ESSEX COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH
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COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
Laurie Kelley, *Chairperson*
Terri Morse, LMHC, CASAC-Master
Director

Essex County Community Services Board - Meeting Minutes
Alcohol Substance Abuse Subcommittee – June 11, 2025 – 1:30-3:30PM
AT MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION, 9096 NYS Route 22, WESTPORT

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.
- Ashley Spaulding, Baywood Center
- Marissa Gaddor, MHA
- Rowena Smith, MLS

AGENDA	DISCUSSIONS
Call to Order (1:30-1:35)	Meeting called to order by Laurie Kelly at 1:37PM.
Meeting Minutes (1:35-1:40)	April 2025 Minutes – Motion to approve made by Mary Bell and seconded by Charlie Lustig. All in favor. May 2025 Minutes – Motion to approve made by Mary Bell and seconded by Linda Beers. All in favor.
Introductions/ Announcements/ Correspondence (1:35-1:40)	A round of introductions was made.
Subcommittee Provider Reports (1:40-2:30)	**The Prevention Team** • Traci Ploufe provided an overview of their recent activities and data and shared preliminary findings of the Prevention Needs Assessment (PNA) surveys throughout Essex County schools, which 9 out of 10 schools participated in. 998 students in grades 7-12 participated and shared thoughts. Key findings include high energy drink consumption among students (nearly 50%) and declining cigarette and tobacco use. The team is working on suicide prevention in schools, a digital health platform, school-based counseling, and programs for seniors and those in recovery. Tracy emphasized the importance of building partnerships and increasing awareness of their services. The team plans to analyze the survey data further and share findings with schools and community organizations. • The group discussed challenges with implementing a survey in Lake Placid schools due to an active consent policy. Despite obtaining 151 parental consents, the school administration did not allow the survey to proceed. The team explored strategies to address this issue, including engaging with the school board, seeking support from the Board of Supervisors, and starting advocacy efforts earlier in the school year. They plan to strategize in September on how to support the prevention team in rolling out the survey in the future. • Traci will report on the PNA results at the November meeting. **St. Joseph's Treatment and Recovery Center** • Emily Gokey provided recent updates for St. Joseph's. • The team discussed the current ratio of in-person to telehealth services at St. Joseph's, which is around 90% telehealth services. Terri expressed concern about the shift towards telehealth and its potential impact on treatment quality, especially for mandated clients and those in early recovery. Emily assured the team that they are exploring ways to increase in-person sessions, including seeking support from legal entities and treatment courts. There is debate about the clinical benefits of in-person versus telehealth sessions, with some team members advocating for a return to pre-COVID practices. The discussion also touched on the challenges of drug testing and accountability in telehealth settings, with

	concerns raised about losing referrals from courts and other providers due to the current approach. • Angie Allen discussed the current partnership between DSS and St. Josephs regarding referrals. • Emily was happy to share that an Associate Director based out of Essex County will be starting at the end of June. **Baywood Center-** • Ashley Spaulding, Director of Community Outreach, shared updates for the Baywood Center- which is a Community Outreach Program designed to help individuals over the age of 12 who struggle with addiction, providing services and support in their home or community setting. • They have had a total of 41 referrals since January 2025 and are currently serving 37 clients throughout 17 towns. • They have been engaging in community events to put their services out there and make themselves known. • Ashley will be speaking at the NYS Harm Reduction in September. • With grant funds ending in September 2025, Ashley was excited to report that they will be continuing services as self-sustaining with no plans of ending the program. The Board applauded Ashley for her wonderful work and commitment to our communities! **ECHO** • Linda Beers provided an update on The Essex County Opioid Coalition (ECHO), reporting a significant decrease in opioid overdoses, with no reported overdoses since February. The coalition has implemented community care kiosks (vending machines) with Narcan and other supplies, which are being heavily utilized. An Opioid Fatality Review team has been established, with a successful mock review conducted recently. The coalition is also planning to implement a "Handle with Care" program to support children who have experienced trauma, starting with a pilot in one school district. • Linda also expressed St. Joseph's lack of participation in ECHO, when their organization was once so community involved.
Old Business (2:30-2:35)	
Committee Reports (2:35-2:45)	Operations Committee (Cammy Sheridan, Chair) – Language for on-line voting By-Laws amendment. • Motion to approve changes discussed today, moved by Cammy Sheridan and seconded by Leslee Mounger. Nominating Committee (TBD, Chair) – NEEDS: Full Board (0); ASA Subcommittee (0); Mental Health Subcommittee (0); Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee (0). • No current needs.

Directors Report- (2:45-3:00)	**Court Navigator** – Valerie/MHA and Terri Morse have worked through the finances of the sub-contracting arrangement and MHA has agreed to the financial plan and the needs for the program. The CSB will need to approve the plan to allow the Court Navigator Program to shift from ECMH to MHA. • Motion to approve moved by Mary Bell, seconded by John Haverlick. All in favor. **CSB Retreat** – Reminder of the change in date! The CSB Retreat is going to take place at Heaven Hill on October 8, 2025. **Local Services Plan 2026** – due to 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. Goals and updates were discussed. • Terri explained that the state is including all partners providing services to Community Services Board clients in the LSP for better care coordination. The team discussed the first goal related to supportive and therapeutic housing, focusing on the Critical Time Intervention (CTI) program and Transitional Residential Services (TRS) for children with co-occurring disorders. They note that the TRS program, designed to help children stuck in emergency rooms, has not yet launched. • Terri also discussed several goals and objectives related to mental health services in Essex County. The team plans to continue integrating mental wellness programs in schools and explore developing peer support for the geriatric population, aiming to establish a proactive pathway to identify when service providers are fiscally or operationally stressed. The group also discusses supporting referrals to the Essex County Mental Health Court and integrating various county-wide planning guides. They review existing housing committees and consider adjusting objectives related to housing initiatives. • She reported that OASAS shared and believes that Mobile Methadone Units are not feasible due to challenges. The team is making progress on their goals and objectives, including obtaining smartphones. They discuss closing and selling a housing property in Lake Placid due to staffing difficulties and geographical challenges. Terri proposed reinvesting the proceeds to expand bed capacity within their current geography. Motion to approve the sale, with a reminder that the property must be sold at market value and cannot be converted for other uses. **Housing** – Audie Sparre, Mary Bell, Valerie Ainsworth, Jack Mudge, and DCS met on March 19 to discuss the needs of the CSB populations. The group will meet again on June 18. • Update on Fireman's Field in Ticonderoga (60-unit ESSHI housing unit): On 5/30/2025, Valerie Ainsworth and Larry and Gabe Regan from Regan Developers provided an update on the exit conference they had with HRC

	(Housing and Community Renewal). Some of the reasons for why we didn't get awarded is that: HRC determined that the "rents are too low" in Essex County (rents and family incomes are much different than Westchester County, for example); there was no working model for operating funds after 15 years; Regan Developers created a self-funded developer reserve and HCR doesn't allow this. Recommendations: re-assess the rents in Essex County, as they have gone up dramatically in the past year; resubmit an ESSHI grant application, given NYS has increased the per unit allowance from $25,000 to $32,000 – Valerie working on with Regan; resubmit another grant application to HCR in the near future because the median income in Essex County increased by 10% to $90,000; and lastly seek $500,000 funding from another entity. Good news: Empire State Development wants to fund this deal because there is more need for this form of housing in this part of NYS.
Other Business (3:00-3:15)	Adirondack Homeward Bound will be presenting updates in February and September.
Adjournment (3:30)	The meeting concludes with an executive session to discuss concerns about OASAS services in Essex County.

Next Meeting: July 9, 2025 (Mental Health Subcommittee)
Reminder: No meeting in August