



## Program Committee Meeting Minutes November 11, 2024, 12:30p – 1:30p

Attendees: Sandra Russell, Board of Directors Secretary, Committee Chair; Daquetta Jones, CEO; Tricia Matthews, Chief Operating Officer; Dawn Penson, Board of Directors President; Andrea

Overarching Objectives: To continue to provide service programs to survivors and victims of abuse, to work with the community to improve these programs and grow them to meet current needs.

### Role:

Note Taker: Sandra Russell

Scheduler: Sandra Russell

Reporter: Sandra Russell

### Long Term Goals

#### 1. Status of Enrichment programs:

- Daquetta J spoke applying to United Way for funding to hire a part time person for recreational therapy. We will hear back from them later this month on that. They are doing movie night, Gathering circles, a cook off. We unexpectedly lost case managers in September and are looking to backfill. There is a 6-month bootcamp for the Baby Momma program.
- Sandi R. spoke about funding possibly source for federal program assisting people with pets to find housing. Daquetta J is working with the District Attorney, the Humane Society and Red Rover to get the shelters ready to people to be able to bring their animals. They cannot stay in the rooms unless they are service animals. This does require having staff that is knowledgeable with animals. This is going to be a journey that will take about 6 months. Daquetta J is going to reach out to Unity House and Purina Company for more information.

#### 2. Any Holiday Enrichment plans

- Tricia M said that staff sign up to bring part of the meal and drop it off. The staff there cook the meal for the residents. We are submitting our toy acceptance letter for the Salvation Army for toy pick up by December 6.

#### 3. Current Program status

##### 1. Tricia M spoke about the positions we have.

- Director of Abuse in Later Life is still open. Funding is on place.



- Our critical need is our Clinical Department. The interim director will be stepping down in December for personal reasons so that position is open. Therapy Roles have had movement. We have 2 full-time therapists. As part of this we are looking at the environment for clients. We are keeping them for too long. Some people are still receiving services for over 5 years. We are looking to transition them out into the community and focus on immediate need clients. Daquetta J we are looking to reimage the clinical department. We are more than \$10,000 below the market standard. We Have looked at our funding sources. We are holding on to filling the Associate Director and eliminating 1 clinician. With increasing the salaries, we're only adding 5 clients a month to their caseload.
- Replacing 2 case managers and Directors are working with the clients until we fill those positions.
- Daquetta J spoke of 2 people that are moving around within the agency to fill needs.
- Tricia Spoke about working thru some staffing analysis to add and Advocate in the DA's office. PREA program has a advocate for this program. There have been some issues with this is program. DOCCS has been brought in and we have established tours for the 3 prisons we are involved in supporting and this has rejuvenated. We are bridging the gap.
- Prevention education is almost full staff again. Working with Syracuse University. We are moving them 731 James St 4<sup>th</sup> floor to save about \$4000 plus a year in rent.
- SANE program still has work needed. There is a GAP. Director Maggie is in the hospital and on-calls for call outs so that makes it hard for her to always be in the office. Setting up weekly meetings with her staff and advocacy. There are also ongoing educational processes to help with the SANE call outs to make sure that the user wants an advocate. Also, Maggie will triage all calls before dispatching the on-call Advocate. They are also creating a Senior Advocate role to help with training and as a resource when the Director is not available. Funders are supportive of this change.
- Daquetta spoke on real dashboards for the Board to see. Also allows them to make sure they are tracking everything accurately. Hoping to have this for January.



- Daquetta J said that the clinical department is a critical area that they are working on when the previous Director left, we knew that there was going to be turn over. They see that this is an opportunity for us to have a stronger department. Dawn P knows Arise is phasing out their clinic and she knows several people that she can refer to Vera House to help get Clinical department back to full staff.
- There was a discussion about committee description in the Bylaws. This committee is of the corporation. Bylaws will be voted on by the board this month.

#### Short-term Goals

##### 1. Build Up Abuse Later in Life Program

- Daquetta J says the programs will depend on funding. We are currently responding to cases in 7 countries. We meet monthly with the Elder Justice Coalition. We are working with them to bring in services and plan the yearly conference. Dawn P asked about special populations if we will have a special department for these victims. Daquetta J explained that this is all about Vera House being an inclusive agency for sexual, domestic and elderly abuse. We ask how they identify but we service all victims. We respond to everyone. We look to possibly in the future, possibly having a special sub group with in advocacy department.

Respectfully Submitted  
Sandra Russell  
Board of Directors, Secretary  
Property Committee Chair