

**SHA Membership Meeting**  
**August 2, 2017**  
**Mary Roebling Building, Trenton NJ**

1. Meeting was called to order at 10 AM by SHA Board of Trustees Chairperson, Melody Federico.
2. Everyone introduced themselves around the room by name and affiliation. 75 people were in attendance representing housing developers, supportive services providers, advocates, government representatives, corporate vendors and families.
3. Minutes of the June 2017 meeting were approved. Motion: Barbara Coppens motioned; Tom Beyer seconded.
4. Diane thanked Cort Furniture for sponsoring the morning coffee and networking session. David Rossi [david.rossi@cort.com](mailto:david.rossi@cort.com), Account Executive spoke and outlined the services as well as Cort's strengths among them short delivery, quick set up and partnership with clients. Cort often volunteers and sponsors events for those they do business with. Krystal Odell gave a spontaneous testimonial to the benefits of doing business with Cort. Another business niche is corporate relocations.
5. Diane Riley, SHA Executive Director gave a presentation reviewing the No Housing Cuts Congressional Reception held on July 26. 450 people traveling to Washington. The reception was attended by all but two of the congressional delegation and included both Senators. The event was dominated by people telling their very moving stories of how permanent housing has changed their lives. Other noted comments included an update on the SHA conference and an extension by one week for Award submissions.  
Finally, SHA is still planning on applying to the Dept. of Labor training grant as a consortium but the timeline will be for the second round. Submission in September will allow more time for interested participants to sign on. As a reminder, benefits include quality training for employees with a match of employee wages in time spent. In addition Act-Cess and SHA will handle the majority of the administration.
6. Harry Reyes, [harry.reyes@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:harry.reyes@dhs.state.nj.us) Assistant Division Director, and Renee Burawski, [renee.burawski@dhs.state.us](mailto:renee.burawski@dhs.state.us) Chief of Staff, gave a DMHAS update. Mr. Reyes emphasized the need to

- take advantage of the Medicaid / Molina trainings. Medicaid 101 will take place August 11. Renee highlighted the CSS is up and running. 38 agencies have extended their CSS state contract and will move to the new fee for service system Jan. 1, 2018, 6 moved July 1, 2017. The Division is working with an actuarial firm for behavior health rate setting. July 2016 med rates remain effective. Bed hold reimbursement is still continues to be worked out. Specific questions about NJ Mental Health Applications for Payment Processing (NJMHAPP) will continue to be monitored and addressed during the transition.
7. Elena Gaines [elena.gaines@dca.nj.gov](mailto:elena.gaines@dca.nj.gov) , Field Supervisor  
Gave the update for Dept. of Community Affairs. The Division continues to make special needs housing, people with disabilities, homeless and those reentering society from prison, a priority. Of the 500 Move On vouchers available, 312 have been assigned and there are approximately 200 remaining. Of the 425 Housing First Vouchers, 75 were set aside for veterans. The demand continues to outweigh the availability of vouchers. Two webinars were held on applying for The National Housing Trust Fund. NJ was awarded close to \$4 million in funds.
  8. Anthony Marchetta, Executive Director of NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, [amarchetta@njhmf.gov](mailto:amarchetta@njhmf.gov) gave an update on the success and proud record of building housing in NJ Over the last 7 years. Highlights include: 31,000 new or rehabbed Units build throughout the state. A priority has been supportive housing units. Of the 60 Low Income Housing Tax Credit awards only 3 did not have a component of supportive housing. The current awards announcement will be delayed until the middle of August. However he expects the award to be significant (close to \$40 million). Supportive Housing Connection continues to absorb the administration of housing vouchers from Dept. of Human Services. Currently fully managing the DMHAS 3,700 tenants and moving 10,000 from DDD.
  9. Renee Koubiadis, Executive Director of Anti-Poverty Network of NJ [renee@antipovertynetwork.org](mailto:renee@antipovertynetwork.org) reintroduced APN to the network. APN is a group of diverse organizations and individuals working on preventing, reducing and ending poverty. Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey (APN) is a diverse and growing network focused on preventing, reducing, and ending poverty in

New Jersey. APN works closely with NJ Housing and Community Development Network, Monarch as well as the Coalition to End Homelessness. Some of the APN policy issues include protecting rental tenants from foreclosures, the concern over housing for those on general assistance, increasing the benefit level for those on TANF and funding for legal services. APN is proud to announce a new report that will be released in Sept. “The Uncomfortable Truth: Racism, Inequality, and Poverty in New Jersey” looking at how racism is imbedded with all of APN policy areas (hunger, housing, economic empowerment etc.)

9. Geraldine Flach, [gflach@valleynationalbank.com](mailto:gflach@valleynationalbank.com) AVP, Valley National Bank gave an informative presentation on CRA (Community Investment Act) initiatives and how they can increase resources in low income communities. Helping communities grow is at the heart of Valley Nationals commitment and corporate citizens’ philosophy. They work with many organizations (citizen action, La Casa). Affordable housing, access to credit and empowering small businesses are part of their approach. By listening to consumers and the community they development some basic banking products such as Alternative Checking Account and Advantage savings accounts. These were of most interest to some of the members present.
10. All presentations can be found at <http://www.shanj.org/members/meeting-presentations>
11. Break for boxed lunches
12. The panel discussion focused on the topic of Supportive Employment Trends and Opportunities.

Panel:

Elaine E. Katz, SVP Grants and Communications, Kessler Foundation,

[ekatz@kesslerfoundaiton.org](mailto:ekatz@kesslerfoundaiton.org)

Cheryl Vail, Community Rehabilitation Programs, NJ Dept. of Labor,

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, [cheryl.vail@dol.nj.gov](mailto:cheryl.vail@dol.nj.gov)

Elisa Cohen, Community Work Incentives Coordinator, NJWINS, the Family Resource Network.

[ecohen@familyresourcenetwork.org](mailto:ecohen@familyresourcenetwork.org)

Amy G Watts, President, NJ APSE, Association of People Supporting Employment First and Support Coordinator, Neighbours Inc., [amywatts@neighbours-inc.com](mailto:amywatts@neighbours-inc.com)

Elaine Katz kicked off the panel and gave a brief overview of the Kessler Foundation, their commitment to rehabilitation research and employment funding whereby they can help return people to their homes, where they can live in their communities and work. Some of their initiatives is the nTides National Trends in Disability Employment

monthly report which tracks employment of people with disabilities and a National survey of on employment and disability. A key finding of which is that people with disabilities are striving to work. They are working, actively preparing for employment, searching for jobs, seeking more hours, and successfully overcoming barriers in the workplace. Wages continue to lag behind those without disabilities by 1/3. The good news is job growth for people with disabilities outperforms those without. Empowerment is key.

Cheryl Vail from the Community Rehabilitation Programs, division of Vocational Rehab of the Dept. of Labor pickup up that thread and talked about the ways they support providing rehabilitation services to individuals to help them get employed and can also help maintain employment. Many services including vocational counseling & guidance, diagnostic evaluations and job coaching are of no cost to the individual. Other services are based on a financial needs assessment. In order to carry out their mission they work with agencies (approved vendors). Cheryl reviewed the vendor application process.

Elisha Cohen from Family Resource Network's NJWINS program added to the conversation by providing info about the work incentive and counseling service they can provide which for recipients of SSI or SSDI and funded by the Social Security Administration. In particular the counseling centers on how recipients can work and keep their benefits which is a common concern. NJWINS also offers training to agencies and providers who support employment for individuals with disabilities. Finally, Amy G Watts, President, NJ Association of People Supporting Employment First (NJAPSE) talked about the membership benefits of that association. The association is a way that businesses that provide supportive employment can connect, offers training opportunities and the ability to do joint advocacy around issues of importance. Information was provided to those present.

The meeting concluded at 1 PM. Next meeting of the SHA membership is scheduled for Wed, October 4, 2017

13. SHA Advocacy and Policy Committee met after the formal meeting. Briefing on current issues were discussed with a focus on the fee for service transitions and current housing legislation. Developmental Disability issues were presented by Maureen Shea of NJACP

Submitted by Diane Riley, Executive Director