

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

April 20, 2021

Present: Legislators Andrea Moroughan, Richard Chartrand, Greg Kulzer, Phil Hathway, and Lisa Virkler.

Others: Legislators Larry Dolhof, Jerry King, Tom Osborne, and Ron Burns; County Manager Ryan Piche; County Atty. Joan McNichol; Treasurer Eric Virkler; and Human Resource Director Caitlyn Smith; and Information Technology Director Conner Biolsi.

Committee Chair Legislator Moroughan called the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Legislator Chartrand made a motion to accept the minutes from 3/16/2021 as recorded, seconded by Legislator Virkler and carried.

Landlord support during eviction moratorium – Snow Belt Housing Director Jaylyn Yuhas-Heames

Social Services Commissioner Jennifer Jones began by stating that there was a survey created by Lewis County Social Services, Snow Belt Housing and Lewis County Opportunities and put out to Lewis County landlords due to the eviction moratorium, there were 34 responses received. The survey determined that there are 33 tenants who have not paid rent, totaling roughly \$190,000.00 and 6 tenants who are at least 12 months or more behind. Statewide there is likely to be a huge issue once the moratorium is lifted. There was clarification that the moratorium in New York State is more enhanced than the CDC version. In response to Legislator Moroughan, Jenny explained that they continued to pay rent for those individuals in many of their programs. There were many different hardships for tenants due to the pandemic.

Jenny introduced Snow Belt Housing Director Jaylyn Yuhas-Heames. Jaylyn explained the three programs available are for tenants to apply for funding to pay their past due rent rather than be evicted when the moratorium lifts. The first program is STEHP/CoC, which stands for Solutions to End Homelessness Program and Continuum of Care. There is \$154,230 per year available to assist approximately 120 individuals. This funding source comes from HUD to NYS Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) then through Point North Housing Coalition (PNHC) to Snow Belt Housing and eligibility is determined by income guidelines. An individual or family must remain 30% or lower of the Average Median Income (AMI)

The second program is ESG-CV, which stands for Emergency Services Grant – CoronaVirus. There is \$245,448 available and needs to be used by September 2022. This funding source comes from HUD to NYS OTDA and then through Lewis County Social Services to Snow Belt Housing and eligibility is determined by income guidelines. An individual or family must remain at 50% or lower of the AMI. The third program is ERAP, which stands for Emergency Rental Assistance Program. Although there is no set amount of funding this will be included with ESG-CV funds. The funding source is from HUD to NYS OTDA then through Lewis County Social Services to Snow Belt Housing and eligibility is determined by income guidelines. An individual or family must remain at 80% or lower of the AMI.

Jaylyn concluded by stating that landlords can apply on behalf of a tenant but must have consent to do so from the tenant. Carol Cheal is the Homeless Coordinator at Snow Belt Housing and can be reached at 315-376-2639, ext. 5 to assist individual or families.

COVID-19 Vaccination update – County Manager Ryan Piche

Ryan reminded legislators that at last month's meeting there was discussion on putting together videos to help residents understand the science behind the vaccines as well as hearing from trusted local doctors in an effort to get more residents fully vaccinated against Covid-19. Legislator Moroughan announced that there was a clinic happening currently in Copenhagen until 4:30 p.m. and walk-ins are accepted. She voiced her concern that she didn't even know until today that there was a clinic and where it would be located, she feels that if we want more residents to get vaccinated there needs to be more work put into advertising the clinics better. Ryan reported that there would be a clinic later in the week at Port Leyden. There are currently 8,545 first doses and 6,734 fully vaccinated individuals.

Ryan explained that there are a total of five short videos that will be shared over social media in the next several weeks from trusted doctors in the area who share their thoughts on the vaccine as well as the science behind it. Ryan showed the video of Dr. Harney. Ryan responded to Legislator Moroughan's question that anyone wanting the vaccine can contact Public Health to get signed up. There was further discussion about convincing more residents to get vaccinated by using local medical professionals. In response to Legislator Chartrand's question, Ryan stated that about 60% of all Lewis County Health System workers have been vaccinated.

The following dockets were reviewed:

1. Resolution adopting policy for smoke free County buildings and grounds (tobacco, marijuana, and e-cigarettes). *Ryan explained the need for this type of policy since marijuana became legal.*
AYE 5 NAY 0
2. Resolution appointing Kathleen Sitko of Glenfield, NY and Geraldine Watkins of Port Leyden, NY as members of the Lewis County Office For the Aging Advisory Council effective May 5, 2021 through December 31, 2023.
AYE 5 NAY 0
3. Resolution to appropriate funds in the Office For the Aging Account in the amount of \$20,436.00 to recognize funds awarded from NYS Consolidated Appropriations Act (HDC5) related to the Covid-19 pandemic.
AYE 5 NAY 0
4. Resolution amending Compensation Plan of the County of Lewis with reference to the Public Health Department to abolish one (1) full-time Registered Nurse position, Grade 33 and create one (1) per diem Registered Nurse position, Grade 33.
AYE 5 NAY 0

5. Resolution authorizing agreement between Lewis County Department of Social Services and SUNY Potsdam to provide training projects for the Department of Social Services beginning January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 at an amount not to exceed \$7,200.00.

AYE 5 NAY 0

6. Resolution authorizing agreements between Lewis County Department of Social Services, New York State Office of Children & Family Services and Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County, Inc. beginning January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

AYE 5 NAY 0

At 3:57 p.m. Legislator Virkler made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Legislator Chartrand and carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Cassandra Moser, Clerk of the Board