

**SHA Membership Meeting**  
**April 1, 2020**  
**Zoom – COVID-19 Pandemic**

1. Meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM by Diane Riley. Diane Riley thanked everyone for registering and asked for patience as this is the very first membership meeting conducted remotely. Diane reviewed the mechanics of zoom navigation including unmuting, chat box questions and the overall agenda. 76 people were electronically in attendance representing housing developers, supportive services providers, advocates, government representatives, corporate vendors and families.
2. Jim Marhold from Declarations addressed the membership as the new President of Board of Trustees. Minutes of the February 2020 meeting were approved. Motion: Barbara Coppens motioned; Jack Mudge second.
3. Diane introduced Tanya Hudson-Murray, Director of MultiFamily Program [thudson-murray@njhmfa.gov](mailto:thudson-murray@njhmfa.gov) to give an update from NJ Housing Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA). Tanya reiterated that the agency was processing business as usual even as most of the staff was working from home. Closings were happening and everyone has adjusted to more electronic meetings and document submissions. Tanya reviewed the new Special Needs Housing Subsidy Loan Program (SNHSLP). SNHSLP provides capital financing to create permanent and affordable supportive housing and community residences specifically for people with special needs. There is currently \$50 million dollars in the fund. The loans are for both new construction and rehabilitations.
4. Diane introduced Harry Reyes, Assistant Director and Renee Burawski, Chief of Staff for Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHAS) to give an update. Renee began by affirming that given the current pandemic and the work force issues at provider agencies, all contracts would be extended for another six months and instituting an emergency payment system for community based providers. Recently Morris Friedman (CFO) sent guidance documents and noted that as part of the extension providers were to review and submit an attestation signed and returned to the division that says that providers will continue to provide vital services to keep consumers in the community. The

guidance also outlines some other requirements associated with these emergency payments. A question raised was whether there was any plans for the division to cover the loss of budgeted Medicaid amounts that providers will be facing. Renee responded that the expectation is that providers will bill Medicaid for Medicaid eligible services as best they can. Understanding that services are being delivered somewhat differently than they normally are and providers are trying to ramp up telehealth as quickly as possible. There is going to be some loss. The Division is working closely with Medicaid and there are some relaxations in terms of regulations that were seeking. There is a lifting of prior authorizations and we anticipate that this will help with service provision and billing of Medicaid. Harry relayed that they are working diligently on getting out information about prior authorizations. We're also working on guidance for telehealth and for prescribers and guidance for residential providers as well. This info will be forthcoming very soon. There are many outstanding questions on credentialing and services (for example those that have a BA or are peers). The anticipation is that Medicaid will release guidance very soon that will address many of these outstanding questions. Right now Licensed Clinical providers are able to supervise individuals doing telehealth so long as they are in the realm of licensure or certification. We are hoping that we get some clarity on the other individuals as it relates to telehealth. Harry reviewed the current consumer verbal authorization for IRPs. Acceptable documentation is verbal authorization must be noted and also indication that the consumer was mailed or sent an electronic copy of the QRP.

5. Diane Riley, SHA executive director highlights included:
  - a. Diane welcomed new members [Bergen County](#), [The American Legion](#), [Lindabury](#) and [Pillar Care Continuum](#) (prior Cerebral Palsy of NJ). She reminded those attending that the value of SHA network is important at times like these. The needs of agencies regardless of special needs populations are similar and therefore advocacy and best practices can be shared and leveraged.

- b. Members will be moving to a January renewal cycle so many will be receiving pro-rated invoices for the year.
- c. Diane reviewed the new Housing Navigation Course currently under development by SHA. The course will be based on the successful Housing Navigation Course in NY State.  
The curriculum includes: Planning, Budgeting, Financing Housing, Types of Housing, Construction, Finding a Home, and include case studies. Students Will develop a housing plan. Many industry experts will be included as guest lecturers. The course timeline will be 8 weeks and include in person and remote classes.  
Given the current pandemic, it is likely that the class timeline will change from a spring to a summer or fall schedule. In addition SHA will develop a process and build a simple searchable Housing Tool that will post rent opportunities, vacancies, and new development info.
- d. Diane affirmed that SHA staff is working remotely and focused on the best way to advocate and provide up-to-date information. We will take advantage of the remote capabilities to host additional meetings on topical information. Please call or email with issues, challenges and suggestion for topics.

6. The featured guests Patricia Hernandez, Associate Director [patricia.hernandez@csh.org](mailto:patricia.hernandez@csh.org) and Courtney Christensen, Senior Director [courtney.christensen@csh.org](mailto:courtney.christensen@csh.org) from Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) presented on the topic “*Supportive Housing, Healthy Aging and COVID-19*”. The presentation discussed CSH recent efforts to analyze the supportive housing need among older adults through a grant from the Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation.

Through this grant CSH will expand the financing and development of quantity and quality of supportive housing in New Jersey for vulnerable populations through the following activities:

**Conduct a statewide supportive housing needs assessment for the aging population.** The needs assessment analyzes existing community data with state and national data, in order to develop a concrete supportive housing development goal and plan. The assessment includes homeless households age 50+, as well as those currently institutionalized who could transition into community with the right level of supports. In addition to gauging statewide need, CSH will work with Bergen and Passaic counties to conduct an in-depth analysis of the housing need and strategies for meeting its development goals. **Training and Technical Assistance to Age Friendly Communities.** Building on the analysis in the Needs Assessment, CSH is providing targeted technical assistance and training to select communities with Age Friendly initiatives. CSH will also provide limited and as needed one-on-one assistance to Age Friendly participating organizations to further build their capacity to respond to the housing needs of their aging community residents age 50+. **Educate state and local stakeholders and new providers** on the benefits of supportive housing so that increased resources for supportive housing development and greater integration of services and supports for vulnerable older adults can be supported in the Administration and Legislature, as well as local communities. The aging of the U.S. population is expected to increase homelessness among older adults; the projection of elder homeless for folks 65+ from 1990 to 2050 suggest that the number of homeless elderly will double by 2050, from 44,172 to 95,000. The surge in older homeless people is driven largely by a single group — younger baby boomers – those born between 1940s and 1965 as this group has consistently made up a third of the total homeless population for the last several decades. Supportive Housing is an important option for older adults delivering more benefits in a very cost effective manner. Benefits include: Fewer emergency room visits and hospital stays, improved medication management and adherence, improved physical functioning, improvements in mental health, reduced incidence of falls, improved nutrition, reduced isolation and lower transfer rates to higher levels of care such as assisted living or nursing home facilities.

CSH also reviewed their response efforts during the COVID pandemic. CHS has an online platform where supportive housing providers can post questions and share resources. To join:

<https://www.csh.org/2020/03/csh-covid-19-supportive-housing-community-platform/>

CSH also convenes weekly calls for 30 min. on Tuesdays.

Presentation can be found:

<https://www.shanj.org/past-sha-membership-meetings/>

7. Finally Janel Winter [janel.winter@dca.nj.gov](mailto:janel.winter@dca.nj.gov), Director Housing and Community Resources, joined us to give an update from the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). DCA staff is working from home. Rent payments are going to landlords. DCA has suspended regular inspections but responds to emergencies. DCA is accepting electronic documents and adjusting income changes without waiting for all the necessary paperwork. DCA has proactively sent advances to agencies on their contract to ease any cash flow issues they might encounter. Ms. Winter emphasized the moratorium on evictions and encouraged the message that no one should be losing their housing at this time.

The meeting concluded at 11:30 AM. Next meeting of the SHA membership is scheduled for Wed. June 3, 2020

Submitted by Diane Riley, Executive Director