



Onondaga County Legislature

JAMIE McNAMARA
Clerk

TIMOTHY T. BURTIS
Chairman

TAMMY BARBER
Deputy Clerk

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HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES – DECEMBER 10, 2025 CODY M. KELLY, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Meaker, Mr. Bush

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. McCarron, Ms. Harvey

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Burtis; also see attached list

Chair Kelly called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m., and the previous meeting's minutes were approved.

1. HEALTH DEPARTMENT: Ann Rooney, Deputy County Executive

a. Confirming the Reappointment of Kathryn Anderson, MD, PhD, MSPH, CTROPMED, as Commissioner of Health for the County of Onondaga

- It is an honor and privilege to offer a reappointment for Dr. Anderson
- Dr. Anderson has done a remarkable job
 - Established the academic health department reaccreditation
 - Reorganized the department to be more nimble and out in the community
 - Performed record numbers of immunizations for children to attend school
 - Made connections in the community
- The Health Commissioner is one of several Commissioners who hold a dual appointment with county and state
 - The state must appointment them as well as the county

Questions/Comments from the Committee:

- Dr. Anderson has been a tremendous, impartial partner and provides objective truth about work done in community
- Dr. Anderson is very accessible which provides security to constituents
- Outreach through social media forums is second to none

A motion was made by Mr. Meaker, seconded by Mr. Bush, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

b. INFORMATIONAL: Opioid Funding Update

- Opioid funding crosses departments; not limited to the Health Department
 - Those suffering with substance use disorder often times have mental health, housing and/or employment challenges
- The county has received funding from the Attorney General settlement and Local Governmental Unit settlement
 - Will be receiving a declining dollar amount between now and 2035
 - 2022, first round of funding was received from the Attorney General which was limited to certain allowable uses
 - Prevention, harm reduction, treatment, recovery, and some governmental uses
 - Governmental uses
 - Work performed by the Medical Examiner when someone passes from overdose
 - Acquired equipment that quickly determines substances that cause fatal overdoses, which allows faster messaging to the street in an effort to prevent further overdoses
 - 2023 had 156 opioid overdose deaths

- 2024 declined to 90 deaths
- 2025 (January through June) declined to 35
- Unless pipeline is stopped through prevention, it will always be an uphill battle
- Prevention
 - Red House put together a production for schools in Onondaga County
 - The focus is on prevention for school aged children
 - Have done up to 40 performances
 - WCNY will be picking up on their station
- Recovery
 - Funding Devin’s Rec Room on Butternut Street
 - Rec room provides a gym and wellness activities
 - Focuses on staying in recovery
- Outreach work
 - Provides case managers on the street, and opportunities for recovery
 - Handing out Narcan, Fentanyl strips
- 2nd round of funding focuses on Housing First
 - Many people suffering from addiction are also in homeless shelters
 - Goal is to get people out of shelters and into stable housing to start treatment and recovery
 - Contract with Catholic Charities for housing stabilization
 - Helio Health has pushed medical services into the shelters
 - Persons in Crisis
 - Use some of the funding for contact community services for persons in crisis
 - Person in crisis does not require a police response unless there is harm or danger
 - 911 will deploy Helio Health, Liberty, St. Joes, or Mobile Crisis Team to respond
 - Day Center
 - Working with City of Syracuse to establish a Day Center utilizing opioid dollars
 - Would be an expansion of what the county already has with Catholic Charities
 - Will set aside money to establish if county and city can agree on a location that works

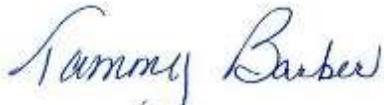
Questions/Comments from the Committee:

- Appreciate the holistic approach, and taking the time to build relationships with case workers and meeting people where they are
- It is great to have the community stay fit and active with others in similar circumstances through Devin’s Rec Room
- Chronic pain is often a big reason for substance use
- Happy to hear about Red House production
- 2026 is the goal for the Day Center
- Will there be transportation to pick people up and take them there?
 - Yes, if they choose
- What age group is the Red House production targeting
 - K-5
- Has there been consideration for high school students?
- Middle school and high school students are a targeted area being introduced
 - Would love for Red House to keep going
- There was a community group that picked a non-profit and allocated funds to them
- Are there any reports on what groups received money and what they did?
 - That would be included with the Health Department’s annual report
 - RFP process includes an analytics team that does performance review
 - By and large, this group has done well
 - Will be willing to renew contract with Devin’s Rec Room and Red House

- Will not renew for those that are not as successful
- Opioid Response Team meets on a monthly basis; happy to provide Legislators with information
- Happy to have addressed this as a public health issue
- There is obviously a law enforcement aspect as well
 - There was additional funding from the DA's office
 - Investigators role is to decide where the drugs are coming from to stop the pipeline
 - Syracuse City police have been instrumental in getting it off the ground
- Getting the right people in the right place at the right is a great example of the work being done

The meeting was adjourned at 12:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



TAMMY BARBER, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: **HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

DATE: **DECEMBER 10, 2025**

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
<i>Ara Rooney</i>	<i>CE</i>
<i>Elaine Deaton</i>	
<i>Steve Smoral</i>	<i>Fin Ops</i>
<i>Darcie Lesniak</i>	<i>Leg</i>
<i>Nicole Watts</i>	
<i>Joe Frakschi</i>	<i>Legal Counsel</i>
<i>Ethan LaMontagne</i>	<i>Leg.</i>
<i>Jim Beebe</i>	<i>Leg.</i>
<i>John Desantis</i>	<i>Leg.</i>