

Minutes for 2nd meeting of Behavioral Health and Treatment and Recovery Committees

Jan 10, 2022

10:00 a.m. at Govt. Building

PRESENT: Y.C. D.A. Kathy Slattery, Y.C. Manager Greg Zinser, Kennebunk Police Chief Robert MacKenzie, Y.C. Fire Chief's Association Member Matt Leach, Y.C. Clinician Jen Ouellette, Commissioner Richard Clark, Y.C. Deputy County Manager/H.R. Director Linda Corliss and YCCAC Exec. Director Barbara Crider and Facilities Manager, Rick DeRochemont.

Diane Gerry (Exec. Director Sanford Housing Authority), Y.C. Sheriff William King and CC Liaison Adam Hartwig were absent.

1. **WELCOME**

County Manager Zinser welcomed the committee members and recapped the first meeting as a far reaching conversation going in a lot of different directions. A summarized document prepared by County Manager Zinser and Clinician Jennifer Ouellette was e-mailed to all.

2. **REVIEW AND DISCUSS YORK COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE PAPER**

County Manager Zinser asked York County Community Action Corp. Executive Director to comment as she was not at the prior meeting as it was discussed at the end of the meeting who else should be on the committee and Barbara was one of the names. The County Manager will work on getting a couple of people in recovery to be included on the committee.

Barbara Crider commended members of the committee on all of the work that they have already done. She added that there is a dire, critical need for these services in the county. Her reaction to the document was that it is a really good summary that informed her. It could have used more data on the assumptions presented. Ms. Crider suggested siting data sources to make sure assumptions are valid and have credibility. She referenced page 2, second paragraph of the document that addresses inadequate transportation, child care and affordable housing issues that could squelch the success of someone who has graduated from treatment and needs to continue. Flushing that out makes sense, commented Barbara Crider. Way down the line I would want to see a business plan with size, staffing needs, operational budget and sustainability as something like this is hard to sustain and is expensive, stated Ms. Crider. Any service that requires 24/7 coverage is really expensive.

She added that the document would benefit by anticipating challenges of barriers and contain a thoughtful response.

County Manager Zinser replied that the committee did recognize that this will become more detailed as we move on.

Item #1- detox -County Manager Zinser asked the committee how do they want to start moving this forward?

Jennifer Ouellette stated that a fair amount of work is already done. We can have a further discussion about continuum and we can offer beyond that, i.e. intensive outpatient, substance abuse outpatient, extended care (270 day stay). Some (of these programs) will be driven by rates and reimbursement amounts.

Jennifer Ouellette continued that she thought (offering) detox is a good place to start in light of no detox beds being in York County, currently. She added that it will be challenging as there is a shortage of nurses in the area and we will need to be competitive in our rates. 1 nurse to 8 people receives a \$150 more a day reimbursement but the beds need to be turned over. She continued that she does not anticipate that licensing is going to be a problem. If we wish to make an impact financially early on, we could look at expansion at Layman Way. MaineCare has a limit of 16. We could run two separate programs with MaineCare accepted on one side. The MaineCare program is limited to 180 day stay by license. One could transfer over to extended care (270) 16 beds with \$175 a day reimbursement, explained Jennifer Ouellette.

County Manager Zinser stated that it seems like a waste if we can't share resources.

D.A. Kathy Slattery asked how much can we fit into the current building?

County Manager Zinser responded that we will still have the overall licensing issue. We are licensed for 24. He added that the issue that we are getting into is the building itself. It is a modular built in 2001. York County Clinician Jen Ouellette added we would have to do some remodeling in it.

The County Manager commented that there is expansion capability. The new Layman Way will look like a dormitory with single rooms with common areas for eating and offices.

That's why we ultimately decided to not use MaineCare when we opened Layman Way but now we are at a point where we need them, explained County Manager Zinser.

Jennifer Ouellette added that it is the uniqueness of Layman Way in that there are a number of things we were able to do because we didn't use Maine Care.

Jen stated that there could possibly be an addition of eight more beds, added to the current 24 beds offered, bringing total bed space to thirty two. To be in line with regulations, we could have sixteen beds on one side and sixteen beds on another, offering two distinctive programs with separate staffing.

County Manager Zinser suggested the Committee maybe look at expansion of Layman Way.

YCCAC Exec. Director Barbara Crider asked if the committee had talked about a mix (of funding)?

She stated that she doesn't know about any program that is sustainable with just Maine Care.

Clinician Jen Ouellette stated that each insurance provider charges an upfront cost to enroll in accepting various insurances. Once you do that, they have their systems that we will need to enter people into.

County Manager Zinser suggested maybe get gap funding. York County currently spends \$2million per year on behavioral health services between Layman Way and at the jail. Perhaps we could retool some of this money. We currently spend \$780,000 a year for Layman Way. Do we bring in a mix of Maine Care or re-tool Layman Way? Can some Layman Way money be diverted to the detox program, asked County Manager Zinser?

0 barrier is part of the success of Layman Way, stated Jen Ouellette. That's what I get worried about when we use MaineCare.

Jen Ouellette voiced her concern of the number of people we think we are going to serve and the kind of support time we will need. She suggested two to three employees will be needed with benefits and salary to do the administrative work when accepting various insurances for such a large continuum we are proposing.

Discussion of perhaps having Sanford Housing Authority do some of the billings in conjunction with the housing side.

Jen Ouellette explained Sanford Housing does not bill for anything like that but that she and Diane Gerry (executive director of Sanford Housing Authority) have talked about hiring a Manager as a 1st point of contact when the supportive housing is built to assist individuals in a continuation of recovery efforts and ensuring they have what they need to be successful. We could bill for that. You can bill targeted based management. This is low administrative overhead at \$85 an hour, explained Jennifer Ouellette.

Commissioner Clark stated that he has some concerns. We have a little over \$40 million in ARPA money. The sense of the Commissioners is we want to spend it on one- time projects. We told outside agencies we never want to see you again. I support Layman Way. Everyone talks about opioid treatment. Commissioner Clark said that the existing building concerns him. Things are deteriorating assets and old buildings are temporary. We are spending money for air handlers for this building.; does that make sense, questioned Commissioner Clark. He added that he sees additional costs to that building and in his own limited conception, he wants to see better facilities. He explained that he is not concerned about demand as he suspects there will be substance abuse forever. His concern, however, is if the facility is twice as large, we will need twice as much for operations. I'm not sure the Commissioners or budget board will have the stomach for that, commented Commissioner Clark. There was a wide ranging discussion at our last meeting. I'm interested in what it will take to do this. I agree with the County Manager that State money comes with strings attached. He stated that he doesn't want to build a large building and be unable to staff it.

County Manager Zinser replied that he knows MaineCare has to come in on this. Maybe we need to start talking to people smarter than us to help us with understanding the regulations and design of the building.

Facilities Manager Rick DeRochemont asked what about finding organizations that need space and contract with them? We build the building and we lease it.

County Manager Zinser replied then we start to lose focus of what we are trying to accomplish as well as losing some of the control.

Deputy Manager Linda Corliss clarified that we build the new building and then lease space to other offices that are connected to them in some way.

County Manager Greg Zinser agreed that some consideration to outside organizations should occur.

Chief Mackenzie asked if once we have a plan, is it solely the County Commissioners that give it the final blessing?

Commissioner Clark replied, yes.

Kennebunk Police Chief Mackenzie stated that we are getting in a little bit over our heads. We need to pull people in.

Barbara Crider commented that the committee is inching close to a model that makes some sense. She added that one place to find funding is MaineCare and then the County (ongoing contribution that the Coms. will make), foundation grants.

County Manager Zinser stated that he thinks we can move forward and start putting some budgets together. I've had some conversations with the Governor's office and they are very excited about this program and they may allocate some money. Let's take where we are and start throwing some budgets together.

Before we brought Jen on, we decided to take a look at all the programming we were doing. The Commissioners were told we didn't have the knowledge so Jen was hired.

I'm confident that we will find some duplication. Everything throughout the years have been built on contracts, stated the County Manager.

York County Clinician Jennifer Ouellette replied that we need to identify the services and programs we want to provide, as well as project how many people we will serve to get at the costs and potential reimbursement. She will do some analysis. She commented that she agrees that we can't do it all. But, whatever we decide to do, we need to be the owners of it and be in control of it. You don't want to get other organizations involved who aren't going to 100% serve the people you are working with.

Greg-whatever we do needs to make a lasting impact.

York County Fire Chief's Association Member Matt Leach stated that we need a wrap around service (housing, childcare, transportation) put in place with no gaps in service.

County Manager Greg Zinser informed the Committee that the County we will be looking at the joint proposal with SMRPC and YCCA for transportation. He continued that we are probably going to end up buying vehicles. We put part of the ARPA funding aside, (one time funding) but there will be costs. It will be put in the budget to keep things going. In our ARPA funding, we have designated \$1.5 million for behavioral health (broadly defined). There are some other funds, also, stated the County Manager.

Barbara Crider asked if there is a needs assessment and scan of what is out there? If you decide to build a business plan passed on per unit there are occupancy targets that will have to happen. Who else is doing this, she asked.

Jen Ouellette answered the simple answer is nobody.

In York County, there are no licensed detox services or beds available. They have to be in the hospital for another reason to receive detox, she explained.

Jen stated that it was thrilling for her to be a part of Layman Way as it is something that is going to make a difference and does, but, does not solve everything. Sanford and Biddeford have the most people coming into the program. Currently, we are sending them back with no job, no aftercare. We had aftercare but people couldn't get back, they had jobs to start and kids. Realistically, we have to have a crisis entry point, someone to manage them for withdrawal, long term rehabilitation, after care, peer support- a continuum from start to finish. Relapse is a part of the disease. If you have a safety net, you will probably be intervened, explained Jen Ouellette.

County Manager Zinser stated that the County is funding a teen center in Biddeford. Fair Tide (southern end of the county) that will give us some housing. Biddeford housing has informed us that there are places they can give us. We need to have these services out there, not just in Alfred.

County Manager Zinser asked Chief MacKenzie and Officer Leach to give an example when they have a person who has overdosed what would help you folks on the ground?

Chief Mackenzie responded that a health liaison is huge. From there, we need access to services right then and there.

Matt Leach stated that Biddeford does have a behavioral health liaison. If someone is ready, you have to strike when the iron is hot. Wrap around services are needed. Housing stuff is unique and a huge component as well as a job opportunity and job building also. Matt suggested in regards to building space, we might want to also look at the benefits of some of these people who are already doing these things.

York County Clinician Jen Ouellette explained that the expectation of supplying housing is that they will be in job training.

3. **NEXT STEPS**

County Manager Zinser stated that by putting some dollars and cents to this, it will get us to reality pretty quick.

Barbara Crider added that data heavy “needs” assessment grounds us and creates a concept. We would be more than happy to use our staff to flush out more around substance abuse and evidence needs programs.

County Manager Zinser commented that it is his hope to give them transitional housing for perhaps 3 to 4 years to get them on their feet before they are let out of the program. On the housing front, we are working with Sanford Housing so something will move forward.

4. **NEXT MEETING DATE**

February 14, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

5. **ADJOURN**

Meeting adjourned.