

**HEALTH, SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN ROOM #318
PUTNAM COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
CARMEL, NEW YORK 10512**

Chairwoman Sayegh, Legislators Crowley & Nacerino

Wednesday

September 20, 2023

(Immediately Following the Protective Meeting at 6:00PM)

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 P.M. by Chairwoman Sayegh who requested that Legislator Crowley lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call Legislators Crowley, Nacerino and Chairwoman Sayegh were present.

Item #3 - Acceptance of Minutes – August 8, 2023

The minutes were accepted as submitted.

Item #4 - Approval/Grant Application/Department of Social Services & Department of Health/Expanding Harm Reduction Services

Supervising Public Health Nurse Shanna Siegel stated this is a very competitive grant. She stated the idea is to fund harm reduction, with a focus on opioid use. She stated the goal is to prevent both fatal and non-fatal overdoses in priority populations. She stated the populations with the greatest needs in Putnam County are adults over 50 and pregnant or parenting people. She stated they will expand the services already available. She added that this is all data based and detailed the organizations involved in compiling the data. She stated that they would like to create a Fatality Review Board, specific to substance involved fatalities, which is an established practice in surrounding counties. She noted that a consultant would be used to get this up and running. She stated if there was funding left over, other determinants of health would be looked at such as transportation needs and food insecurity.

Chairwoman Sayegh thanked Ms. Siegel for the overview.

Ms. Siegel stated it can also be used to identify gaps in services or services that are not being used to their full capacity.

Chairwoman Sayegh requested clarification on the grant applications.

Ms. Siegel stated each applicant can submit up to four (4) grant applications, so they submitted these two (2).

Social Services Commissioner Michael Piazza stated a significant portion of the Child Protective Services (CPS) reports they receive are as a result of the substance abuse of the parents.

Legislator Nacerino stated this is a wonderful opportunity.

Ms. Siegel noted that veterans are identified as a priority population on this grant, but the county chose to encompass the older population to provide more flexibility.

Chairwoman Sayegh noted Putnam County has one of the largest senior citizen populations in New York State.

Legislator Ellner requested clarification on the number of grant awards and the grant amount. He questioned if he was reading correctly that the grant amount could be between \$200,000 and \$900,000 per category.

Ms. Siegel stated that is correct. She stated there will be a total of 24 grant awards and the State is estimating one (1) to three (3) per category.

Legislator Ellner questioned if the application for each category differs significantly.

Ms. Siegel stated the applications are the exact same.

Legislator Ellner suggested including veterans with the application for the older population.

Ms. Siegel stated the justification would vary based the data and could be harder to evidence the need in the application. She stated this is why the local data collection is so important.

Legislator Nacerino questioned how the county fares in comparison to more urban areas which have a higher number of cases to use as evidence of need.

Ms. Siegel stated Putnam's reputation as a healthy and affluent county does work against these types of grant applications and that is why the needs must be backed up by data.

Legislator Addonizio questioned if populations and percentages will be taken into account.

Ms. Siegel stated not necessarily, but it is demonstrated in the application. She explained how New York State sets goals for statistics.

Legislator Addonizio commended the focus on older adults as she believes there has been a recent spike in substance abuse in this demographic.

Legislator Jonke questioned when there is an overdose death in the county, do the coroners report that to the Health Department.

Ms. Siegel stated they do, and work very closely together.

Legislator Jonke stated the Legislature used to receive quarterly reports from the Coroner and he would like to see that start again. He questioned how many overdose deaths there were in 2022 and have been in 2023.

Commissioner Piazza stated he believes there were 22 in 2022. He stated up until August 1, 2023 there were two (2) but there were some pending investigation, with the potential for up to nine (9). He noted that they do not receive specifics such as age and gender. He noted that many of the overdoses were mixed drugs, but it would be good to know exactly what drugs were involved in each to help target prevention.

Legislator Jonke questioned if the names are not released, there should be no privacy issue.

Ms. Siegel stated certain information needs to be suppressed if the numbers are very low, because it could be identifiable.

Social Services Deputy Commissioner Sara Servadio stated there were 14 overdoses in 2021, 20 in 2022, and seven (7) so far in 2023. She stated this does not include suicides of people who had substances in their systems.

Ms. Siegel stated they are working with the coroners on a way to internally discuss the suicides, so they are not excluded from the data.

Commissioner Piazza noted that every death of someone under the age of 21 is reviewed by the Child Advocacy Center's Fatality Review Board. He stated as far as the suicides, they are looking to get more demographic information so that they can investigate more and figure out what made them lose hope.

Chairwoman Sayegh noted she believes men over 50 are the highest suicide rate in Putnam County.

Legislator Montgomery requested clarification on if this grant will allow for both data collection and providing services.

Ms. Siegel stated they are already collecting the data but there are improvements that can be made.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if she will now be able to get more localized coroner data for her district. She stated it has been confidential in the past.

Ms. Siegel stated it is still not available by municipality. She added that the numbers are too small to utilize.

Legislator Montgomery questioned how deaths are being reported when there are underlying health issues as well as an overdose.

Deputy Commissioner Servadio stated they are definitely looking into that.

Ms. Siegel stated that is a universal challenge statewide.

Legislator Montgomery stated another aspect that can be looked at with this grant is the lack of transportation services in the county.

Deputy Commissioner Servadio noted approximately 95% of the CPS caseload are parents experiencing addiction.

Legislator Montgomery facilitated further discussion.

Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to Approve the Grant Application/Department of Social Services & Department of Health/Expanding Harm Reduction Services; Seconded by Legislator Crowley. All in favor.

Item #5 - FYI/Fund Transfer 23T270/Department of Social Services/Paint Project Staff Offices – Duly Noted

Item #6 - Other Business – None

Item #7 – Adjournment

There being no further business, at 7:09 P.M., Chairwoman Sayegh made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Nacerino. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Ed Gordon.