

COUNTY INSTITUTIONS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, August 12, 2020

PRESENT: M. Holliday, N. Petrillo, R. Wesley, M. Madison, J. Minner, H. Mueller-Jones, L. Dalton

ABSENT: K. Novacich-Koberna

OTHERS: A. Schoeberle, C. Cohan, B. Cooper, R. Werden, T. Blackard, B. Lavite

Mr. Madison moved, seconded by Mr. Petrillo to approve the minutes from the July meeting.
MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

The following public comment was received and read aloud:

To the Institutions Committee: I am retired from full-time work and very interested in the Stepping-Up Initiative that I have been told has been discussed by the Committee. I was referred to you by Deborah Humphrey, of the County Mental Health Board, and by Ms. Kris Gamm-Smith, of the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Southwestern Illinois. I am writing this to offer my assistance with your pursuit of the Stepping-Up Initiative for Madison County. I have worked on multiple projects with both Ms. Humphrey and Ms. Kris Gamm-Smith. I also worked for 12 years in Madison County, for the Probation Department, State's Attorney's Office, and Madison County clearly has an excellent opportunity to reduce the number of people with mental illness who cycle in and out of the Jail, and by doing so can reduce county expenses without compromising public safety. As you know, the Stepping-Up Initiative is supported by the National Association of Counties, and the Council of State Governments, and the American Psychiatric Association. There are jurisdictions who have succeeded at this task, and we can certainly learn from them. The resolution that the County is considering would commit it to working on improving the 4 Stepping Up outcomes: 1) Reduce the number of people who have mental illnesses who are booked into jail. 2) Decrease the average length of stay of people with mental illness in jail. 3) Increase the percentage of people who have mental illnesses who are connected to treatment and services after involvement with the criminal justice system. 4) Reduce the recidivism rates for people with mental illness released from the jail. I understand the importance of cost-savings, and the concern you may have to minimize new expenditures. As a grant writer, I have brought in a good deal of money for Madison County in the areas of supportive housing, services to probationers, and Drug and Veterans Courts. I would be interested in exploring the most practical steps the County could take to address these outcomes. I will be phoning into the Institutions Committee meeting on August 12, 2020. Thank you, John Harvey.

EDUCATION:

R. Werden introduced Dr. Tricia Blackard as the new Assistant Superintendent for the Regional Office of Education. He gave a brief update on how school districts are currently operating and said the western part of the county is 100% remote learning, middle portion is blended and the eastern portion is learning in person. Mr. Werden said they are working closely with the County Health Department and is awaiting guidance from the State Health Department. He noted there is lots of plexiglass and hand sanitizers in place along with other protocols. Mr. Werden asked for continued flexibility and positivity. He also noted that school districts have local control which will allow them to adapt and change their learning plans. Mr. Werden gave the committee their monthly acronym list – Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA), Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC).

COUNTY MUSEUM:

No report.

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER:

C. Cohan reported the interview numbers through the month of July were down from June. She also reported they have received several new grants and that they received a free upgrade to their iRecord software. Ms. Cohan also said they continue to work on a new web based platform and hopes to be online by the end of the year. The annual golf tournament, September 17th, is still scheduled pending Covid restrictions.

MENTAL HEALTH:

No report.

VETERANS ASSISTANCE:

B. Lavite gave out thanks to multiple people regarding the remodel/expansion of the VAC's Office and explained how the new renovated space will help with Veterans and their appointments. He also reported they have gone to a rotating shift due to Covid but are still seeing clients by appointment remotely and in-person. The VAC is using a new system called VetPro which allows for electronic signatures and filing. He mentioned they have a new Service Officer, Torie Ryan. Mr. Lavite spoke at length about a PREVENTS (President's Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End a National Tragedy of Suicide) presentation that was held August 6th at the Edwardsville American Legion; he listed several elected officials that attended the event, highlighted the Presidents Roadmap for ending suicide among Veterans and all Americans and asked for feedback of the presentation. Further discussion was held regarding Madison County's participation in PREVENTS and the impact of suicide. Mr. Lavite also mentioned they were awarded the 48 Hour Review Award from the General Assembly. Another PREVENTS presentation will take place remotely alongside the VA in St. Louis in September.

Mr. Madison moved, seconded by Mr. Wesley to approve the bills for the month. The ayes and nays being called on the motion to approve resulted in a vote as follows: AYES: N. Petrillo, R. Wesley, M. Madison, J. Minner, H. Mueller-Jones, L. Dalton NAYS: None. **MOTION CARRIED.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Further discussion was held regarding the Stepping-Up Initiative. It was suggested that a subcommittee be formed to look at the Initiative more closely that can report back to the committee which will then go to the full board. It was noted that the subcommittee could work alongside of the Mental Health Board, NAMI and Mr. Harvey before going to the full Board for approval. Mr. Holliday read parts of a letter submitted by Mr. John Harvey who is volunteering as a grant writer.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

Mr. Minner moved, seconded by Mr. Madison to adjourn the meeting. **MOTION CARRIED.**

***Please refer to the audio for report details.**

/mds