

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Health and Human Services Committee at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes when these minutes are approved to obtain any changes to these minutes.

DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Health & Human Services Committee Minutes
October 4, 2021**

The Health and Human Services Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, October 4, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in the Legislative Center's Gathertorium in Sycamore, Illinois. Madam Chair Crawford called the meeting to order. Those Members present were Mr. Scott Campbell, Mrs. Karen Cribben, Mr. Bill Cummings, Ms. Maureen Little, and Chair Rukisha Crawford. Ms. Linda Slabon was absent. A quorum was established with five Members present, one absent, and one vacancy.

Others present were Brian Gregory, Deanna Cada, Ellingsworth Webb, Abbie Ascencio, and Lacy Searcy.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Ms. Little, seconded by Mr. Cummings and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Ms. Little, seconded by Mr. Cummings and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the August 2, 2021 Committee Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

POLICE / SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM PRESENTATION

The Committee was joined by Northwestern Medicine's Ben Gordon Center Police Liaisons Ms. Abbie Ascencio and Mr. Lacy Searcy.

Ms. Ascencio explained that the Social Worker Liaison Program began in July of 2020 as a partnership between the DeKalb Police Department and Northwestern Medicine. Since its inception, the social work program is now being utilized by DeKalb Police Department, Sycamore Police Department, and soon the County Sheriff's Office. The program is funded through the DeKalb County Community Mental Health Board.

The goal of the Social Worker/Liaison is to provide a wraparound service to an individual and family to assure that the community is working together to improve quality of life of individual. The Social Worker/Liaison addresses barriers that prohibit individuals from reaching this goal through crisis management, care coordination, linkage to care, and case management.

Since the implementation of Social Worker in July 2020, a total of 736 cases (79% of those cases are with DeKalb Police Dept.) have been referred. A majority of the referrals at 73% of the time, the crisis was resolved in the community by an officer or were stabilized in the hospital and discharged back home; 18% of the referrals were transferred to a different facility from the ED to receive higher level of care; 7% of the referrals had an undetermined disposition due to inability locate individual or person was referred as frequent utilizer; about 2% of the referrals were arrested or were admitted to the hospital for medical monitoring.

Ms. Ascencio further explained that DeKalb Police Department has seen the program's potential for reducing future service calls when community members are properly assisted. Officers are directly referring cases or certain individuals to Abbie and then she is able to connect them to the appropriate services. Follow up cases are when people can be given extra support after their interaction with the police officer. When the social workers can respond, along with the officers, their able to provide that on-the-spot service, Ms. Ascencio explained. Those services include case management, transportation, food delivery, housing information, coordinating with agencies and advocating for financial support.

Ms. Ascencio, who is additionally bilingual, can assist with stabilizing people during a crisis at on-scene cases. She provides people with resources and creates a safety plan for them after a crisis as well. Ms. Ascencio said the program also offers the living room (located at Ben Gordon) that's free of charge to anyone who's 18 and older. People can go in on a walk-in basis during office hours, and get a peer support counselor that they can talk to on the spot.

Ms. Ascencio also touched on information regarding her coordination in bringing Crisis Intervention Team Training to DeKalb County local law enforcement officers. Last January, there were about 24 local officers trained in CIT. The CIT training consists of identifying: Mental Health Signs and Symptoms, Hearing Voices Exercise, Homeless Issues, Child & Adolescent Disorders, Geriatric Issues, Co-Occurring Disorders, Compliant Surrender & Tactical Response, Veterans' Issues, Risk Assessment & Response/Legal Issues, Medical Conditions & Psychotropic, Virtual Hallucination Machine, Scenario-based Role Playing, and Autism. The hope is to be able to bring that training back to the area in 2022 to get more local law enforcement officers trained on the various topics to better assist the community.

Lastly, Ms. Ascencio and Mr. Searcy shared a few success stories from the program. The Committee thanked the two guests for all of their dedication and assistance with getting this very important program up and going for the communities. It was noted that the County Sheriff's Office just received a grant from the Community Mental Health Board to fund a Part-Time social worker for their calls as well.

GY2021 SENIOR TAX LEVY YEAR-END ACTIVITY REPORTS

Community Mental Health Director Deanna Cada provided the Year-End Reports for GY2021 Senior Tax Levy that runs from July 1 to June 30th. Surprisingly, the reports were fairly similar to years prior regardless of the COVID-19 impacts. Some agencies did provide less services but were able to pivot and reallocate the money to assist seniors in different ways. DeKalb County Community Garden did receive an increase in funding which resulting in them being able to assist with providing 2,000 additional meals. Next year Ms. Cada noted that she will be providing some more trend reporting.

FY2022 BUDGET

a. FY2022 Budget Appeals, if any

There were no appeals for the Committee to consider.

b. Committee's Questions & Review of Departments' FY2022 Budget Requests

There were no questions.

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ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Ms. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Cummings, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rukisha Crawford, Chair

Tasha Sims, Recording Secretary

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