



**Tompkins County**  
**COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD**

**Tompkins County Whole Health**  
**201 East Green Street**  
**Ithaca, New York 14850-5635**

**Ellice Switzer, Chair**

**Jan Lynch, Vice Chair**

**Frank Kruppa; Commissioner**

**Harmony Ayers-Friedlander,**  
**Deputy Commissioner/Director of Community Services**

**Larry Roberts, Chair,**  
**Mental Health Subcommittee**

**James Beaumont and Jeff Boles, Co-Chairs**  
**Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee**

**Marley Brooks and Jacob Parker Carver , Co-Chairs,**  
**Substance Use Subcommittee**

**Tompkins County Community Mental Health Services Board**  
**201 East Green Street, Ithaca NY 14850**  
**Monday, October 2, 2023, 5:30 p.m. Meeting Minutes**

**Minutes Approved**  
**12.4.2023**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkpJNVbpLLbEbhoDbTIEgSQ>

**Present:** Ellice Switzer; Mary Hutchens; Sheila McEnery; Stu Bergman; Dr. Auguste Duplan; Sally McConnell-Ginet; Jessica Conner, PsyD; Jan Lynch; and Larry Roberts (Zoom)

**Excused:** Travis Winter

**Legislature:** Randy Brown

**Guests:** Anna Tamis; Howard Reid; Khaki Wunderlich

**Staff:** Frank Kruppa, Commissioner; Harmony Ayers-Friedlander, DCS; and Karan Palazzo, LGU Administrative Assistant

\*\*\*\*\*  
The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Ms. Switzer. Introductions were made. The "Peer Outreach Center Update" from the Mental Health Association was deleted from the agenda. Ms. Lynch motioned to approve the September 2023 minutes; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dr. Conner; it was unanimous; all were in favor.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Privilege of the Floor & Announcements:** Dr. Conner requested suggestions to fund free swim classes at the YMCA for children with developmental disabilities. Suggestions included reaching out to RACKER to utilize their facilities and explore potential funding sources, and also reaching out to Ithaca City Public Schools, TST BOCES, Ithaca College, and SUNY Cortland.

Ms. Switzer announced that she unfortunately be resigning from the CSB at the end of December due to professional/personal obligations. Many offered compliments for her leadership and service.

**Commissioner's Report:** Mr. Kruppa reported that the County Administrator is presenting the budget next week and the public is welcome to provide input. The following week the legislature will begin their voting session for adding and removing from the county administrative budget.

OTR continued:

1. CARES Team funding
2. The third and last year of support of the ADC facility on Triphammer Road
3. Nursing support (\$87,860) for REACH Medical for one more year
4. Vehicle replacement

Funding for the expanding community outreach worker program was not included or brought forward in the county's budget. He encouraged speaking to your local district legislatures, which will take someone amending before it would be considered by the legislature.

The Mental Health Clinic hired social workers due to a focus on loan forgiveness; a new program from the governor that does not require a written exam for licensed clinical therapists; and adjusting the social worker job description to allow newly graduated students employment working under a limited permit license regulated by the NYS Department of Education.

**Deputy Commissioner's Report:** Ms. Ayers-Friedlander reported that a successful "Suicide Prevention Coalition Townhall" was held on September 28, 2023, at GIAC. Tompkins County Whole Health, Cayuga Medical Center, Alcohol and Drug Council, CARS and Guthrie Health Care representatives were panelists and discussed Zero Suicide initiatives where health care providers regularly meet to implement the Zero Suicide Model in Tompkins County. Another panel discussion was on suicide as a public health problem. The event was sponsored by the Sophie Fund and the Suicide Prevention Coalition (SPC).

The Suicide Prevention Coalition's (SPC) strategic plan can be found on TCWH's website with descriptions of the various workgroups. The Zero Suicide Society provides a packet for the public with information on identifying red flags for suicide and how to assess risk using a Columbia suicide severity rating scale.

Ross Milne, experienced in data analysis and project management was recently hired to help organize the funding initiative of the Opioid dollars for mental health and substance use services, including emergency housing and wraparound support for individuals who are very high risk in the community. He will also work on domestic activities by developing a comprehensive protocol with a focus on supporting education and responding to students with high needs.

A Parade of Quilts event is scheduled for tomorrow where 50 community members have created quilts that will be used at the ADC Triphammer Road facility.

Ms. Ayers-Friedlander shared new informative brochures on Narcan, Xylazine, and Fentanyl strips. TCWH provided training to TCWH staff; is partnering with ADC; and making it available to the community.

Temporarily suspended OPWDD programs are happening due to a lack of staffing and a decrease in the number of beds by 50. Ms. Switzer expressed her concern for the loss of 50 beds and feels that the county must take action to provide affordable housing for staff to be able to afford housing in Tompkins County. Many businesses have created affordable housing in order to assist staff. There was a lengthy discussion about the closings/temporary suspensions. Ms. Lynch encouraged the group to watch a documentary on Willow Brook called "Lessons Learned."

Dr. Connor expressed her concern about the lack of human touch in case management and suggested inviting care coordination organizations to dialogue.

7:01 p.m. Mr. Bergman moved to go into executive session to discuss applicants; seconded by Ms. Lynch.

7:10 p.m. Mr. Bergman moved to go out of executive session; seconded by Ms. Hutchens. The CSB recommended Benjamin Komor and Susan Tabrizi to the Mental Health Subcommittee; Khaki Wunderlich to the CSB and Developmental Disabilities Subcommittee; and Noah Valdez and Susan Pedersen to the Substance Use Subcommittee.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.



**The Next Community Mental Health Services Board Meeting is  
Monday, November 6, 2023, at 5:30 pm.**