

**STEBEN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES, HEALTH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

*Wednesday, April 1, 2020*

*9:00 a.m.*

*Via Teleconference*

**\*\*MINUTES\*\***

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	Carol A. Ferratella, Chair Steven P. Maio	Hilda T. Lando, Vice Chair Paul E. Van Caesele	K. Michael Hanna
<b>STAFF:</b>	Jack K. Wheeler Jennifer Prossick Tammy Hurd-Harvey Kathryn Muller	Christopher Brewer Hank Chapman Eric Rose	Brenda Mori Patty Baroody Darlene Smith
<b>LEGISLATORS:</b>	Scott J. Van Etten John V. Malter Gary B. Roush Robin Lattimer	Kelly H. Fitzpatrick Robert V. Nichols Thomas J. Ryan Aaron I. Mullen	Jeffrey P. Horton Frederick G. Potter Gary D. Swackhamer
<b>OTHERS:</b>	James Johnson Executive Director, Steuben County Industrial Development Agency Mary Perham		

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mrs. Ferratella called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**II. DEPARTMENT REQUESTS**

A. Office of Community Services

1. **Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Contract** – Dr. Chapman stated he would like to table this until a later time.

2. **Canisteo Valley Lease Agreement** – Dr. Chapman stated as many of you know, we have been leasing office space and providing mental health services from Dr. MacKellar’s Canisteo Valley Family Practice, for the past three years. Recently Dr. MacKellar’s practice was purchased by WNY Medical Practice. Therefore, I’m asking your permission to enter into a lease agreement with WNY Medical Practice that is being transferred from Dr. MacKellar. Mrs. Ferratella asked any other questions? Mrs. Lando stated I have a question; nothing has changed? Dr. Chapman replied nothing has changed; it is \$1,000 per month, internet and phone service included, front office support, shared waiting area and furniture. That all remains the same. Mrs. Ferratella stated all right. Do we have a motion?

**MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES TO ENTER INTO A LEASE AGREEMENT WITH THE NEW OWNERS OF THE CANISTEO VALLEY FAMILY PRACTICE, WNY MEDICAL PRACTICE UNDER THE SAME TERMS AND CONDITIONS AS THE LEASE UNDER CANISTEO VALLEY FAMILY PRACTICE MADE BY MR. HANNA. SECONDED BY MR. MAIO. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.**

Mrs. Ferratella asked, Dr. Chapman are you going to address the psychiatric nurse practitioner contracts? Dr. Chapman replied no I am going to table that to a later date. Mrs. Ferratella stated okay, do you think that would be our next meeting? Dr. Chapman replied most likely next meeting, yes. Mrs. Ferratella stated all right, thank you.

B. Public Health

1. **Accept Covid-19 Response Grant** – Mrs. Smith requested authorization to accept and appropriate the Covid-19 Response Grant from the NYS Department of Health; they are administering the funds. The amount of the grant is \$112,025. This will cover things like overtime, supplies, mileage; things like that.

**MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH TO ACCEPT A COVID-19 RESPONSE GRANT FROM THE NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN THE AMOUNT OF \$112,025 MADE BY MRS. LANDO. SECONDED BY MR. MAIO FOR DISCUSSION.**

Mrs. Lando stated so now I have a question. Will this even touch what we have spent so far? Mrs. Smith replied yes. This is a big shot in the arm for us. The last two weeks we have certainly had a significant amount of overtime from the nurses and anticipate more in the coming weeks because of the numbers increasing exponentially. Mrs. Lando asked so Darlene, what are those volunteers doing? Mrs. Smith replied well they are, Civil Defense is their home base right now (*Secretary's Note: Audio cut out*) they are helping in a variety of ways. They are helping to answer the million phone calls coming in every day from the community; questions, concerns. They are helping with that. They are helping with going to the homes of those who are positive and are under mandatory isolation. Those individuals need a daily, in-home check to make sure they are still in isolation and managing their symptoms. There is office and clerical work out at the Civil Defense and even starting with today, I have a couple of retired nurses coming back to help with some of our regular public health work that we really haven't gotten to, much, you know like Lead, Rabies, STD's, things like that.

Mrs. Ferratella stated all right, thank you. Any other questions?

**VOTE ON PREVIOUS MOTION: ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0. Resolution Required.**

2. **Contract** – Mrs. Smith stated the last item for me is authorization to enter into a contract with the Hornell City School District to provide preschool evaluations and related services. Same price point as always; \$70.00 per session and \$35.00 per group session. Mrs. Ferratella asked are there any questions?

**MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE HORNELL CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR PRESCHOOL EVALUATIONS AND RELATED SERVICES AT A RATE OF \$70.00 PER SESSION AND \$35.00 PER GROUP SESSION FOR RELATED SERVICES AND THE STATE RATE FOR EVALUATIONS MADE BY MR. HANNA. SECONDED BY MR. MAIO. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.**

3. **Preschool Transportation Bids** – Mrs. Smith stated the last item for me is this is the time of the year when I always come to ask for approval to request bids for our preschool transportation services.

**MOTION: AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PURCHASING DIRECTOR, TO SOLICIT BIDS FOR PRESCHOOL TRANSPORTATION MADE BY MR. HANNA. SECONDED BY MR. VAN CAESELE. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.**

Mrs. Lando stated so I have a question; are we going to get an update from Jack or from you, Darlene, about what is going on? Mrs. Smith replied I can give you a little update this morning. Now these numbers that I'm going to give you are effective last night. Each morning when we come in, we start adding up new numbers from overnight, so I don't have the overnight numbers for you. As of last night when we all went home, we have 36 confirmed, positive Covid cases. We have a total of 152 individuals in both isolation and quarantine. Throughout the County approximately 283 tests for Covid have been performed and approximately 214 of those have come back negative so there are still some outstanding pending. We currently have 11 that are hospitalized. We do expect all of the numbers to increase today and in the coming days. It's at a pretty fast pace right now with the numbers that are coming in.

Mrs. Ferratella asked are there any other questions?

Mr. Van Caesele stated I have a quick question. How much of a problem do you think it is with people who are suspicious that they have it and then how much room are they going to take up when they go to the emergency room for testing; is that causing a big backflow in the hospitals? Mrs. Smith stated I don't think it is causing a backflow. I think a number of those, quite simply, are getting turned away. They may think they have it, but if the medical provider or the hospital feels that they really don't meet the criteria, they are trying to protect the number of testing kits they have available and they are often not testing them. They are just sending them on their way. So I don't think it is really causing a capacity issue in terms of the number of people at the ER, it's more the number that are being turned away.

Mr. Wheeler stated (*Secretary's Note: Audio cut out*)...it is more of an issue with people coming into the ER...more likely to be positive. Before we were seeing about a 25 percent positive tested rate and that number we are seeing is going up because the providers are getting tight with how they are testing. So we have asked the hospitals about capacity and issues they are experiencing and for the past week, week and a half they haven't mentioned it to me. Mr. Van Caesele stated okay, thank you.

Mr. Maio asked, Darlene how are we set in the County for test kits, masks, etc.? Are we having any issues there yet? Mrs. Smith stated the hospitals have a supply...(*Secretary's Note: Audio cut out*) We, I mean in conjunction with Tim at OEM (Office of Emergency Management) placed a testing kit supply order about two and a half weeks ago now and we still do not have all of the components of that that we would need to perform testing. It's a problem for everybody. With PPE, we still have PPE and we are distributing it based on need and acuity and you know hospitals first and then down the line chain of health care providers and health care institutions. We did have a conversation yesterday with the hospitals on our morning call, that they really need to preserve and ration their PPE, specifically gowns. Sometimes you can't and at this point they you just can't change a gown every time they walk in a room and come back out.

Mr. Wheeler stated so we have a daily call with the State Office of Emergency Services and they are the organization that Tim and Ken and Matthew work with for supplying. We received a shipment, pretty significant shipment, of about 1,000 N95 masks, 1,000 surgical masks, gowns and gloves last week. We are expecting a small shipment again today. But like Darlene said, and you see it downstate; the CDC does have guidelines for the rationing and provisioning of the N95's and gowns. We know their burn rates, so every day they tell us how many they have gone through and it is getting concerning. They are taking the measures and all of the hospitals are already instituting the measures to preserve. Specifically in the Hornell area because you currently have 5 positive individuals that we know of as of last night, that are hospitalized with Covid. That's where we are seeing the highest burn rate right now.

Mrs. Ferratella asked are we seeing mostly the elderly or is there a mixture of ages? Mrs. Smith replied there is a mixture. We even have a fairly young individual who is positive and is hospitalized, so it is a mixture at this point in time.

Mr. Hanna asked how do they determine if a person needs to go to the hospital versus just going home and being in quarantine? Mrs. Smith replied you know certainly it is a medical condition. We have had it both ways where the individual went to the hospital to get tested and their symptoms, condition was severe enough that they were immediately hospitalized. Then we have had it the other way that they got tested, sent home but their condition worsened and then they ended up going back and getting hospitalized at that point in time. It's certainly how they present and I think a big part of it, whether they need hospitalization, a big part of it is related to their breathing. How difficult, because we had one individual who tested positive quite some time ago, they went home and were home for probably a week and then it ended up her O2 rates were just too low and ended up getting hospitalized a week later after testing positive.

Mrs. Ferratella asked are there any other questions?

Mr. Mullen stated I have a couple of questions. One of them is, have we talked; I had seen an article about blood testing for people who may have already had it. I have talked to different people who have said I think I may

have had this a few months ago. Have we talked about doing anything like that to try and see what is going on with that in the County? Mrs. Smith replied the last I heard about that was I would say last week I think when Governor Cuomo said plans were being put into place for that testing, but we haven't received any direct communication that we are ready to roll with that. Mr. Wheeler commented we don't have the supplies, so that would be coordinated by the State, but we will keep asking that question when we are on the phone with our State reps.

Mrs. Lando stated I have a question. So if I'm not mistaken, when I am looking at the reports, a lot, several of the cases are centered around Hornell, Hornellsville. Is there a reason, has anybody figured out why that is happening? Mrs. Smith replied we have noticed that as well and we are not sure. You know it only takes a small number of people to increase the spread. (*Secretary's Note: Audio cut out*) Mr. Wheeler stated we haven't noticed a, so some of the cases are related, so it definitely is community spread. We haven't seen any, you know where one person is responsible for, or the origin of another infection. We haven't seen that yet.

Mr. Van Etten stated one question I asked Jack this morning is as I am driving from Corning, I am following a pick-up truck with six, well five Amish contract workers and a driver. I had said has there been any issue as far as the Amish community, in Woodhull or wherever, because they certainly self-isolate on their own until they ride to a work site and then they are all huddled in a truck. Mr. Wheeler stated yeah to your point, I have talked with the Governor's Office yesterday because it came up again. (Chris) Mr. Brewer did a great job as he has connections with an individual who is close to the community and spoke with their Bishops to urge them to take the proper precautions. I asked yesterday for State guidance on dealing with this and they said they have been asked by other communities up in the North Country for that and they said they were working on it.

Mr. Mullen stated hey Jack, I have a suggestion on that. One of the wind proceedings that went through, it was suggested by some of the people that one of the best ways to inform Amish is that there are several Amish newspaper publications that are specific to their community that most of the people in the communities get that and it may be good to try to look into those and just getting a notice into some of those newspapers and I've got names for like three of them that I can email to you. Mr. Wheeler stated that would be fantastic. Lorelei, Darlene and her staff have done an awesome job with messaging so there are pretty simple and easily communicated messaging that would be applicable for all communities that we could get out, so yeah, if you could send it to us, that would be awesome. Mr. Mullen stated he will get that contact information to Mr. Wheeler today.

Mrs. Ferratella asked any more questions?

Mr. Van Caesele stated just one more concern. The messaging to the average citizen about the PPE, (*Secretary's Note: Audio cut out*)....should we be, should, does it help healthy people stay healthy by wearing it because I am concerned that, assuming that it is limiting supply to the hospitals. Does that make sense? Mrs. Smith stated I know we are trying to get the message out that the PPE is not necessary or required for healthy people and that we should be preserving that for those that are ill and certainly the health care workers. They are the most important individuals who should be utilizing it. So where some of those people that I see in the grocery store where they are wearing a mask; where they are getting it from I'm not sure, but it's out there and I do see healthy individuals wearing masks. I'm not sure, but we can certainly continue to message around that. Mr. Van Caesele stated all right, that was my concern.

Mr. Swackhamer stated on the TV they are warning, saying that everybody leaving their house should be wearing a mask now. That was on this morning, earlier. Mr. Wheeler stated yeah I saw the CDC....(*Secretary's Note: Audio cut out*)....Mrs. Ferratella stated Jack, Gary said this morning that on TV it said that everyone should be wearing a mask. Mr. Wheeler stated CDC was talking about that yesterday, but we will keep our eye out and do some messaging on that. You know some folks in the community in the knitting community and others are doing an awesome job making the homemade masks and certainly that, some of them being distributed to hospitals and others and that is more appropriate, and in my uneducated opinion a better use for the public than the N95 and surgical masks. The N95 and surgical masks need to really be reserved for the hospital systems and quite frankly, if a citizen wanted to buy N95's on Amazon, they are not going to be able to right now. It's not a concern at the

moment, but yep we will do some more messaging and look at what CDC says. Mr. Swackhamer stated okay, thank you.

Mrs. Lando stated Gary they also are saying you can use a bandana, or a scarf around your head, it does not have to be a real mask.

Ms. Fitzpatrick asked Mrs. Ferratella if she could make a comment. Mrs. Ferratella stated sure. Mr. Swackhamer stated they said anything that can protect the virus from coming in; anything, a scarf, bandannas, anything of that nature. Mrs. Ferratella asked Ms. Fitzpatrick if she wanted to say something.

Ms. Fitzpatrick stated I wondered how many calls was Public Health taking regarding businesses that have not been deemed essential and also regarding the post on our Facebook page for the Attorney General's phone number to call regarding businesses that are still open. Is that post still up? Mrs. Smith replied yes....(*Secretary's Note: Audio cut out*)...I can tell you that we got a lot more calls about those types of questions before we put some messaging out there about, you know, who to call in relation to all sorts of specifics of people who didn't agree or didn't know who was essential service. We got a lot more calls before our messaging than after.

Mr. Wheeler stated we also, I mean Lorelei monitors the social media activity. You know we get a couple questions about those a day and they are very focused on the larger businesses that have been deemed essential that remain open, not the (*Secretary's Note: Audio garbled*). We have gotten really one question that I can recall us discussing, a small business.

Mr. Mullen stated I have a comment. I looked at the posts there. I think it is good to have information on the website about who is an essential business. I thought and I know you guys were in the middle of a lot of things and this is a small issue, relative to that, it may be better to say this is, is it Empire State Development Jamie? The website that if you still have a question whether you are an essential business, this is the link where to find that. Mr. Johnson stated so can I jump in here Jack? So how we are directing things; Empire State Development, in the last couple of days, has taken a much more hands off approach, designating whether you are essential or not. They basically are saying to go to the guidelines and they are not making special designations at this point, they are just directing everyone to the guidelines. If a business really wants to push the issue then they can request a legal opinion through the State of New York. We are telling people that it is better to be safe and to just take a conservative approach because if they request a legal opinion, it's going to take them forever to get one anyways. The State is actively investigating, through the Attorney General's Office, those complaints that they get, which is the information that has been posted and referenced a few minutes ago. I can tell you that the AG's Office is actively investigating those types of complaint as they come in because we have gotten several calls from businesses related to that and continue to field those calls. Right now the State is not making any designations as essential as they got inundated and they are just directing people right to the guidance that is on their website. Mr. Mullen stated yeah that was what I was talking about, the guidance on their website. Mr. Wheeler stated if you would like, we can do more messaging and...(*Secretary's Note: Audio cut out*)

Mrs. Ferratella stated all right, any more questions? Jack, do you have anything additional? Mr. Wheeler stated no, thank you.

Mr. Hanna stated thank you to Darlene and staff for all they are doing. Mrs. Smith stated thank you we appreciate it very much.

**MOTION: TO ADJOURN MADE BY MR. HANNA. SECONDED BY MR. VAN CAESEELE. ALL BEING IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIES 5-0.**

Respectfully Submitted by

Amanda L. Chapman  
Deputy Clerk  
Steuben County Legislature

**\*\*NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR\*\***  
**Wednesday, May 6, 2020**  
**Legislative Committee Room**  
**9:00 a.m.**

**Please send agenda items to the Clerk of the Legislature's Office**  
**NO LATER THAN NOON**  
**Wednesday, April 29, 2020**