

**SHA Membership Meeting**  
**August 3, 2022**  
**Zoom – COVID-19 Pandemic**

Diane welcomed everyone and encouraged people to put their names in the chat box as a way of introduction before the meeting was called to order. Attendees represented housing developers, supportive services providers, advocates, government representatives, corporate vendors, and families. There were 56 people in attendance.

1. Meeting was called to order at 10:02 AM by SHA Board President, James Marhold. Jim asked for any updates or corrections to the minutes as posted. Hearing none, the minutes of the June 2022 meeting were approved.
2. Diane introduced Amy Scartocci, Office of Housing and Resource Development Director, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to [amy.scartocci@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:amy.scartocci@dhs.nj.gov) give an update. The highlights are as follows:
  - Updated Housing Subsidies stats are: Currently 7,260 housing subsidies in provider managed settings, a little over 1,000 subsidies that are linked to subsidy programs funded by HUD or DCA, 1,003 subsidies in self-directing sites across the state in the CCP and Supports programs
  - Housing Development stats: supported the opening of 75 new sites in 2022 and in FY23 they are projecting 150 new sites.
  - Statewide Transition Plan and Home and Community-Based Settings Final Rule: engaging in a verification process with providers. DDD sent out updated provider self-assessment- their teams are going out to provider agencies reviewing a sample of those settings to verify the surveys.
  - Last week released a provider guidebook on the DDD website that outlines some best practices and information around each of the settings criteria characteristics expected to be seen in those settings
  - Working with the BOGG Center developing more information for individuals and families and updating their trainings.
  - Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS) posted the process for heightened scrutiny for the Statewide Transition Plan that is available on the Department of Human Services website in the section for Public Notices with a deadline of August 19<sup>th</sup>. Work with providers utilizing tools and reviewing how they can overcome the institutional presumption.
  - Reminder: Rolling RFP for provider ready directory available for identifying an alternate provider if another provider was unable or unwilling to continue to operate a program
  - Remind: staff will work housing developers and provider agencies and can provide assistance support through the point of lease up. Can support review of heightened scrutiny. They are focused on the potential experience of consumer of

settings.

- The next public update webinar is August 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:30. Registration can be found on the DDD website

3. Diane introduced Harry Reyes, Assistant Division Director of Division of Mental Health, and Addiction Services (DMHAS) [harry.reyes@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:harry.reyes@dhs.nj.gov) to give an update. The highlights are as follows:

- Highlight in the state and country, July 16<sup>th</sup> the 998 Suicide prevention three-digit number went into effect replacing the 1-800 number and will connect you to a 988 clinically driven agency. In an emergency, 988 would transfer you to 911 and in reverse if a call to 911 is behavioral health related (never a disconnection). Additional services of 988 are continuing to be developed by the Division and the State. Mary Jean Weston is DMHAS Lead for 988. Information on the DMHAS website: <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhas/initiatives/988/>
- Continuing to put out RFP's, the CSS RFP's will be slated for the Fall. RFP's mostly for substance abuse or opioid abuse. State of NJ.
- The completed RFP process and more funding has allowed all counties in NJ. The EISS program has now expanded to all counties. EISS (Early Intervention Support Services), to have an Urgent Care setup for Behavioral Health Services. EISS was created in a non-crisis situation, for an individual to not have to go to the ER or ED when it is for medications or their anxiety is escalating. EISS provides a prescriber and counselor service in Urgent Care circumstances and are able to follow individuals until they are connected to an outpatient program and have their first appointment. The EISS program has now expanded to all counties.
- Acutely aware of Fair Market Rate (FMR) issues. They are in contact with the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the Continuums of Care (COC's) and Division of Family Development (DFD) to help assist individuals on the DMHAS Services subsidies with finding affordable housing. Looking at when the rates will go up, but no decisions have been made. DMHAS 40% income towards rent, DCA FMR cover more and pay less.
- Contract providers for DMHAS has received a small increase for all contracts to increase staffing salaries to address difficulty of acquiring clinical and supportive staff for services. Staffing is also an acute problem with agencies struggling.
- CSS should be put back on the agenda in September. Credentialing continues to be a problem.
- DHS has a new Deputy Commissioner, Lisa Asare. Lisa transferred from the Dept. of Health. DMHAS, Valerie Mielke (DMHAS), and NJ Medicaid reports to Lisa Asare.

4. Michael Tyler- Regional Vice President of the Mutual America gave a presentation regarding a new benefit Multiple Employer Plan (MEP) Qualified Retirement Plan open to SHA members to provide a better offering of retirement services. The benefits of the SHA MEP are: Cost savings – working together toward the common good, reduced cost, reduced fiduciary liability, reduced administrative burden. There will be additional meetings and dates, please reach out with any questions to

Diane and a Mutual America Representative:

[Michael.Tyler@MutualAmerica.com](mailto:Michael.Tyler@MutualAmerica.com)

[Thomas.Moller@MutualAmerica.com](mailto:Thomas.Moller@MutualAmerica.com)

See presentation for more info:

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

Please let us know who in the organization we should reach out to in order to review this new benefit.

#### 5. SHA Update:

Diane thanked all renewed and new members for joining the meeting.

- She also announced our annual conference is back at the Palace at Somerset Park in person on Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>. More information will follow in the next week.

Diane reminded attendees of the in-person annual Conference on Friday November 4<sup>th</sup> at the Palace at Somerset Park. **Diane asked for topics for workshops to be included.** Please reach out if you have ideas for workshops for information for the Conference.

The **Keynote speaker is Dr. Dan Tomasulo**, Academic Director and Core Faculty member of the Spirituality Mind-Body Institute at Teachers College at Columbia University will speak about his new book "Learned Hopefulness." He also has extensive experience in the past, developed specifically Behavioral Therapy group therapy for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Diane discussed the **SHA Awards:** Hero, Project, Municipal, Innovation will be conducted again this year in person and the deadline is September 9<sup>th</sup>.

Diane spoke about the importance of sponsorships to the program and thanked Cort, Valley National Bank and Regan Development for their sponsorships. In person exhibits will take place, if you know an exhibitor that should attend, please reach out to SHA.

<https://www.shanj.org/2022-conference/>

#### 6. Steve Schoch, Board of Trustees, Strategic Planning Chair

[sschoch@kitchenandassociates.com](mailto:sschoch@kitchenandassociates.com) to give an update on the SHA

Strategic Planning process.

- Steve continued to discuss the strategic process and what the planning committee hopes to accomplish. summarized the strategic planning process that SHA undertook pre-covid. Today, there are two poll questions that we would like member input.

Question 1: as about moving virtual meetings to in-person meetings or a hybrid option in October. Question 1 results were an even split between in person and virtual and some undecided. Diane suggested that we may never go back 100% In person membership meeting to accommodate both groups.

Question 2: Of the following "Strategic Conversations" topics, which one do you think is the highest priority to discuss at the next meeting? Of the following choices: Ways to strengthen relationship between SHA and Municipalities, Identify needed training topics and ways to provide more training for SHA members, SHA's position as industry advocate and identify critical issues, Open Forum to brainstorm ideas for future discussions was the most popular.

Diane encouraged member participation of the poll during the meeting and those that had not participated to email Diane or Steve to finalize the results and discuss further.

7. Diane welcomed the main speaker Stephanie Hoopes, National Director, United for ALICE, United Way of Northern NJ, [stephanie.hoopes@unitedwaynj.org](mailto:stephanie.hoopes@unitedwaynj.org). The topic was **ALICE in Focus: People with Disabilities. This informative presentation the new Report on ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) with a special focus on People with Disabilities.** Further information can be found: <https://www.unitedforalice.org/focus-disabilities>.
  - Key Findings, a tour of their Dashboard on the website containing data and another new feature to the website that shows how the ALICE research is being used not only in NJ but with partner states across the country. The presentation was finalized with open discussions and feedback.
  - A reminder of characteristics of original ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) profile • Above FPL, below Household Survival Budget • Low-wage jobs – cashiers, health care workers, security guards, laborers, office administration • No savings: • For emergencies • For investing in the future – education, homeownership, retirement.
  - Catherine Connelly, Director of Research Engagement for United for ALICE, shared the dates of the new ALICE in Focus Research Series and the three populations of focus: Children (4/22), People with Disabilities (7/22) and Veterans (11/22). A new source was used for data 2019 US Census American Community Survey Pums data. Pums based around a Puma which is a designated census area of not less than 100,000 people. Catherine listed and thanked those from different Committees statewide and national that helped them to review ALICE in Focus on People with Disabilities in NJ and provided feedback (see slides for list).
  - Catherine displayed a video of a family describing some of the challenges families with family members with disabilities experience. Catherine presented Defining Disabilities in six categories: Ambulatory, Independent Living, Cognitive, Hearing, Self-Care, and Vision; the number of people categorized as having that disability and the percentage of those people below the ALICE threshold or Poverty and ALICE combined. Data allowed a look at different categories to assess financial hardship for instance, race and ethnicity, education and household living arrangement and having a disability was a variable factor that contributed most to financial instability. 14% percent disabilities living in poverty higher than 10%. You can see that 47% of people with disabilities living in financial hardship (below ALICE threshold) compared with 29% without disabilities which is significant.
  - Hispanic population severely affected. 67% of all Hispanic population followed by 62% of black people with disabilities below the ALICE threshold vs. 39% of white.
  - Ashley Anglin, Director of Research and Strategic Analysis for United for ALICE, discussed the resources people need to be able to live, thrive and succeed in their

- communities and where those gaps were by disability status. Looked at renter burden- more than 35% of their income spent on housing, Assistance out of reach, COVID and mental health. Ashley gave an open moment for the members to share challenges and or opportunities related to housing for ALICE people with disabilities in the chat box, questions and thoughts about the data she and colleagues presented to compare feedback.
- Among people with disabilities in financial hardship in NJ: Under age 65, more likely to rent (64% vs. 36%) 60% who own a home & 61% who rent spent 35% or more of their income on their housing
  - Another note: Of people with disabilities in financial hardship in NJ: Nearly 356,000 did not receive SSI Over 290,000 did not participate in SNAP Assistance Out of Reach Did not receive Medicare or Medicaid 34% Of people with disabilities under age 65 and in financial need...
  - State programs are using the data to try to improve these challenges- Partners are offering programs for first time homebuyers trying to help them, group Unite Us a coordinated platform of health and social services, Houwzer Rise Up Fund helps with down payment and housing costs, ARPA foreclosure and utility assistance for ALICE, and others....coming to our website soon!  
Arc of funding was used to help with foreclosure, evictions and utility assistance.  
Looking for information: <https://unitedforalice.org/alice-in-action>  
A tour of the website was given.
  - ALICE Data Dashboard and presentation information  
<https://unitedforalice.org/focus-disabilities>
  - Kate Kelly reviewed the Municipal Toolkit and how it can enhance the data is now available through this report. <https://www.shanj.org/sha-integrated-community-project/>
8. Kate Leahy gave an update PowerPoint on the Housing Navigation Project: DCA funded, 18-month long grant that SHA was awarded in January designed to bridge a gap that will bring greater access to affordable housing to those most economically challenged in New Jersey. Aims to strengthen services that connect people with available housing and the capacity for program coordination throughout the state.
- The project encompasses a three-part approach:
    - Phase 1: Production of a Housing Navigation Best Practices Report, Library and Toolkit based on both nationwide and local research. This will include an examination of barriers to service delivery through the eyes of people with lived experience.
    - Phase 2: The development of multi-sector stakeholder collaborative, including The development of a multi-sector stakeholder collaborative, including organizations that currently provide for vulnerable individuals, to examine successful strategies extracted from the research as the basis for a shared approach to sustainable change. The Housing Navigator Collaborative will help establish pooled resources, coordinated services and sustainable partnerships that can be applied to improve housing access.

- Phase 3: with the collaborative, develop and implement recommendations in the areas of funding, procedure, and policy improvements to guide planning leading to increased availability of affordable housing.
- States that participated were Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

The National Report and Companion State Report separately will be released in the next couple of weeks. For info on the project

Kate Leahy [kate.leahy@shanj.org](mailto:kate.leahy@shanj.org)

9. Diane introduced Arnold Cohen, Senior Policy Analyst to conclude the meeting. Arnold discussed the next steps in getting more resources for Housing will be the appropriations process. The Senate Appropriation Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Related Agencies just passed their appropriation bill but is less than what the House provided and does not include the number of vouchers that were on the House. Advocacy is important in making sure the final policy follows more of what the House of Representatives has out- 40,000 increase in vouchers and increases in other funding streams. It is important to let your Congressional Representative know an appropriations process is needed for disability housing and the need for vouchers. A network called the Out of Reach report was just released that takes data by county and shows how out of reach rentals in New Jersey are for renters. New Jersey has an online Consolidated Plan of how it is going to be using funds from the Federal Government for different Housing related Federal Programs and a Hearing will be held on Thursday, but comments are accepted until September.
10. Diane concluded the meeting, any answers to the polls or questions please bring the information to the next meeting. Registration for the Annual SHA Conference will be open after Labor Day.

The meeting concluded at 12:05 PM. Next meeting of the SHA membership is scheduled for Wed, October 12, 2022

SHA Advocacy and Policy Committee met after the membership meeting.

Submitted by Diane Riley, Executive Director