

Morrow County Local Community Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

Thursday September 2, 2021 @ 9:00 a.m.

Google Meet

Participants Present: Andrea Fletcher, Courtney Valenzuela, Don Russell, Don and Donna Eppenbach, Emily Roberts, Erin Bartsch, Heidi Zeigler, Linda Skendzel, Marci McMurphy, Maria-Ximena Williams, Marie Shimer, Nazario Rivera, Rebecca Gardner, Sonja Neal, Troy Soenen and Yvonne Morter.

1. Call to Order: Andrea Fletcher called the meeting to order at 9:01 am.

2. Public Comments:

Linda Skendzel – Morrow Veterans Service Representative, doing almost no face-to-face appointments and all lab work is going to Good Shepherd. The VA is changing to a new electronic health record program. Over time this will make it easier for private doctors to share information with the VA. The VA currently had a staff member retire so the telehealth clinic currently has no RN. Please pass the word on.

3. Consensus to Approve Meeting Minutes

Yvonne Morter recommended to approve the minutes, Linda Skendzel seconded. Minutes approved.

4. EOCCO Announcements

- Incentive Measures Review
 - Incentive measures were shared (updated through July 2021). Morrow County is currently meeting 1 of the 10 measures, Emergency Department Utilization for Individuals Experiencing Mental Illness.
- Consumer Engagement Planning Report
 - A work group has been meeting for the past six months looking at recruitment strategies, while being mindful of accessibility issues and supports needed to both recruit and retain consumer members.
 - Orientation packet has been developed and working on a plan for involving and supporting participants, specifically around times to meet and objectives of those meetings.
 - They will be asking our partners and organizations to help identify new participants as work continues and Andrea will keep this group updated on the progress.
- SHARE Funding Request from Umatilla County
 - EOCCO has dedicated around 300,000 to housing as the SHARE initiative. They received 7 applications, The Stepping Stone Alliance was the application that involved Umatilla and Morrow County. The LCAC role is be award of local activity, be a resource and to help vet the applications. Andrea shared the local feedback that was sent to the EOCCO.

5. Partner Sharing

Don and Donna Eppenbach, Irrigon – the Sr. Center is still providing meals, but take out only. They are anxious to get into the new building.

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Emily Roberts, Morrow County Health District – Expanding emergency services staff so will be hiring EMTs. implementation begins in Boardman and is moving to a fully paid staffing model. The following year Irrigon will be developed and by the third year will be on board with a fully paid staffing model. It has been difficult to recruit volunteers. Worked with a national organization, Paramedic Foundation, to find a model that would work better for Morrow County. The model that we're moving to is a 12-hour model, where staff will be in building and prepared to respond during their staffed hours. They would be a full-time district employee, with benefits. It's not a 24-hour model that would require sleeping accommodations. There were concerns that there wasn't funding and that patients would be getting a higher bill, but MCHD has the funds to manage the service.

Down one physician at Irrigon Medical Clinic and recruiting for one, maybe two depending on recent interviews at Pioneer Memorial Clinic in Heppner. We want to ensure we are getting somebody who is a good fit for our community and who will provide great services to our patients.

Erin Bartsch, Blue Mountain Early Learning Hub - The Hub's October 8, Early Childhood and Behavioral Health Fall Summit is scheduled by zoom. The morning session is "How to Unwind Anxiety" workshop by Dr. Jud Brewer. It will provide some tools that teaches the how to break the cycle of smoking and eating addictions. The afternoon session is "Loving Your Job Again" with Moe Carrick – it's focus is how to get back to where you enjoy your job. Link for information [-https://www.bluemountainearlylearninghub.org/o/bmelh/page/fall-summit](https://www.bluemountainearlylearninghub.org/o/bmelh/page/fall-summit)

Marie Shimer, Morrow County School District – School started this week in Morrow County. Exciting to have students back in the buildings and the students are excited to be there as well. Implemented a new busing GPS program that will allow parents to track their child's bus is in the route. Students activate the tracking with a badge similar to a city bus card for better student safety. Dealing with all things COVID and very grateful for our community and county partners – it has been life-saving that these relationships were built prior to COVID and it has done incredible things for our district. We really appreciate all of the partners that we have!

Nazario Rivera, Morrow County Health Department – Morrow County is seeing the highest COVID numbers throughout the pandemic. Working hard with case investigations and still working diligently to get vaccines out in the community. Opportunities to partner with various partners and businesses to make sure that the vaccinations are accessible to the community. There has been greater demand and need for Covid-19 testing so also working through that.

Yvonne Morter, Morrow County Health Department – Working with CaCoon Program which includes home visits for children with special needs, Nurse Family Partnership (NFP), Care RN and working at the School-Based Health Center. I am on the second unit of my training - starting the week-long training on September 13th. We will be working to increase the NFP case load so we need to get the word out. I want to make sure we get out to the schools and to the first-time moms before 27 weeks that qualify for WIC.

Ian Murray, Morrow County Health Department – Navigating the Oregon Department of Education's COVID rules.

Facilitating the smooth beginning of school. Already had a lot of COVID cases and that correlates with a lot of navigating the rules. Not every situation fits exactly where the guidelines are and that requires working closely with schools. We are very happy with the communications between schools and us. Also focusing on adolescent immunizations with LCAC CARE grant, specifically the 13-year-olds, and am ahead of last year. Will continue to play catch up due to COVID, but am pretty happy with the progress made so far.

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Kimberly Lindsay, CCS – There has been an exodus in general in the behavioral health workforce across the state. Fortunately, CCS hasn't experienced some the same struggles. However, it is on our mind so we have been putting a lot of work into looking at ways to increase retention and improve recruitment. We are reviewing and adjusting every three or four months instead of every two years. We have a vacant counseling position, so if you know of anyone send them our way. Working on a housing planning grant. Excited that Morrow County might receive \$50,000. We'll look at what behavioral health housing needs in the county and submit recommendations back to the state. Working with employees on the vaccine mandate.

Linda Skendzel, Morrow Veteran's Services – Added information in the chat on the Community Connection Stand Down event. Seeking vendors for this outdoor event and would like to make sure that our Community Counseling Services is represented. Project Community Connect & Veteran Stand Down Pendleton Outdoors Sat Oct 2, 2021 10am – 2pm.

The Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs will have suicide awareness funds available. We will be applying for some of those funds and would like to work with others in our community to come up with a good plan to meet the needs of our veterans and their families.

There has been some concern locally about VA billing and the confusion for our veterans to get clarification on billing and the time it takes to get a response and approval for the VA to pay the bills to the private providers.

Rebecca Gardner, Oregon Child Development Coalition – Boardman building is just about finished, but it will be November before children will be in. We start new EHS program for the year next week.

Sonja Neal, Columbia River Health – Very busy lately COVID testing and with increased number of vaccinations. Down to one provider and lost a nurse practitioner. Recruiting another nurse practitioner.

Don Russell, Morrow County Commissioner – County is moving in to new Irrigon building the first week of November. At that time, we will push over the existing county building which will become the parking lot for the new building. The new parking lot will be paved probably the first week in April. There have been a few delays on furnishings due to the back-orders from COVID.

We are making sure that the county employees that work in the schools (CCS and SROs) are fully vaccinated or rearranging staff in the sheriff's department to bring in vaccinated employees to cover as needed.

6. **Next Meeting: October 7, 2021**

7. **Adjourn 10:06 am**

Submitted by Connie Lobato