

SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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Southeastern Connecticut

Regional Human Services Coordinating Council

A steering committee of the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments

Draft Minutes

Friday, January 20, 2023 8:30 AM

Conducted via Zoom

Attendees: Deb Monahan (TVCCA), Kathleen Stauffer (The ARC of Eastern CT), Leanne Theodore (Stonington Human Services), Alison Dvorak (Senior Resources – Agency on Ageing), Cathy Zall (New London Homeless Hospitality Center), Jen Muggeo (Ledge Light Health District), Patrick McCormack (Uncas Health District), Mayor Ron McDaniel (Town of Montville), Teri McHale (Mohegan Tribe Behavioral Health Clinical Services), Kate Milde (Norwich Human Services), Amanda Kennedy (SCCOG), Zakkyya Williams (Lawrence & Memorial Hospital), Claire Silva (Madonna Place), Kyle Casiglio (SCCOG)

1. Call to Order

Ms. Monahan called the meeting to order at 8:34 AM.

2. Welcome and Introductions

The RHSCC welcomed Zakkyya Williams, Community Relations Coordinator with Lawrence & Memorial Hospital, as well as Teri McHale, Director of Behavioral Health Clinical Services for the Mohegan Tribe, to their first meeting.

3. Legislative Agenda

Ms. Monahan and Ms. Stauffer summarized the legislative agenda that was drafted following the December meeting, emphasizing how rising cost impact providers, the problems that all non-profits and agencies are facing with staffing shortages, and the disconnect between the intentions of legislators and what happens on the ground.

Ms. Muggeo and Mr. McCormack highlighted this last point with the examples of recent student mental health day legislation and the development of state mold standards.

Ms. Zall and Ms. Stauffer noted that the state agencies face many of the same issues being under-resourced and under-staffed, compounded with a risk aversion due to the strings that come with federal money from programs like CARE and ARPA.

The council discussed how some of the member groups present their priorities to decision makers. The idea of a legislative roundtable or breakfast was proposed with the group agreeing that this was a sound idea with examples of success from member agencies. This would allow the RHSCC to speak with one unified voice. While too late to prepare for this year's agenda the idea should be planned for the following legislative session.

4. Member Updates

Ms. Williams reported that L&M Hospital has concluded its 2022 health needs assessment, which identified food, housing, stability and mental health as among the biggest priorities for the hospital in the community, aligning strongly with many of the areas of focus of the RHSCC.

Ms. Theodore reported that Stonington Human Services added a full time Community Outreach Specialist almost two years ago and has seen a remarkable impact because of the position. Coordination with the schools and police department has improved dramatically. The council remarked on the value of meeting people where they are and in getting out into the community. This conversation led to two ideas for future meetings being proposed:

- 1) Inviting representatives from The Hispanic Alliance and other groups serving the undocumented and immigrant population of our region to better coordinate on community needs and service provision.
- 2) Inviting municipalities and police departments to present on the example of Stonington Human Services' work and increasing coordination between Human Services and Police throughout the region.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25am

The next convening is scheduled for April 21st at 8:30am