

Tioga County Department of Human Services
Advisory Board
August 8, 2025
12:00 p.m.

Attendance: Roger Bunn, Lindsey Chambers, Kristin Hamilton, Jennifer Harmon, Brett Kennedy, Nikki Luckovich, Commissioner Shane Nickerson Mellissa Parsons, Commissioner Marc Rice, Sara Rice, Jeanette Salevsky, Sue Sticklin, Diane Weed, Brett Weiskopff, Colleen Wilber, Mary Wilson, Justin Woefel

Call to Order: Kristin called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence.

Secretary's Report: Sara asked the board to review the meeting minutes. No questions, concerns, or changes were voiced. Commissioner Rice made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Roger seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: As of the end of July 2025, the Advisory Board balance is \$3,221.13. Commissioner Rice made a motion to accept the treasurer's report, Roger seconded. Motion carried.

Business:

The Tioga County Department of Human Services, children and youth department presented the Children and Youth Needs Base Plan and Implementation Plan.

The trends that Tioga County is seeing this year are similar to the trends that we saw last year: Substance abuse by caregiver, domestic violence, inadequate housing, truancy, sexual abuse and child behavioral problems.

This fiscal year Tioga County has had 780 general protective service reports and 141 child protective service reports. These numbers are slightly lower than the year prior. There is a trend with generational and repeat families. These families know how the agency operates, and they do not cooperate.

The severity of domestic violence has increased and is typically associated with substance use. The department is requesting an increase in housing money due to the number of unlivable conditions such as infestations, utility shut-offs, and general home conditions.

Once a case is open with our intake department, if there is enough information to keep the case open, it then gets transferred to an on-going placement. The on-going unit works with these families to create a family service plan. Our intake department has been having to transfer more complex cases.

Tioga County currently has 77 youth in care. Tioga County continues to prioritize kinship care as a core strategy in achieving stable and family-connected placements for dependent youth. We have placed 51 youth in kinship care which is more than double traditional foster care. However, we recognize that kinship caregivers often require a higher level of support to sustain these placements successfully. In this plan, we are asking for another foster care caseworker position to assist with our kinship placements.

The Specialized Services department is being brought back under direct County oversight that will unify them with the existing family services unit. This will improve service delivery, team collaboration, and outcomes for the children and families. The programs that are included in Specialized Services are Family Support Provider Services, Family Finding Program, Family Group Decision Making, Independent Living Program, Adventure Challenge Experience, Youth Diversion Services, Plans of Safe Care, and the Truancy Program.

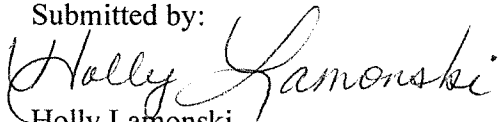
The probation department has seen a slight decrease in their overall numbers however their

placement numbers have remained about the same. In 2023/24 they had 71 youth and in 2024/25 they have 64 youth. Their trends include drug-related offenses that include possession and drug use and paraphernalia.

Justin Wolford, Chief Operating Officer from the Behavioral Health Alliance of Rural Pennsylvania (BHARP) has joined today's meeting. He introduced BHARP's Behavioral Health Higher Education Plan to the council. This plan provides two opportunities for college students: a paid internship and tuition assistance, which may be pursued independently or together. Qualified students will begin a paid internship at a behavioral health provider during their senior year that helps build practical skills and a strong foundation for future employment. Students interested in tuition assistance must also agree to a two-year post-graduate employment commitment with the same provider. They may receive up to \$20,000 for a bachelor's-level program or up to \$40,000 for a master's-level program.

Roger made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Kristen seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Submitted by:


Holly Lamonski
Secretary