Local Advisory Council (LAC) North

St. Louis County

March 16, 2023 4:30 – 6:00 Teams

Present: Todd Swenson, Jennifer Rich, Brenda Shafer-Pellinen, Heather Kainz, Linda O’Neil Deremee, Macy Viita, Lacy Podlogar, Katy Lofquist, Ann Marie Lubovich, Sandy Tuin

Guests: Tony Yeley and Jared Sabin

SLC Guests: Gena Bossert, Nicole Curphy, Brandie Webb and Commissioner Paul McDonald

● Meeting started at 4:30 pm

● February Meeting Minutes were approved

● Tod read the LAC Values

● Talked about the applicants and as of today there was 32 applicants for the LAC positions. Macy will do up a chart so each member can rank the top candidates. Sandy will send perspectives chart to Macy to show her what is listed for each applicant.

● Discussion on what we should do in the May meeting as April’s meeting we will only have enough time to go through the applications. Sandy will not be at the April meeting. Sandy asked for a paragraph to send to those applicants that were not chosen for this round. We will keep the names on hand for the next round or if someone else decides not to stay on the LAC. Already have names for the next time.

● Jennifer asked if she should have Chad come for the May meeting to go over info about Clubhouse. Ann Marie suggested that since the new members will be invited to May’s meeting, we just have introductions and redo priorities since there will be almost half of the membership will be new. Tod also suggested going over the LAC guidelines from the State and just getting to know everyone since we will be in person for May. Maybe have food available at the May meeting.

● Gena, Nicole, Brandie and Commissioner McDonald introduced themselves and explained their positions at that County and asked what the LAC would like to go over and tell the LAC where they are noticing gaps.

● Nicole Curphy Director CPS and Voluntary Services – Nicole states gaps that she is seeing in Mental Health for Children is kids at a younger age are exhibiting mental health concerns. Increased number of kids with mental health issues and a decrease in the number of resources. She states there is a lack of options and a lack of resources for in-home and out of home resources.

● Brandie Webb – Supervisor of Voluntary Services – Brandie states the gaps she sees is that we need to partner with Mental Health Partners, need more youth crisis beds in our area and expanding mental health continuum.

● Commissioner McDonald states the Check and Connect Program in schools have been successful. $6 million have been used in our SLC Schools for this program. We still have approx. 18 months to figure out the funding and where this program will be going.

He states they are also working on broadband access to all students. He states we need to get kids back to being successful in school. He also mentioned the Clarity Project as this will serve all SLC.

● Gena asked if the LAC would be willing to do a meeting with local officials and legislators to come to meeting in the fall so we can let them know where our gaps are as they are not always aware of the issues that our County faces. Maybe North and South LAC could hold this forum together. When officials and legislators go back to session, then they would have info on what funding they would like our region to get money for those services that are in lacking.

● Commissioner McDonald said it would be important to have elected officials all together at one forum to hear directly from the LAC or members with lived experience to educate them on personal experiences and educate them what is lacking in our area. Commissioner McDonald offered to be the Liaison to connect us with other local officials and legislators to come to these meetings.

● Open discuss about this forum. Here were a few things that were discussed, and the LAC could meet more in the coming months to plan for this forum:

1. It was discussed that the LAC would like to have the North LAC to have their own forum separate from South LAC as our North SLC area is much different than the South and our resources are fewer than the Duluth area.
2. Invite members from the Welling Being Development, Ely Behavioral Health, MBHI
3. Invite Ida Rukavina from IRRRB to be invited to the forum.
4. Workforce to hire new people for the mental health positions that would be needed to increase services in our area.
5. Heather sat on a forum, but it was for disability issues. Heather states the legislators were not aware of the problems the area was facing and were happy to get this information from the people that it was affecting. Heather will send out brochures that she received in this Disability Forum to help us see what needs to be done to set this up. Recommend having people with lived experience talk for approx. 2 minutes each to give information on how their personal experiences affected them.
6. Talked about August and September meeting be a planning session to get the forum set up for October. It was discussed about having this on a weekend or a weekday. Commissioner McDonald said he would do some checking and get back to Tod on what day would be better to have the Forum.

● Commissioner McDonald, Gena Bossert, Nicole Curphy and Brandie Webb thanked the LAC for inviting them to the monthly meeting and said to reach out to them at any time. They will also help the LAC in getting what is needed to do this Forum in October.

● Tony Yeley asked if he could speak even though he was not a member of the LAC. Tony asked that we bring something up to the local Mines to see if they would be willing to help fund some of the things that we were talking about. Someone mentioned about the mines hosting the forum. Not sure if this is something we could work on.

Next meeting: Thursday, April 20th

Melanie Smith will be at the April meeting. Sandy will make sure all applications are sent out to the members and the perspectives chart right after the closing date of applications which is 4/3/23. Sandy will contact all applicants when she gets back to the office. Invite those that were approved to the May meeting and contact those that were not approved on this round of hiring.

Meeting ended at 5:53 pm.