulster County Budget To Accept Funding From The New York State Office Of Mental Health For The Veteran Peer To Peer Support Pilot Program – Department Of Mental Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution amends the 2021 Ulster County budget to accept funds from the NYS Office of Mental Health for the Veteran Peer to Peer support pilot program. \$185K

Motion No. 2 **Moved to Discuss and Adopt Resolution No. 162**
Motion Made By: Legislator Petit
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Bruno

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution adopted.

Resolution No. 157: Amending The 2021 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 amends the 2021 Ulster County budget to accept funds from NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance to support activities associated with sheltering homeless during inclement winter weather – Code Blue Plan

Motion No. 3 **Moved to Discuss and Adopt Resolution No. 157**
Motion Made By: Legislator Bruno
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution adopted.

Resolution No. 158: Amending The 2021 Ulster County Budget – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution amends the 2021 Ulster County budget to allow for payment of 2020 and 2021 contractual obligations.

Motion No. 4 **Moved to Discuss and Adopt Resolution No. 158**
Motion Made By: Legislator Bruno
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Petit

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution adopted.

Resolution No. 159: Amending The 2021 Ulster County Budget To Accept An Allocation Of Funds From The Redlich Horwitz Foundation To Support Technology Tools for Child Welfare Virtual Casework – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution amends the 2021 Ulster County budget to accept funds from the Redlich Horwitz Foundation supporting technology tools for Child Welfare Virtual Casework. \$7600.00.

Motion No. 5 **Moved to Discuss and Adopt Resolution No. 159**
Motion Made By: Legislator Petit
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution adopted.

Resolution No. 160: Amending The 2021 Ulster County Budget To Accept An Allocation Of Funds From The New York State Office Of Children And Family Services To Expand Services Under The Supervision And Treatment Services For Juveniles Program (STSJP) Annual Plan – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution amends the 2021 Ulster County budget to accept funds from the NYS Office of Children and Family Services to expand services under the Supervision and Treatment Services for the Juvenile Program (STSJP) Annual Plan. \$132,394.00.

Motion No. 6 **Moved to Discuss and Adopt Resolution No. 160**
Motion Made By: Legislator Bruno
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution adopted.

Resolution No. 161: Amending The 2021 Ulster County Budget To Accept An Allocation Of Funds From The New York State Office Of Children And Family Services To Expand Services Under The Raise The Age (RTA) Plan – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution amends the 2021 Ulster County budget to accept funds from the NYS Office of Children And Family Services to expand services under the Raise The Age (RTA) Plan \$520,895.00.

Motion No. 7 **Moved to Discuss and Adopt Resolution No. 161**
Motion Made By: Legislator Petit
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution adopted.

Resolution No. 163: Amending The 2021 Ulster County Budget To Accept Increased Funding From The New York State Office Of Mental Health For Supported Housing – Department Of Mental Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution amends the 2021 Ulster County budget to accept funds from the NYS Office of Mental Health for Supported Housing \$86,860.00.

Motion No. 8 **Moved to Discuss and Adopt Resolution No. 163**
Motion Made By: Legislator Petit
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Bruno

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Resolution adopted.

Resolution No. 164: Amending The 2021 Ulster County Budget To Accept Increased Funding From The New York State Office Of Mental Health For Assertive Community Treatment – Department Of Mental Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution amends the 2021 Ulster County budget to accept funds from the NYS Office of Mental Health for Assertive Community Treatment \$4,450.00

Motion No. 9 **Moved to Discuss and Adopt Resolution No. 164**

Motion Made By: Legislator Bruno

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 5

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Resolution adopted.

Resolution No. 165: Amending The 2021 Ulster County Budget To Accept Increased Funding From The New York State Office Of Mental Health For Gateway Community Industries, Inc. – Department Of Mental Health

Resolution Summary: This resolution amends the 2021 Ulster County budget to accept funds from the NYS Office Of Mental Health for Gateway Community Industries, Inc. for personalized recovery services (PROS) \$892.00

Motion No. 10 **Moved to Discuss and Adopt Resolution No. 165**

Motion Made By: Legislator Petit

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle

Voting Against: None

Votes in Favor: 5

Votes Against: 0

Disposition: Resolution adopted.

Resolution No. 166: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$125,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Anderson Medical, P.C. D/B/A Emergency One Urgent Care And Diagnostic Center – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract with Anderson Medical, P.C. D/B/A Emergency One Urgent Care And Diagnostic Center for client drug and alcohol screening. \$125K 36% Federal, 29% State, 35% County, Contract Dates 7/1/2021 – 6/30/2023

Motion No. 11 **Moved to Discuss and Adopt Resolution No. 166**
Motion Made By: Legislator Bruno
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Criswell

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution adopted.

Resolution No. 167: Approving The Execution Of A Contract For \$100,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Industrial Medicine Associates, P.C. – Department Of Social Services

Resolution Summary: This resolution approves the execution of a contract with Industrial Medicine Associates, P.C. for substance abuse assessment, testing, and treatment monitoring for individuals applying for or receiving public assistance. \$100K 51% Federal, 49% County. Contract dates 4/1/2021 – 3/31/2022

Motion No. 12 **Moved to Discuss and Adopt Resolution No. 167**
Motion Made By: Legislator Bruno
Motion Seconded By: Legislator Uchitelle

Discussion: See attached transcript.

Voting In Favor: Legislators Lopez, Criswell, Bruno, Petit, Uchitelle
Voting Against: None
Votes in Favor: 5
Votes Against: 0
Disposition: Resolution adopted.

New/Old Business:

See Transcript – Legislator Uchitelle, Mental Health For New Business and district update.

Chair Lopez asked if there was any other business, and hearing none;

Adjournment

Motion Made By: Legislator Uchitelle

Motion Seconded By: Legislator Bruno

No. of Votes in Favor: 5

No. of Votes Against: 0

TIME: 6:23 PM

Respectfully submitted: Nettie Tomshaw, Legislative Staff

Minutes Approved: May 3, 2021

Ulster County Legislature
Public Health and Social Services Committee
Meeting Transcript
April 5, 2021

Chairman Lopez

All right, well, then I will call the meeting to order. And we'll start with the motion to approve the minutes from our last meeting.

Legislator Petit

Make that second, whatever,

Legislator Bruno

Whichever.

Chairman Lopez

Okay. Any discussion? Hearing none. All in favor?

Committee Members

Aye.

Chairman Lopez

Aye. All right, very good. We'll get right to the resolutions, then. What do we have like 10 or 11 of them? I think so.

Nettie Tomshaw

Um, yeah, we have 11. And if you want, we have Mark from veteran services here for one resolution that's resolution 162.

Chairman Lopez

162, I see you want to take it out of order. We'll start with that one. That way. We can cut him loose if he doesn't want to stick around for our regular business.

Mark Cozzupoli

Appreciate that.

Chairman Lopez

Yeah, no problem. All right. Well, we will start with resolution 161. I'm sorry. 162. Yep. Yep. That's the pilot program. All right. Resolution 162. Amending the county budget to accept money from the New York State Office of Mental Health for the veteran peer to peer pilot program. And move for discussion.

Legislator Albert Bruno

Alright let's get this straight. I don't care. I'll make the motion.

Legislator Petit

I'll second it. All right. Great. Great.

Legislator Albert Bruno

This goes away.

Chairman Lopez

Alright, um, yeah, discussion? Well, it. Well, you're What do you want the? Alright, you're on the phone with us?

Nettie Tomshaw

Mm hmm.

Chairman Lopez

Yeah. Okay. Yeah. If you want to chat with committee, let us know exactly what it's about. And, okay. If you would like to do so. Yep. The floor's yours.

Mark Cozzupoli

We'll do. Can everybody hear me? Okay.

Committee Members

Yes.

Mark Cozzupoli

Excellent. So, this grant funding that we're going to receive is called the Joseph P. Dwyer, veterans peer to peer support program. It's a New York state program that began about seven years ago, in Suffolk County, and (inaudible), in New York State. And we were fortunate enough last year to get on the list for the first time to be able to receive this funding. And what it is designed to do it is it's a proven process of veterans, helping other veterans. So, we will have qualified social worker type veterans that are going to work for a not for profit agency called the Hudson Valley Center for Veterans Reintegration. And their job is going to be to support and identify with those veterans in need, whether it be in crisis at the moment, or just to get them involved in other programs. They'll work very closely with my agency, and, you know, as a partner agency, and we'll be able to tackle a lot of the veteran problems together. And there'll be better qualified to handle those veterans that are in crisis or mental health issues at that moment. We're the only ones doing it right now. And having them on board is just going to be wonderful. And a great thing has proven that it's, it works to have better health and take

care of other vets. But nobody identifies better than with a vet than another veteran that's been in the same situation.

Chairman Lopez

Now, this \$185,000 is through a one-time grant is going to be.

Mark Cozzupoli

It'll be no, so we'll receive it twice a year. So, it has each, every six months will receive half of that grant. And it's supposed to continue once now that were approved, we should be getting this every year. Now, I do know that there are issues every year at the state with this funding, but you know, normally comes through and hopefully it continues and every year we will be seeing this 185,000 come down. And it goes through our Office of Mental Health and they'll contract directly with this not for profit that is, you know, in place ready, already working with veterans and doing this kind of program. But now they'll be able to fund the funded and actually grow and become a much better program and partner for us.

Chairman Lopez

That's great. Good, are there any any questions?

Legislator Petit

Right now? I do have us through the chair to our deputy executive. Should we be expecting another resolution authorizing the outside vendor then or is this all going to go through the veterans.

Deputy Executive Rider

No, so this amount, it will let me see what. Sorry, I'm just pulling up the resolution.

Legislator Petit

Mark said it was an outside agency Mark with a "K" not with a "C".

Deputy Executive Rider

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's, it's, it's, uh, the Reintegration Center. Um, but I'm not sure if that's included in this resolution or not.

Legislator Petit

So, we can expect a resolution. Okay. Yeah.

Deputy Executive Rider

Yeah, I believe there will be another one coming down.

Legislator Petit

Thank you.

Chairman Lopez

Anyone else?

Legislator Uchitelle

I'll just now if I may, I'll just say did not relate specifically to this. But if anyone here has veterans in their lives, and you're not yet on Mark's on Director Cozzupoli's email list, you got to get on his email list because he sends great emails about resources for veterans all the time.

Legislator Petit

Thank you.

Chairman Lopez

Good. Okay. Are there any other questions, comments? All in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

Great. There you go. You got it.

Mark Cozzupoli

All right. Thank you very much. Take care, everybody.

Chairman Lopez

All right you to be well. All right, we will get go back up to the top now for with Resolution 257. Amending the county budget to accept an allocation of funds from New York State Office Temporary and Disability Assistance to support the homeless through the Code Blue plan.

Nettie Tomshaw

Resolution 157.

Chairman Lopez

Yep, 157 sorry. Move for discussion.

Legislator Albert Bruno

I'll make that motion.

Chairman Lopez

And a second.

Legislator Petit

Abe second it.

Chairman Lopez

As for a little over \$352,000. The state money's coming through.

Legislator Bruno

Pass through.

Chairman Lopez

Discussion.

Legislator Bruno

It's a pass through.

Chairman Lopez

It is AI, it's a pass through. Hearing. No discussion? All right. All in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

Aye. Very good.

Legislator Uchitelle

Can I just ask before we go on to the next one. Is there a way Marc to get notified when the warming station opens and closes? I think that's what this is for right?

Deputy Executive Rider

It is it's for the warming center?

Legislator Uchitelle

Um, warming center?

Deputy Executive Rider

Yes, I mean, we do. So, we do put out information on our website. And we contact like the various police agencies and others. Commissioner Iapoce is on he can talk some about the communication spread. I'm not sure if there's an email blast that we can put you on. But we'll figure out a way. You know, I don't anticipate that we'll be open any more this year, although we were just opened on Friday, Saturday and in to Saturday. But we don't get funded for this unless it's below 32 degrees. And there's no days like that in the forecasts coming up. So, my guess is we're done for the year. But next year, we can work on ways to notify you when it's open. I'll say this year, it was there was far more days than we that we operated, then we didn't I think at least on a 12-hour overnight basis. It operated almost every day. There were a few days where we maybe didn't and there was a lot of days where we were running 24 hours as well. Mike, I don't know if you have any of those numbers.

Commissioner Iapoce

Hi, everyone, nice to see all of you. Um, I don't have a report for the 2021 season yet, Marc. But I do anticipate that we'll have information in the very near future. The service provider that operates the warming center of Catholic Charities usually puts together a comprehensive report and I know that

you've participated in we usually convene a meeting around June or July, to basically review the prior seasons data, see where we're at in terms of the services that we're providing to ensure that we're meeting you know, ongoing and emerging needs. So, we can certainly provide information to the committee along those lines and then with regard to age specific question. There is a very comprehensive communications system set up Abe, where by the director of emergency operations, the county executive or myself all have authority to activate the warming center, as Marc referenced when the temperature is 32 degrees or colder. And when that happens, there is a list serve that includes all of the county law enforcement agencies, fire departments, municipalities, interfaith organizations, service providers. So, I'm very certain that probably many of the service providers in your respective districts do get information that we have an activation, but we can certainly make sure that if there's any other organizations out there that want to be notified when we have an activation that we can add them to the list serve.

Deputy Executive Rider

And we can certainly add it, add yourself as legislator or we could add Vicky as well so that she can put it out to the entire legislature.

Chairman Lopez

In the family of Woodstock also has a direct hotline, don't they, as well to

Legislator Uchitelle

The oldest continue reading hotline in the world.

Commissioner Iapoce

They operate the emergency after hour's hotline, so they're notified when we have activations as well. And during activations when we have persons that cannot be accommodated at the warming center because it's for adult individual's family of Woodstock's after hours Emergency Services provides families with emergency housing because of code blue circumstances.

Chairman Lopez

Okay. All right. Very good. All in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

All right. Move on to 158. This is amending the county budget if we get a motion for discussion, and second, I have a question for you, Marc.

Legislator Bruno

I'll make the motion for discussion.

Legislator Petit

I'll second.

Chairman Lopez

Yeah. Yeah, I'm not sure I've ever seen a resolution like this come through in the past. Yeah, Marc, if you're able to explain it a little bit. Do you have you have that resolution in front of you? Are you able to bring it up?

Deputy Executive Rider

I am. But I did ask the commissioner to come speak on some of these resolutions. So okay. He's probably more appropriate to speak to this one.

Chairman Lopez

Okay. Yeah. Okay. Good. Yeah Mike. remark.

Commissioner Iapoce

Okay, Craig. So, with respect to this resolution, my recollection is that it is an annual resolution. And it's specifically in connection with grant funding we receive from the prior year that we're unable to spend, for a variety of reasons, it may be that we were not able to engage a service provider or contract with an individual or professional to provide a service. So, the grant funds have been awarded to us and under circumstances where the timeframe permits that we continue to retain the grant funds and keep them on account, to be able to arrange for the services. That's why we have this resolution. So, last year, obviously, because of the pandemic, there were several circumstances where we had applied for during 2019 grant funding, which we were awarded in 2020. But which we were not able to expend because of the impact of the pandemic. Fortunately, those grants that we were awarded, we have been notified that we are able to continue to keep those on account. And we are going to try to expand those but because they were not in this budget cycle. That's the purpose of this resolution. And it may not have been something that you saw previously, because most of the time we spend grant funds in the designated time frames, but this is a little unusual. I've seen it a couple of times over the course of my time here.

Chairman Lopez

Okay. Yeah, I figured as much actually Nettie and I had a discussion earlier we thought it was most likely COVID related. Because of you know what this past year has been like so it makes sense. All right. Very good. Are there any other

Legislator Criswell

Just quickly, some so I'm clear so that's it's no addition to county expenses right.

Commissioner Iapoce

No, Peter, it would be no edition. It's all grant funds.

Legislator Criswell

And there's several of these resolutions in front of us tonight. Are they all the same? Is that all the same story basically?

Commissioner Iapoce

No, each of the resolution has their own story. This resolution addresses those grant funds that we're basically keeping on account. And I'll be happy to address questions with respect to the other pending resolutions, but they're not related or connected to this one.

Legislator Criswell

Thank you.

Chairman Lopez

Okay, anything else? All in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

Okay. All right, Resolution 159. Amending county budget to accept an allocation of funds from the is that is that Redlich or Redlish? I, I never know how to pronounce this. Anybody.

Commissioner Iapoce

Redlich Horwitz.

Chairman Lopez

Horwitz Foundation to support tech tools for child welfare visual classwork. So, did we move it? We moved it? We did. Okay. Yeah, if, Mike, if you want to discuss this a little bit as well, too, for the committee.

Commissioner Iapoce

Sure, just briefly, Redlich Horwitz as a foundation that supports child welfare agencies in connection with ongoing activities and in light of the pandemic. And because we have a lot of the work that our caseworkers are conducting remotely. This was a grant that they offered, so we applied for it. And we received this award. And as Craig indicated in his remarks, it's basically going to facilitate us getting signatures and connection with paperwork that we have to process for, basically children who we have in our care custody, foster care children that are placed in foster care homes or in congregate care facilities. So, it'll allow us to be able to process paperwork electronically. And it'll just again, be something that facilitates and makes our workflow more efficient. And because Redlich Horwitz, which is a foundation that supports the work we do, we're always exploring opportunities to apply for grant funding for specific initiatives like this, and we were fortunate enough to be selected for the award. And we did clear with IS, so it will be compatible, there's not going to be any obstacles. That's one of the boxes we always want to check off. Before we get too far along, you know, compatibility and reconciliation, just to make sure that our systems we're going to be able to have the software installed and licensing issues and things of that nature but IS we've already met with them and with Redlich Horwitz so everything is set to go with that.

Chairman Lopez

Okay. Any questions, comments? All right. All in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

Okay. We will move to Resolution 160. Amending the county budget to accept an allocation of funds from the New York State, Office of Children and Family Services to expand services under the supervision and treatment services of for juvenile's program. Move for discussion.

Legislator Bruno

I'll move for discussion.

Chairman Lopez

Second. Again, this is the DSS and I received notification from CFS. The approval of the supervision and treatment services for juvenile's program was submitted by the county DSS and these are the state funds. So just over \$132,000.

Legislator Uchitelle

Second.

Legislator Bruno

I got one question where it says to expand the services, supervision. How so?

Legislator Petit

You're muted, Mike.

Chairman Lopez

Yeah, I can't hear you.

Commissioner Iapoce

Okay, I wish I could repeat myself exactly, I really got off to a good start on that expansion of, that's okay. The expansion of the program and you'll see this, this is connected to another resolution - Resolution 161. Over the course of the last couple of years, I know that you have reviewed resolutions around the raise the age program, which was 100% funded, and that is for 16 and 17-year-old juveniles in the criminal justice system to no longer be processed as adults or be incarcerated. STSJP, which is super busy supervision and treatment of juvenile's program has been an area that they're expanding to be able to connect to raise the age. What has essentially happened is that I don't think that we have seen the numbers either in our county or statewide with regard to criminal defendants in the 16 and 17-year-old category. And there's a lot of different reasons for that, potentially, around whether or not law enforcement continued to as proactively charge that age group or not. But because of the fact that the funding has been available, they're expanding it into STSJP. So, it just gave us an opportunity to receive more funding. And obviously, this is the allocation that we have arrived at qualifying for. So that's where the expansion comes in AI. And it's also addressed a little bit more in Resolution Number

161. And basically, and we have a really excellent track record on this. Previously, the committee has requested that I provide data around the preventive services that coordinated Children Services, and STSJP provide where we're keeping children from having to come to care or custody, or go into congregate care facilities. So, this money is going to support, you know, those diversion services, and our ability to continue to hopefully have enough intervention so that we can avoid having cases with outcomes where there has to be placement of juveniles in detention centers.

Legislator Bruno

Okay thank you.

Chairman Lopez

All right. All in favor.

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

We'll move on to Resolution 161, Amending the county budget to accept an allocation of funds from New York State Office of Children of Family Services, to expand services under the raise the age plan. Discussion.

Legislator Petit

I'll move it.

Legislator Uchitelle

I'll second it.

Chairman Lopez

A second. Again, state monies. This is totaling just over \$520,000. So, questions, discussion. Mike, would you be able to get a little background on Raise The Age plan. I have a basic understanding. But um, yeah, if you can go into a little bit of detail. I'd be interested. Maybe the committee would be interested as well.

Commissioner Iapoce

Yeah, while you're on? Yeah, no, absolutely. Right. I'd be happy to try to give a little bit of a summary. You know, obviously, the initiative has its origins at the state level and in the governor's office, and it was arrived at with specific focus on removing 16 and 17-year old's from being part of the adult criminal justice system. So, it required that all of the counties in the state implement planning around 16 and 17-year old's who were charged criminally across the spectrum of different kinds of charges that could be incurred to set up plans to be able to react to and make certain you know that there is an appropriate response for 16 and 17-year-old. A big part of that is around detention centers where we do have to have 16 or 17- year old's go into detention, where it's only among a population of their age group. But besides that, it's about engaging those 16 and 17-year old's in different kinds of programming. So, we have as part of our plan developed using family house as a respite. So, part of the total award of

\$386,000 that we're getting is allocated to family house for respite for juveniles in that age group, who are not going to go into detention but might need more supportive services so that they can be residentially placed in family house. We also use the youth advocate program, YAP, to connect youth with YAP advocates, so that they can get one on one support in an environment where they can build a relationship, have some supervision, some guidance, some encouragement, we have our multi systemic therapy, which is partially funded by this. And that's where we bring a therapist and to family units were 16 and 17-year-olds have been criminally charged to try to get to what the root cause of the problems are, again, our coordinator, Children's Services has done a lot of work in this area. And our STSJP program has also been very successful in keeping children from having to be placed in detention. So that's kind of an overall look at it. Each county obviously has to arrive at a program and a plan that reflects what sort of volume and kinds of cases that they're saying, again, we have a very strong track record on this. I'm very encouraged to say anecdotally, after everything that we've been through from a fiscal perspective, raise the age and expanding STSJP is a real accomplishment. With regard to the fact that, you know, the 100% funding has continued to be there. We haven't seen any kind of a reduction in the funding. And notwithstanding that we, you know, the Federal COVID relief package that was just passed, not all of these programs are easily connected to that. So, I am encouraged. And I think it's just important to mention, you know, the state's commitment to 100% funding on a lot of these programs has been something that they have followed through on, and it's continue to allow us to keep our programming in place, keep our services in place. And, you know, I'm optimistic about it, I think we're in a really good place. And I think the fact that we have these kinds of programs, particularly with recidivism around some of the youth, you know, it's that first engagement with the criminal justice system at 14, 15, 16, 17, that's going to dictate what happens next. And the programs that we have in place are really vital in ensuring that if you get the right kind of intervention with that, that first incident, then then hopefully, you're not going to be revisiting those kinds of issues. And, and sometimes other issues are arrived at, you know, you start peeling the layers of the onion, and you find out there's other things going on. But we have services in place to be able to try to address that. So that's kind of how I think Ulster County has experienced raised the age and has been impacted by it. I think it's been very positive. So, you know, at this point, it's in the past two years, they did 16-year-olds and 2019 and 17-year-olds and 2020. So, we're beyond the implementation phase. And this is what the DSS is ongoing role is in terms of providing services around raise the age.

Chairman Lopez

Right, that was wonderful, thank you.

Legislator Petit

I really thought raised the age was going to be more of a probation, you know, program, but I guess we're finding it's more social services since they are younger, and they're minors in need.

Commissioner Iapoce

It's a partnership. Laura, I would say we work closely with probation. And they're definitely still a major partner on our raise the age team in Ulster County. So, they definitely are still very involved.

Deputy Executive Rider

They receive their own funding. Correct, Mike? I mean, they have different programs that they receive on raise the age that they received funding for separate from this.

Commissioner Iapoce

Yes, they do, Marc yep. This is our component of the raise the age plan.

Chairman Lopez

Okay. Any other discussion? Questions? All right. All in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

Okay, we did a 162, we'll move to 163. Amending county budget to accept an increase funding from the New York State Office of Mental Health, for supported housing. We move it?

Legislator Petit

I'll move it.

Legislator Bruno

I'll second it.

Chairman Lopez

Second. Discussion Laura?

Legislator Petit

Yes. I was going to reach out to Deputy Rider earlier, so I can wait for the answer. But I did meet someone who had come out of a regional health care facility, and he's kind of walking up and down the sidewalk uptown. And he was in supportive housing. He also didn't have clothes other than what he was wearing and said, all he had left was granola. So, I'm kind of wondering, you know, how, how supportive are the programs, so once we put them back out, and honestly, I still, I'm not a professional, but you know, my belief is are not keeping people in inpatient care long enough, you know, to adjust medications and let everything start to take hold. But, you know, when you get them into the housing, how, how aggressive are the follow ups to make sure that they're getting involved in programs and have access not just to mental health needs, but you know, to personal needs, too?

Deputy Executive Rider

Sure. Um, I mean, I can mostly speak from the mental health standpoint, supported housing is not transitional housing meant to take somebody from inpatient beds, and transition them to a different circumstance. Supportive housing is it is permanent housing. And, and it is meant to provide wraparound services. So oftentimes, we'll see supported housing, housing units, you know, maybe an apartment complex, will have 10% of their units be supportive housing, the housing is cost, the rent, etc., as provided, you know, they could be on DSS they could be on private pay, the supportive housing costs that you see here. And that we're adding to the bucket are really the wraparound mental health

services. So, you know, that could be anything from outpatient, you know, very stringent outpatient services to therapy to anything else. But they are wrapped around supportive services from the OMH side, as far as personal care and other things. I mean, that might be a small part of it. But it's really meant on on therapy and treatment.

Legislator Petit

But they do, they are told about, you know, food pantries, and that's the information I was giving them. It's just, you know, if, if you're already in a bad state, you know, going with that food and clothing, I think just kind of adds to, you know, the issues. So,

Deputy Executive Rider

Yeah, I mean, again, these are people who can live independently, you're typically not going to see somebody go from needing severe inpatient service beds to being on supportive housing, that the idea of supportive housing is that it just provides the service is really needed for somebody who might otherwise be institutionalized to live independently. And not everybody can live in that situation. Right. So not everybody fits. Not everybody matches, you know, the need of supportive housing, but it does help a lot of people in our community.

Chairman Lopez

Yeah, you have a follow-up Laura?

Legislator Petit

No, I'm okay.

Chairman Lopez

All right. Any other questions?

Legislator Bruno

Yep. I got one question. Marc. You said that helps a lot of people in our community. Is there a number about how many people and I'm not saying exact number because I know that probably varies a lot, but just a ballpark figure out how many people in the county does it actually affect?

Deputy Executive Rider

Um, I mean, I'll just say for this specific resolution, it's, it's dealing with 168 supportive housing beds, but there's far more than that. I would have to ask our OMH team to provide me the exact number. This specific, this specific resolution is for 168 beds.

Legislator Bruno

Okay. That's what I was asking for. Okay, so it's not, we're not talking like 12 beds, it's serious?

Deputy Executive Rider

No, this is just adding funding. It adds \$500 a bed for 168 beds, and then it does a couple other small little things. But that's the bulk of this resolution. That's 84,000 of it. Understood.

Chairman Lopez

Thank you and the location of these other beds.

Deputy Executive Rider

These are belief scattered supportive housing. So they could be they're spread throughout the throughout the county.

Chairman Lopez

Gotcha. Okay. All right. Any other questions? Hearing none, all in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

Resolution 164. Amending the county budget to accept and increase the funding for the for the New York State Office of Mental Health for assertive community treatment, and the amount of 400 I'm sorry, \$4,454. Move for discussion.

Legislator Bruno

I'll move for discussion.

Legislator Uchitelle

Second.

Chairman Lopez

Discussion.

Deputy Executive Rider

This is similar to COLA. I mean, they're just there was a, there was an increase statewide. They call it a net deficit increase to this particular model, which covered the majority of this, this resolution.

Chairman Lopez

Alright, anything else? All in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

All right. Resolution 165. Amending the county budget to accept increased funding from New York State Office of Mental Health for Gateway Community Industries. This is for personalized recovery oriented services. motion.

Legislator Petit

Motion.

Chairman Lopez

Second.

Legislator Uchitelle

I'll second.

Chairman Lopez

Discussion. Question comments. All in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

That was a \$900 one I think that wasn't a lot. Resolution 166 proving execution of a contract for \$125,000. With Anderson Medical. Doing businesses as Emergency One Urgent Care and Diagnostic Center for client drug and alcohol screening. Move it.

Legislator Bruno

I'll move it for discussion.

Legislator Criswell

I'll second it.

Chairman Lopez

Discussion. Yes Al.

Legislator Albert Bruno

Yeah Anderson Medical. Is this Dr. Anderson in Port Ewen? This is what we're talking about. Marc?

Deputy Executive Rider

This is Emergency One which is in this is right over off. It's off of - it's over by our Public Works. It's not Lucas. Hurley Ave.

Legislator Bruno

Yeah. Right. But Anderson, I just was interested in because Anderson Medical. I know Dr. Anderson in Port Ewen. He's got a service there. So, he's in charge of that?

Deputy Executive Rider

That I'm not sure of. I mean, I don't know. Mike, can you speak to that? Are you aware of that?

Commissioner Iapoce

I'm not aware that particular physician is specifically involved with this Al. It's basically the emergency one and diagnostic center that we use for testing I could find out but.

Legislator Bruno

I was just curious more than anything, because I know that he has a medical practice in Port Ewen, and I saw his name or the name Anderson here. It was I was kind of confusing between that. There's also a place in Rhinebeck called the Anderson School, which deals with developmental situations. I was just wondering if they're all in one of the same people.

Deputy Executive Rider

I know Anderson school for autism is not related to emergency one. And I'm not sure I don't think the one in Esopus is either.

Legislator Bruno

Okay.

Legislator Petit

I think he's Family Institute. I think that's how that got started.

Legislator Bruno

I just was trying to differentiate between all Anderson's that's all sorry.

Legislator Criswell

I had a question.

Chairman Lopez

Sure.

Legislator Criswell

So, this is a sort of a broader question for this resolution and a following resolution. And it has to do with drug testing now that marijuana is going to be decriminalized. Can you speak to that a little bit, Mike about how that's going to change things up with the testing. And with all the related sort of domino down the line with DSS and things like that.

Commissioner Iapoce

I'll speak to it Peter. But I don't want to give you any guarantees about anything, since we're in the early stages of, you know, what the consequences and ramifications are going to be, you know, in preliminary conversations that I've had with our family court judges, and a lot of this testing is done in connection with individuals who are parties, to family court proceedings, where we've brought some type of a proceeding. And we've arrived at terms and conditions that have to be complied with. And a lot of those are orders that the court generates not to use any kind of drugs or consume alcohol, my expectation is that the legalization of marijuana is not going to change those orders at all, just because of the fact that it's able to be transacted, it's not going to change with regard to that individual case where the use of alcohol or drugs has been ordered to be discontinued. So, my expectation is, we'll continue to test for it on a case by case basis. I don't think for the parties who are involved in these cases that the court is going to necessarily be any more or less lenient, because if they're having

issues around abusing or neglecting their children, because of drug or alcohol use, or some type of underlying substance abuse problem, if those orders get generated, they're still going to have to be complied with. So, I don't think it's going to have a dramatic impact.

Deputy Executive Rider

And I do think that's sorry, go ahead.

Legislator Criswell

As a follow up, just a quick one, I also saw that there were connections with testing and employment. How do you see those two being related?

Commissioner Iapoce

From our perspective, or around

Legislator Criswell

I saw I saw it somewhere in the in the scope of service, it was talking about employment related testing's. I'd have to go back, do

Deputy Executive Rider

We use them for other employment related testing, but not for DSS?

Legislator Criswell

Correct I was talking about it's I think it's a following resolution. So maybe that's something you can speak to Marc rather than and Mike.

Deputy Executive Rider

And I do think it's important to note that distinction that these are CPS mainly driven cases that we're using. We're not drug testing our clients who come in seeking temporary services, I mean, I believe I'm speaking truthfully, correct me if I'm wrong, Mike, but if somebody is coming in and seeking temporary services, we're not using this contract. It's more for CPS adult services clients.

Commissioner Iapoce

No that that's exactly right Marc this testing service with regard to cases exclusively where it's court ordered, that a party has to comply with no use order. So generally speaking, we're given some discretion over being able to randomly test. And, you know, for instance, I'll give you an example if we have visitation schedule between a biological parent and your child. And, you know, drug use has been an underlying issue. And that individual arrives for the visit and appears to be under the influence, we would probably make the decision to request that that person submit to a test, we also would just randomly test, but we never do it arbitrarily. And it's not a criteria in connection with being eligible for public assistance or economic support programs. And I'll distinguish in the next resolution, Peter, what that other contract is for.

Legislator Criswell

Thank you.

Commissioner Iapoce

Sure.

Chairman Lopez

Okay, any other questions? Comments? All right, all in favor.

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

Resolution 167. Approving execution of contract for \$100,000 with Industrial Medical Associates for substance abuse, assessment, testing and treatment monitoring for individuals applying for and receiving public assistance, and move for discussion.

Legislator Bruno

I'll move it.

Chairman Lopez

Second.

Legislator Uchitelle

Second.

Chairman Lopez

Discussion questions.

Legislator Albert Bruno

Yeah, this the way you it's worded, Chairman is, first of all, in other words, if I understood this correctly, in order, it would be a condition to social services would be to submit these kinds of tests. Marc.

Commissioner Iapoce

I can respond AI about the context in which this kind of testing gets done. So, when we have individuals arrive at DSS who are applying for public assistance and economic support programs, we're required to do a series of screenings. And one of the screenings that we do is a drug and alcohol screening. And if during that screening, the individual reports that one of the issues that they're dealing with happens to be drug or alcohol use, we will make a referral then to IMA to have that person assessed. And it's part of our goal to if the person ends up arriving at being deemed to be in need of treatment, that then a referral gets made for that person to go into a treatment facility can be inpatient, or outpatient. So that's part of what we do in terms of contributing to the effort, you know, to address making referrals and having people evaluated. It's a voluntary process, you know, to the degree that a person presents and discloses that they're experiencing issues around drug or alcohol use, and a little bit of the history. This is where CASAC, certified alcohol and substance abuse counselors actually end up doing the assessments and evaluations. And we had previously had a position here at DSS where we had a staff

person who was a CASAC when that person retired, we subsequently explored some more efficient possibilities in terms of being able to have the ability to meet this requirement to do referrals for drug and alcohol assessments. So that's how we basically arrived at this.

Legislator Bruno

So, if I'm, if I'm getting this clear, we're spending \$100,000 to refer people somewhere else.

Commissioner Iapoce

No, we're going to spend \$260 per client who is flagged in the screening who need a drug and alcohol assessment might need to go into treatment.

Legislator Bruno

But it's just a referral.

Commissioner Iapoce

We'll see (inaudible). Well, they're going to be referred to drug and alcohol treatment facilities, and hopefully, you know, they're an opioid problem, or it's a methadone problem, or

Legislator Bruno

I guess what I'm getting at is that, I'm sorry, because maybe I don't understand this correctly. But this \$100,000 is strictly referral program, that whatever their issue may be, is going to be mitigated through another agency or another program, this program of \$100,000, just to see that they get there right?

Legislator Uchitelle

Can I respond to that actually, if it's alright. AI, DSS and I say this with the highest level of respect, Commissioner, Iapoce. DSS is a referral office.

Legislator Bruno

Exactly.

Legislator Uchitelle

In many ways, not just for this. I mean, if you want to talk about decades of moving public sector, social services out of the public sector and into other areas that they need to be referred out to, we should talk about that. I put, I asked to put on the agenda later, that we should have really serious conversation, I know that you're excited about it on doing more mental health, you know, doing more work on mental health. But this is there's a lot of other services that fall into this category as well, where it is really just a referral out. But I think if you want to dig at that I'm not saying you shouldn't I think that's a really worthwhile thing. But I just want to point out that it is a lot that gets referred out.

Legislator Albert Bruno

But all right, I appreciate it. Thank you, Legislator Uchitelle. I'm just curious as they're doing a job and you're getting paid through other thing, but this isn't like almost like \$100,000 bonus is what I'm looking at it to refer people to other departments or other programs. And I granted they do a lot more than just these particular people, but it's so still a referral service.

Commissioner Iapoce

They're not just doing a referral AI they're doing an assessment. They're sitting down with the individual going over their history going over what their needs are going over. Well, that has to be done that has to be done before someone can be able to get into some type of a treatment facility to start to address the issues that they're having. So, it's a necessary function that has to be performed. It's the degree that it's not just the bonus. Well, that they have to be basically evaluated, they have to be sat down with and go through an assessment to determine mean, we can't just put people in nursing homes, without PRI's, patient review instruments and Adult Protective Services, we have staff that does PRI's. Hospitals do PRI's, nurses do PRI's, physician's office do PRI's, they sit down and do the patient review instrument. Drug and alcohol assessments are the same type of tool. A professional who is experienced and trained in being able to determine what an individual in front of them needs are have to do. So, the drug and alcohol assessment, it's not just a bonus to refer somebody, it's actually a function that's performed, that requires a lot of expertise. It's done by CASAC, who are certified alcohol and substance abuse counselors who are licensed and trained to do that. And with the degree of issues that we have around opioid abuse in our county and across the state, it's just vitally important to try to get anybody who might be experiencing those issues evaluated by a professional and referred to the appropriate type of treatment. So, I don't think it's appropriate to characterize it just as \$100,000 bonus to somebody.

Legislator Bruno

I apologize (inaudible)

Commissioner Iapoce

We might have 100 yeah,

Deputy Executive Rider

There is no patient client relationship with this doctor, or, you know, this contractor without this contract. There is I mean, to get to the main point that you're making AI, they wouldn't be doing this, because these are people that we're referring to them through this contract. And they wouldn't be providing this assessment if we weren't providing the people to them.

Legislator Bruno

Okay, so these assessments are typically done when people come to us.

Deputy Executive Rider

They're done because somebody flags that they have an issue. And then the assessments done to see which kind of facility would make the most sense to give a referral to, like the commissioner said, we used to have a staff member that did this, which, my guess I mean, I didn't look at last year's budget, but when you look at salary plus fringe benefits would have been much larger than the \$100,000.

Legislator Albert Bruno

Okay, I just want to make sure I understand, believe me, I'm not knocking and I apologize, Mr. Iapoce, I didn't mean it as a bonus, I think it was a poor choice of words. I apologize for that. What I was, I guess

what I was referring to it almost, I didn't want to see a duplication of funding. In other words, you know, we spend millions of dollars through social services, to make sure people get to the right facilities and get the services that they're needed. And I'm just making sure I'm just questioning whether this is a duplication of that. That's all.

Commissioner Iapoce

No, and I totally understand, Al, I think, you know, it's also important to point out, we're always I think, you know, Abe made the remark a few minutes ago about, you know, part of the Department of Social Services role frequently in connection with engaging clients is evaluating what their needs are, making determinations, doing screenings and referring them. I mean, we don't necessarily have the ability to find permanent housing. We can't find permanent employment, but we make referrals to other agencies who do those things. I think it's also really important to point out here, we're always striving to achieve better efficiencies, and get a better return on our investment. One of the reasons why we made the proposal to shift away from continuing to keep a position in our budget to have a CASAC and to go to a service provider. I was noticing that we were having maybe screening between 100 to 150 people in a six-month period, and \$260 per screening 100 screenings at \$26,000, where our county share is only 49%. That's a \$13,000 cost which is much less than maintaining a position for someone. And we also have a service provider who engages with an array of facilities who provide in and outpatient treatment that can make effective referrals. And around the opioid epidemic what's so crucial is being able to add screening and assessment to make the right referral as quickly as possible when an individual has indicated they might be receptive to starting to receive services. So, I really think it's a win win win across the board, both in terms of efficiencies, expenditures, and the actual subject matter. And I think, once we get some time under our belt with this, I hope the data will justify that.

Legislator Bruno

And thank you. I appreciate that. My, but I will point out that your numbers you just put out at us as you say, \$25,000 versus \$100,000?

Commissioner Iapoce

Well, the contract is for that amount Al. We won't spend that if we don't have that number of referrals.

Legislator Bruno

Okay. All right, you understand my - you know what I mean, it's a lot of money, and make sure it's go to the right place.

Commissioner Iapoce

You know, there's a contract that we won't incur that - we're not just giving them \$100,000 right now. We'll be billed for each client we refer to them.

Legislator Bruno

It's a maximum of \$100.

Commissioner Iapoce

To a maximum. So, if we refer 100, people, the expenditure will be 26,000. And then the county share of that is 49%. So, our county costs would be 13,000.

Legislator Bruno

Understood. So, it's a maximum of 100. Okay, that makes a difference.

Legislator Criswell

Yeah. The other thing I like about this is it doesn't rely on one individual staff person that you're managing who if they leave, then you've got some gap in service, or you're trying to figure output. So, this is a firm that's got several people, so you're not relying on one human to take all this on.

Commissioner Iapoce

And that's a really important point, Peter, because the other thing that can happen when there's a single point of entry, that's always transacting this kind of function. It's obvious sometimes that there can be preferences arrived at, in terms of which facility to refer to. So I appreciate you pointing that out. I think it's gonna make us able to be more responsive, on a larger scale, in terms of meeting all the potential needs that we arrive at identifying, and again, you know, the the CASAC, do really important work, and it will be case socks that are doing all the evaluations. So that's an important component of what we're contracting for.

Legislator Albert Bruno

Thank you, Mike, for your information. Thanks for clearing.

Commissioner Iapoce

You're welcome Al. I appreciate it. I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

Chairman Lopez

I've got a question for you Mike. Considering some of these services that are provided also include federal assistance. In some instances, will the local DSS apply the law according to the beds, or the state when it comes to the legalization of marijuana.

Commissioner Iapoce

I think we're gonna stay in a holding pattern and wait for further guidance about how that might impact some of our programming Craig. I see so many different potential circumstances where obviously, someone, you know, might arrive at relying on the fact that it's been legalized to potentially avoid meeting a criteria. Again, I think for now, because of the fact that most of the cases that we deal with that involve drug or alcohol use, and restrictions around that are reflected in court orders. I don't think that the legalization is really going to be impactful. But we'll watch closely and keep, obviously, administration informed about any developments that might change how we have to conduct business or impact what types of services were able to be involved with.

Chairman Lopez

It's still a little bit early, then right? I mean, know exactly how it's gonna impact (inaudible).

Legislator Bruno

Alcohol is legal. But if a court says you can't touch it, you can't touch it. It's still the same thing. Just another (inaudible).

Commissioner Iapoce

Exactly Al. That's kind of the way we've been, you know, expecting that it's going to probably unfold, because they the entire time, we've had a lot of orders that restrict alcohol use. And that's been legal so.

Chairman Lopez

Sure. Any other questions? discussion? Hearing none, all in favor?

Committee Members

Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

All right. Very good. That'll do it with resolutions. Thanks so much, Mike, for joining us, you know, you're always a wealth of information. And thank you for the details that you can provide on these programs and are really second to none, so I appreciate that.

Commissioner Iapoce

I appreciate the time that you all take as well. And I do really appreciate the questions because I know sometimes, you know, some of the work that we're doing and what we're involved in, you know, doesn't always seem to make sense. Or come across as clearly. So I appreciate, you know, Marc, inviting me to join you at this meeting. And I'm always available to answer any questions. So good to see you all.

Chairman Lopez

Thank you, take care, stay well. Alright new business.

Legislator Uchitelle

So if it's all right, Craig, I can jump in.

Chairman Lopez

Yeah, absolutely.

Legislator Uchitelle

Great. Thank you. So I had asked two items, but they're really related. So I'm going to kind of address them together. And then we can either talk about them separately or talk about one or I just want to make sure that these are on everybody's radar. So you know, we reached out. So we've got this issue with Health Alliance and the inpatient mental health beds. I think, I've been incredibly proud of our work. I mean, it's not really work. It's more like statements and kind of engagement in this committee, with the, you know, leadership from the hospital and in conversation with the county executives team. I mean, we've, you know, and the eagerness among people on this committee to address the fact that we're losing our inpatient mental health beds, we've lost them already. And they're not likely to come

back and that this is an issue that we would like to see resolved. In the last session in 2020, Resolution 225 was something that we you know, that we've passed, and it specifically asked the county executive, in addition to calling on Westchester Medical to return the beds, it also asked the county executive to explore options to expand mental health services and care in Ulster County. And I want to make that resolution. I want it to be in our minds as we continue to grapple with the fact that we're not getting those beds back. And we're very much in need of the services for our residents. And this has become a very, very real thing for me, not in for my district, not necessarily that the issue I'm about to share, is, uh, now is the same folks that would have used these inpatient mental health beds, but it is part of this larger issue of a lack of mental health services in our county. And an opportunity and a really a need just like we asked the county executive to explore options for the inpatient mental health beds, there are other areas that we should seriously consider. And so I'll share with you an issue that's going on in my district. But it really is, like so many things that happened in Kingston it is, you know, the population center, but it really is serving the whole community. So there's a facility in my district that's called Chiz's Heart Street. It's located on Washington Avenue. And it is a four or five adjacent buildings that have operated as a boarding house for people serving predominantly people with very, very severe mental challenges. And there is capacity for up to 70 people there, the number of people that are there right now is slightly lower than that, and it's a little bit unclear about just exactly how many people are there. But these are folks that really, were talking about supportive housing earlier, these are folks that really, you know, require significant support, and have a range of issues, a lot of them are on SSI, or SSD, and don't have a direct relationship with the county through DSS for a variety of reasons, mostly because they're receiving, you know, they received their benefit there, you know, their state benefit through SSI or SSD. And the reason I'm bringing this up now is because it was announced earlier, or it is it has become clear, earlier this spring that the facility has been put up for sale. And the future owners there aren't there isn't a there isn't a buyer in contract yet. But it's fairly clear that the woman that's been running it for a very long time is no longer going to continue running it. And this is a loss in terms of the services that we provide to something like 60 people, I mean, it could be up to 70 people. Right now, it's a little bit less than that but there is no alternative for folks that are in this, that have these mental health needs in this facility right now. The owner is not going to continue operating it, I think she's pretty much done. Or rather, the manager of the of the facility isn't going to continue operating it, you know, no matter when it gets sold, she's, you know, moving on. And, you know, I wish her well, I've spoke I spoke with her over the weekend, actually. But these folks are going to get placed out of out of the community. She's working really hard to help place folks that are, you know, in places that are going to address their needs. But we don't have this in our community here in Ulster County. And this means Ulster County residents are going to be displaced and you know, God willing find great services wherever they can find them. But it's a really tough moment of reflection for me. And I think it should be for all of us to think about the mental health options that we have in our community. And the fact that this is in my district, I think doesn't make it any less significant for Ulster County as a county and the Hudson Valley as because they're, you know, it's not just county residents that are there. But it's folks from all over that might have you know, even fewer options and districts west and north of us. And so, the reason I wanted to bring this up is because I want this to be part of the conversation about mental health funding in our community, a conversation that we've already asked the county executive to explore. And I've spoken to many members of the county executives team, including Deputy Exec. Rider, Commissioner Iapoce. You know, Pat, the County Executive, Ryan has been involved in the conversations as well. You know, I am just trying to refocus as much energy on this issue as possible.

And, also to point out that, you know, in the months ahead, we're going to be having conversations about federal rescue plan, money, and mental health toll of this pandemic has been significant. And it's been particularly significant for the folks that are served by facilities like Chiz's Heart Street, I can I mean, as a relatively mentally well, personally, I have had a hard time with the mental effects of the pandemic. I mean, really, I can only imagine how folks that really are challenged on a good day, are dealing with this situation. And so, you know, I hope that we're going to be really strongly considering how we can serve this population. So I appreciate the time to talk about this. I'm happy to talk, you know, have a dialogue about it. But I wanted to make sure to really orient this committee to this issue. Legislator, Bruno, do you want to go ahead?

Legislator Bruno

Yeah, I, if I can bring, Craig keep going out. If I can talk about what I want to talk to you about earlier this week. And Marc, is that okay, at this point, you think?

Chairman Lopez

What? Sorry I was muted. No, absolutely AI, I think would be a good opportunity for you.

Legislator Bruno

I'd like to address something with you is this. This is one of the things that have been in my craw. It's been driving me nuts, especially when we heard Dr. Doyle say point blank, sorry, you're not worth it. It's we're not bringing them back to Ulster County. And that really ticked me off to be honest with you. I had a meeting this past week, Wednesday with Peter Kelly, who is the President of Vassar and Vice President of Nuvance Health. Nuvance is a hospital conglomerate which holds seven hospitals from Danbury, Sharon, Connecticut, Vassar Brothers, Northern Dutchess and Putnam and I wanted to open up the conversation between Ulster County Marc Rider and Pat Ryan and Craig Lopez of possibly circumventing Westchester Medical and providing getting a different medical provider to provide the beds. At least let's get the conversation going. Maybe we can find a location. I mean, first of all, Chiz's Heart Street, I feel it. I know who some of the people in there. They perform an amazing, amazing service of people, not just Kingston, but Ulster County that people go there. All that being said as we can get the conversation going, we don't necessarily have to be hooked up, in my opinion and the opinion of other people to with Health Alliance. They just happen to have the buildings. Ulster County owns buildings and will probably own more buildings. Nuvance Healthquest, owns buildings in Ulster County as well and I'll use Macy's as an example where they turn that into a medical practice building. They are going to be doing residents options where they're going to actually provide going to become a teaching hospital, consortium, so to speak. That being said, on one, we're working on getting the conversation open and going, we're possibly setting up a partnership with another medical provider. To bring those beds back to Ulster County, we may have to pay money for it as a county. But personally, I would rather write that check as Ulster County or whatever checks are needed to get those beds back, then write those checks to a facility who really made it very clear that they don't care about Ulster County. So even if it costs us more, I think it's worth it in the long run, because we're spending much more money and much - wouldn't use the word money, but the toll is much greater through not having them. I mean the suicide yesterday, I was learned two more people that I know very closely died from an overdose. One was an adult in his 50s. Another was another child of 25. Those being said, we need to stop this. The pandemic has increased it - I forgot what the actual percentage is. But it's ridiculous.

We need to have our medical health in Ulster County. If it's not the county seat then needs to be somewhere nearby. Ellenville Hospital is doing an incredible job with it. But I think if we get all the right players on the same team, and we go after other people that can provide these services with us, I think we can get it done. I applaud you Abe for bringing this to the forefront as well. But there are a couple of us that are actually trying to circumvent the Westchester Medical and try to get it done. So hopefully, Craig, I don't know if you have you reached out to Peter.

Chairman Lopez

I did actually I reached out to them today I left a message and yeah, I would expect to get a call back, you know, maybe tomorrow and the next couple days. If not, then I'll follow up.

Legislator Bruno

Yeah, Peter, Peter Kelly is he was a he's a great guy. He was the President of Putnam, which has an incredible mental health facility at Putnam Hospital. He was very open to the idea. And he did say there was a lot of costs involved. There was a lot of things that were red tape that we aren't familiar with. But you know what you it may be a dead end. But we won't know it until we turn on to that road and go down there. But at least we have to try. As a committee, I think it behooves us to be on the forefront of moving forward and getting those beds back to Ulster County.

Chairman Lopez

Sure, no, definitely, I think in order to move forward, yeah, it starts with a dialogue. And I think that's kind of, you know, our job here is to facilitate that dialogue. And if we work together and reach out to the right people, like you have Al and, you know, I want to reach out to and I've been in discussions with Steve Kelly as well. I know that Laura has as well. And I think we're all on the same page that something has to be done. You know, what's going on here in Ulster is indicative of, you know, what's been going on and other places as well. And to watch, you know, Westchester and Dr. Doyle come in and just totally dismiss us, you know, and kind of throw us under the bus for you know, I hate to say that it was completely money related, but I think they are all on the same page that it was most likely related to money and yeah, yeah, and, yeah, and something has to be done. Like, even though it was it, it was 40 beds, those 40 beds make a big difference, you know, plus the additional 20 for substance abuse related issues. And, you know, it's, we've got to start, you know, we've got to start someplace, and yeah, I think like, like our intent here, um, you know, Abe and Al and Laura, I think we reach out to the right people, you know, bring them to the table, have an open dialogue and really try to come up with a way that we can start to solve this problem, because it's not going to get any better anytime soon.

Legislator Bruno

I have a vision where you take I know, obviously, Enterprise West is off to another direction, but a building such as that or the head trauma center and make it we know we have that in Ulster County. We can have a mental health facility and run it ourselves if we have to.

Chairman Lopez

No absolutely and I if I think Gateway could play a part in this as well. I know that they have yeah some room at you know, and a facility that they have as well. And yeah, I think if we bring the right people to the table, we can really come up with a solution. And a

Legislator Criswell

I've started some conversations with Step One. Are y'all familiar with Step One? Substance Abuse. So up to start getting those conversations rolling, but I think they'd be an amazing partner in this as well.

Legislator Petit

I honestly think if we seem to have other parties that are very interested in helping out Ulster County, and since Health Alliance does not seem to be, and I spoke to, I think she's the office manager, but I was under the impression that the 14 beds we had in Ulster County were in Ulster County in the hospital, but apparently, they're at Mid-Hudson Regional, which is the old St. Francis. So, so in the turnaround time, I mean, this has really hit, hit home with close friends. They're only holding people with severe substance abuse, mental health issues for five or six days. And in one case, the young man was making phone calls 15-20 times calling the house even though the police gave his father a restraining order. I mean, he hit him so hard, he had a bleeding, stroke, a hemorrhaging stroke. So it's this is not a joke, and how a hospital could determine and release somebody who is, you know, not in danger of hurting themselves or someone else when they're being like this, and don't have time to get the medication straightened out is beyond me. I would be willing to either meet earlier at one of our meetings, or if it's too long, because we do have Energy and Environment after this one, to me to separate time, but and not for any great length of time. But just so we could bring in these different parties that are interested in speaking with us. Step One, Steve Kelly, Peter Kelly, you know, and see if we couldn't put together a program. There's got to be I mean, there is funding coming in. But there's got to be funding for this. And, you know.

Legislator Bruno

That would be great (inaudible), you're absolutely right Laura. I think we could create a team of experts to make this happen. This is not an insurmountable thing in front of us. And I would love to be, you know, a big piece of it, if I could somehow. This is very, you know, real and near and dear to my heart. I've lost a lot of people from mental health issues. And, and I'll use the word mental health issues, because that transcends into substance issues, substance abuse, and all ends up in the same spot six feet under, and we got to stop it.

Legislator Petit

And its hit a younger population now, between 11 and 15 with - I can't even understand but.

Legislator Bruno

Yeah, it's hitting everybody. There is no age limit on this anymore. It's COVID make sure of that. Marc, you got any input?

Deputy Executive Rider

I mean, these are all things we're working on. I mean, I, you know, encourage you all to continue down this path. And I think, as a team, between the legislature and the administration, we'll figure out

solutions. But you know, none of this is going to be cheap, and which is why, you know, what WMC is, is leaving, I mean, it is a money constraint, they are improving some services, that they're going to bring in a cardiac, a high level, cardiac, you know, facility that we didn't have and haven't had to date. But in doing that, they are, they are deleting the mental health beds which to us is not acceptable. So we have to find some kind of solution. I don't know that we're ever going to find somebody to come in and do inpatient mental health beds in Ulster County as a standalone, whether it be 40 or 60. Or, I mean, it's not it's a very difficult path, but I think that we can patch work a bunch of better mental health services together with various partners and help come up with a solution that all of us agree upon. I just think that we got to continue reaching out to our individual networks.

Chairman Lopez

Sure, I think that's a good plan.

Legislator Bruno

I agree with you, Marc. I had to kind of chuckle about, oh, we're losing mental health but we're gaining cardiac care. The ultimate reason is the cardiac care generates more money. That's the part of the healthcare business that makes them millions. I mean, a cath lab, you know, makes a half a million dollars an hour while somebody is on that table.

Legislator Criswell

Can I suggest that we hash this out at a separate meeting? I'm sorry, we're kind of going but Energy and Environment is waiting. And we need to I'm sorry AI I don't mean to cut you off. But we could talk about this for a long time. I suggest, like Laura said, let's set a separate meeting and focus on this issue.

Legislator Bruno

Understood.

Chairman Lopez

Yeah, definitely. That's a good idea.

Legislator Bruno

This could take it as an animal unto itself. You're right, Peter.

Legislator Uchitelle

Well, I appreciate everyone for having the conversation and hearing what I wanted to bring to the table here. Thank you.

Chairman Lopez

Alright, does anybody have anything else for the good of the committee? All right, hearing none, we'll move to adjourn.

Legislator Uchitelle

Move to adjourn.

Chairman Lopez

Second.

Legislator Bruno

Second.

Chairman Lopez

All in favor.

Committee Members

Aye. Aye. Aye.

Chairman Lopez

All right. Very good. Thanks so much. Take care everybody.