ESSEX COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH
Terri Morse, LMHC, CASAC-Master, *Director*
Dava Clement, LMHC, *Director of Clinical Services*
P.O. BOX 8 – 7513 COURT STREET
ELIZABETHTOWN, NY 12932
PH: (518) 873-3670 / FAX: (518) 873-3777

COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
Laurie Kelley, *Chairperson*
Terri Morse, LMHC, CASAC-Master
Director

Essex County Community Services Board - Meeting Minutes
Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee
May 14, 2025 – 1:30-3:30PM

BOARD MEMBERS:	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
1. Angie Allen *(Board)*	☒	☐	☐
2. Audie Sparre *(Board, MH & ASA Subcommittee's)*	☐	☒	☐
3. Ernest Hough *(Board & ASA Subcommittee)*	☐	☒	☐
4. Bryan Bond *(Board & MH Subcommittee)*	☐	☒	☐
5. Cammy Sheridan *(Board Vice Chair & MH Subcommittee)*	☐	☐	☒
6. Charlie Lustig *(Board & ASA Subcommittee)*	☒	☐	☐
7. Dr. Kristin Mack *(Board & ASA Subcommittee)*	☐	☒	☐
8. Jo Ann Husslein *(Board & MH Subcommittee)*	☒	☐	☐
9. John Haverlick *(Board & MH Subcommittee)*	☒	☐	☐
10. Kenneth Hughes *(Board & ASA Subcommittee)*	☒	☐	☐
11. Krissy Leerkes *(Board & MH Subcommittee)*	☐	☒	☐
12. Laurie Kelley *(Board & DD Subcommittee Chair)*	☒	☐	☐
13. Leslee Mounger *(Board & ASA Subcommittee)*	☐	☒	☐
14. Linda Beers *(Board & DD Subcommittee)*	☒	☐	☐
15. Mary Bell *(Board Secretary, ASA & DD Subcommittee)*	☒	☐	☐

MENTAL HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE:	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Dava Clement *(ECMH)*	☒	☐	☐
JoAnne Caswell *(FF)*	☐	☐	☐
Valerie Ainsworth *(MHA)*	☒	☐	☐

ALCOHOL SUBSTANCE ABUSE SUBCOMMITTEE:	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Emily Gokey *(ST. J)*	☐	☐	☐
Traci Ploufe *(Prev. T)*	☒	☐	☐

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE:	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Cheryl Blanchard	☒	☐	☐
Jack Mudge *(Mtn. Lake Services)*	☐	☒	☐
Nina Matteau	☒	☐	☐
Sara Evans	☒	☐	☐
Sara Stone *(Care Design NY)*	☐	☐	☐
Tiffany King (Citizens Advocates)	☒	☐	☐

OTHERS PRESENT:

- Terri Morse, Community Services Board Director
- Abbey Cramer, Administrative Assistant
- Rowena Smith- MLS
- Brandon Barton, NC Rep for Healthy Alliance
- Karen Hoffman, LifePlan
- Sarah Gallagher, OPWDD

AGENDA	DISCUSSIONS
Call to Order (1:30-1:35)	Meeting was called to order at 1:30PM.
Meeting Minutes (1:35-1:40)	Approve Minutes – April 9, 2025 (Mental Health Subcommittee)- Moved to next meeting.
Introductions/ Announcements/ Correspondence (1:35-1:40)	All attendees provided a round of introductions.
Subcommittee Provider Reports (1:40-2:30)	**Mountain Lake Services (Essential Non-Contracted Provider) –** • Rowena provided an update on Mountain Lake Services, highlighting several key points. The organization is currently undergoing an executive leadership transition, with Rowena serving as interim executive director while the board searches for a permanent replacement. Mountain Lake Services has been working to address operational deficits through streamlining resources, reducing costs, and diversifying funding sources. They are also piloting an H-1B visa program in hopes to stabilize their workforce. which was approved by the board for a one-year period with the potential to extend for up to 40 employees. Linda raised concerns about the potential risks for H-1B visa holders and the need for protection of their rights. Rowena acknowledged these concerns and emphasized the importance of partnerships with other organizations to share best practices. • Regarding the Critical Time Transitions Program for youth, Mountain Lake Services has established a project team, is finalizing the contract with OMH, and has selected a director to lead the program development. • Rowena discussed the number of people serving in the county and clarified that some services, like the fiscal intermediary program, support people in multiple counties. Mary Bell expressed interest in the total number of people served in the county, not just those receiving multiple services. Laurie provided a rough estimate of over 300 people served but noted that the actual number would be different. Rowena explained the self-directed services program and the role of the fiscal intermediary. John asked about the funding issues for certain services, to which Rowena responded that it was due to a combination of factors including a decrease in census, staffing crisis, and a reduction in rates. **OPWDD (Non-Contracted Provider) –** • Sarah Gallagher from OPWDD provided an update on CS-IDD approvals, stating that there are currently 7 of from Essex County. She also discussed a new waiver service called Home Enabling Supports, set to launch in summer 2025 which was described as a subcomponent to their assistive technology program. This will help support people in living independently. **Citizen Advocates (Non-Contracted Provider) –** • Tiffany King from Citizens Advocates reported on their services in Essex County, expressing interest in expanding their reach in our county.

	• Their self-direction program is currently serving 146 participants as a whole and only 2 of those are from Essex County. • As for their Health Home Care Coordination services, they are currently serving 15 individuals in Essex County. Tiffany explained that this program was recently shifted to their Behavioral Health Division. **LifePlan, CCO (Non-Contracted Provider) –** • Karen Hoffman from Life Plan shared that they are currently supporting 48 people in Essex County and are developing a statewide service directory, though funding challenges have slowed its completion. • They are continuing to work on developing a statewide directory to include all services. Karen shared that it's unfortunate they lost their grant funding from CDC for this, but they remain committed to finishing the project.
Old Business (2:30-2:35)	No report.
Committee Reports (2:35-2:45)	**Operations Committee (Cammy Sheridan, Chair) –** • A language amendment regarding voting through email was discussed. Terri Morse shared her screen to present the written amendment. • The proposed changes were reviewed and the committee decided to table the motion until they could get the language. • The next steps include further review and potential changes to the bylaws. **Nominating Committee (Angie Allen, Chair) –** • Membership NEEDS: Full Board (0 member); ASA Subcommittee (0); Mental Health Subcommittee (0); Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee (0) – No members are needed currently. **Community Education (Mary Bell, Chair) –** • Mary Bell was excited to share that the CEF Library system has implemented a poster with images to help nonverbal people communicate.
Directors Report- (2:45-3:00)	**Court Navigator Position –** • Terri discussed the potential for contracting with the Mental Health Association for the Court Navigator position, which was initially awarded to Essex County Mental Health. The decision was based on the sole viable candidate at the time. Terri proposed contracting with the Mental Health Association due to their existing skill set for the role. The budget for the position was discussed, with John expressing interest in seeing the overall budget. Terri mentioned the annual funding conversation with the Office of Mental Health, and the potential for contracting with an individual or the Mental Health Association if the funding were to go away. **CSB Retreat –** • There has been a change in date for the Community Services Board Retreat this year. Heaven Hill was not available on May 14, so the event was pushed out to October 8. Terri asked members to mark their calendars and because the May 2025 date was switched to October, the

2026 retreat date will be scheduled in October as well.

Local Services Plan 2026 –

- This is due to the State by June 30, 2025. As a reminder, the Local Services Plans are now plans that cover a 5-year period, however, annual updates are required. A segment of the June in-person meeting includes reviewing and updating the 2025 LSP.

Housing –

- Audie Sparre, Mary Bell, Valerie Ainsworth, Jack Mudge, and the DCS met on March 19th to discuss the needs of the CSB populations. The group plans to meet again on June 18th. A list of presenters who have unique housing solutions was created to present at the CSB Retreat – Including North Country Rural Development Coalition (Nicole Justine Greene); Adirondack Roots (Megan Murphy); Step by Step – St. Lawrence County (David Bayne); Hamilton County Tiny Homes (Lynette Greene); and Trisha and Lorilee Sheehan from Willsboro. The Essex County Housing Task Force has determined there is value in establishing a Strategic Plan for the county's housing needs. The plan is to contact a non-county employed housing organization, such as the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board, to assist in this planning process.
- Terri discussed the ongoing rounds of capacity building for providers to hire staff and make building modifications. She suggested training more community members in Mental Health First Aid and Youth Mental Health First Aid. Terri also mentioned the potential impact of Medicaid cuts on all departments, including nonprofits. Linda expressed concerns about the potential slashing of services and the impact on vulnerable populations. John suggested communicating with legislators about the impact of Medicaid funding loss. Angie emphasized the need to understand the multifaceted nature of Medicaid and its potential cuts.
- Angie discussed the impact of Medicaid funding on county budgets and services, urging community members to reach out to her office at DSS for specific questions. She also mentioned the potential for job losses in other counties but reassured that Essex County would focus on attrition and creative staffing rather than layoffs. Angie highlighted the daycare waitlist issue, which is not related to Medicaid but to state funding. Terri suggested sharing definitive information with her and Laurie for further dissemination.
- Terri mentioned a regional meeting for the 1115 waiver participants and an event hosted by the Office of Mental Health for community engagement was discussed.
- Dava Clement reported on a meeting she attended with representatives from the Office of Mental Health and other stakeholders. The discussion focused on treatment and support needs for different populations, with transportation, housing, and resources for adults with co-occurring neurological issues identified as ongoing challenges.

	• Terri announced an upcoming presentation to the Board of Supervisors about the coalition's accomplishments and future initiatives, as well as a "Vivid Life Run" event in Schroon Lake on June 14th to honor men in light of suicide statistics.
Other Business (3:00-3:15)	Motion to go into executive session to discuss budget matters, moved by Charlie Lustig and seconded by Mary Bell.
Adjournment (3:30)	Motion to adjourn moved by John Haverlick and seconded by Linda Beers.

Next Meeting: June 11, 2025 (Alcohol Substance Abuse Subcommittee)
In Person at Mental Health Association in Essex County 6096 NYS Route 9N, Westport