



Board of Health Meeting

Wednesday, July 17, 2024 at 7:00 PM
REMOTE ONLY

Agenda

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, the meeting and public hearing will be conducted with remote opportunities for participation. Remote participation and access methods include:

ACCESS INFORMATION:

- A. This meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 17, 2024 at 7:00PM. Location: REMOTE ONLY
- B. The meeting will be televised through WCATV (Watertown Cable Access Television): <http://vodwcatv.org/CablecastPublicSite/watch-now?site=3>
- C. Join Zoom Meeting <https://watertown-ma.zoom.us/j/83188312663> Meeting ID: 831 8831 2663
- D. Public may comment through email: amyers@watertown-ma.gov
- E. Please Visit the Board of Health Website here: <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/176/Board-of-Health>

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- 1. Call to Order
 - 2. Acceptance of Minutes
 - A. Review of Draft Minutes of May 15, 2024
 - 3. Public Comment
 - 4. Biosafety Committee Permits:
 - A. Parallel Biosystems – 200 Dexter Avenue
 - 5. Staffing and Department Updates
 - A. General Department Updates
 - B. SSRS Quarterly Report
 - C. Discussion on introducing the Dumpster Regulations
 - 6. Items that could not be anticipated before meeting
 - 7. Adjournment

BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING
REMOTE ONLY
MINUTES
Wednesday May 15, 2024 at 7:00 pm

PRESENT: Richard Arnold, Chairperson, Dr. Dominic Amirtharaj and Kim Netter

Staff: Abbey Myers, Acting Director of Health, Maureen Foley, Clerk
In attendance Eric Duhaime, Melissa Geddie, Dustin Poole

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Arnold called the meeting to order 7:02 pm

Minutes

Minutes were approved for April 17, 2024
(Amirtharaj, Arnold) (3,0)
Roll Call

Public Comment

No Public Comments

Approval of an Permit applications for:
7 Traits Genomic – 155 Arlington Street

Dustin Poole, Manager gave a short presentation of the company's activities. Mr. Arnold asked about the types of materials samples is 7 Traits testing. 7 Traits will receive human, animal and plant samples. Ms. Myers questioned the number of employees 7-Traits has hired. Please submit a workman's comp. insurance. Mr. Arnold asked about the screening in terms of diseases in the samples.

Ms. Netter made a motion to recommend approval of a permit for 7 Traits.
(Netter, Arnold) (3,0)
Roll Call

Diagonal Therapeutics – 200 Arsenal Yards Boulevard #220

Eric Duhaime, Senior VP gave a short presentation of the company's activities. Melissa Geddie , Drug Discovery explained the DNA capabilities. Mr. Arnold asked about infectious materials on site. Dr. Amirtharaj inquired what direction Diagonal is heading. Ms. Geddie stated they were working on blood disorders. Mr. Arnold asked about Diagonal's antibody work .

Mr. Arnold made a motion to recommend approval of a permit for Diagonal.
(Arnold, Amirtharaj) (3,0)
Roll Call

Ms. Myers stated the regulations will begin on July 1, 2024 to serve as an education period. Registrations will be required by December 31, 2024. The Regulations provide accountability to all who have dumpsters at their place of businesses, multi housing units and construction sites.

Department Update

1. Ms. Myers stated the regulations will begin on July 1, 2024 to serve as an education period. Health posted the legal notice that the BOH approved the Watertown Dumpster Regulations.
2. PH nurse applied for a hoarding grant
3. PH nurse is providing additional CPR classes
4. ACO is hosting a dangerous dog hearing class and several municipalities are attending.
5. Ongoing noise at Newlywed Foods has been found and the part will be replaced.
6. HR has received HO applications but we are waiting for more before reviewing them.
7. Health has prepared education materials for both rodent prevention and mosquito and tick information

Items that could not be anticipated before meeting/future meetings

Mr. Arnold asked the board if they are receiving many emails about NFG's. These emails are about not restricting nicotine sales in the community. These emails are from Watertown but outside entities. Nicotine sales are determined at the local level not statewide.

Next Meeting

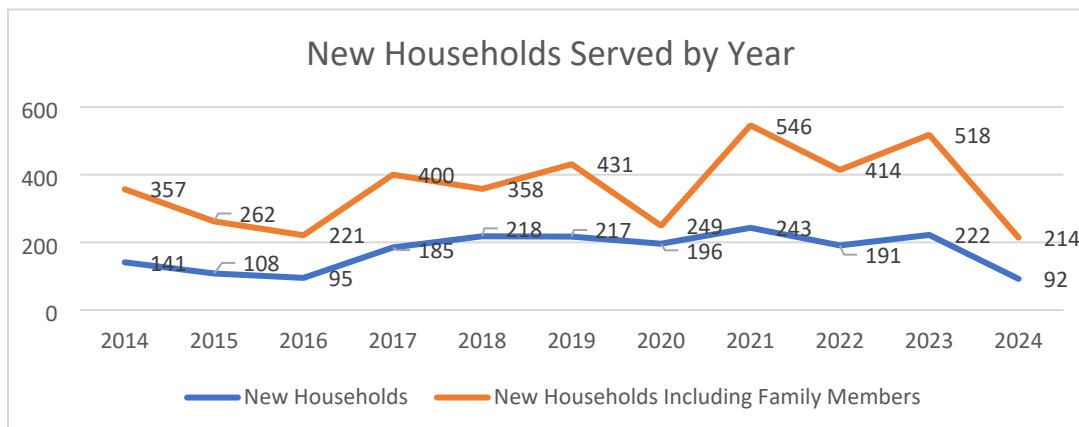
June 26, 2024

Adjourn:

Adjourned the meeting at 7:40 PM
(Arnold, Netter) (3,0)
Roll Call

Watertown Social Services Resource Specialist (SSRS) Program April – June 2024

Between April and June 2024, the SSRS program served a total of 125 households, which included 40 new households for a total of 92 new Watertown residents served. The total number of households served by the SSRS program to date is 1,911 for a total of 3,976 residents when including family members.



Please note that the 2024 data reflects only Quarter 1 and 2.

The chart below represents the assistance needed for new and returning individual residents over the last quarter.

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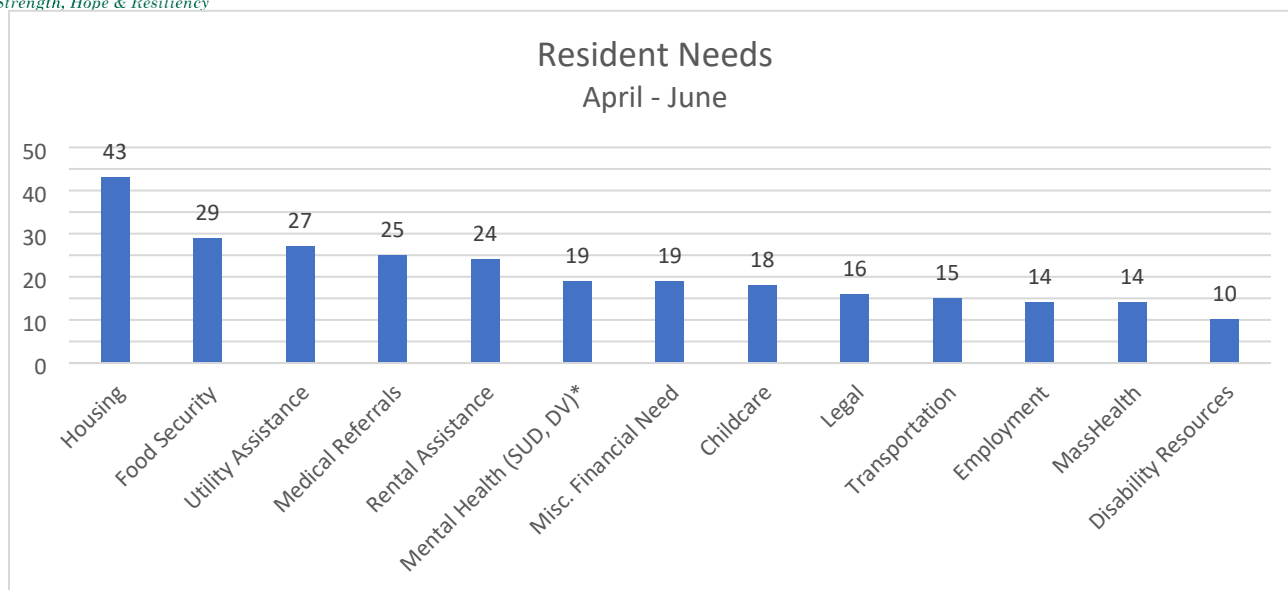
Sara McCabe, LICSW

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*SUD = Substance Use Disorder; DV = Domestic Violence

Many clients have multiple needs and SSRS Clinicians complete a needs assessment and prioritize with clients to meet their most urgent needs. This quarter, the primary needs returned to Housing, Food Security, and Utility Assistance. Other high needs included Medical Referrals and Rental Assistance.

Ways in which SSRS assists with most frequent needs:

- For **Housing Assistance**, SSRS Clinicians work with people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness by applying for public housing and other affordable housing programs, as well as connecting people with emergency housing such as shelters.
- To address **food security**, SSRS Clinicians help clients apply to SNAP (formerly food stamps), distribute grocery store gift cards with funds from the Watertown Community Foundation for those impacted by COVID-19, and share local food pantries and the Watertown Community Fridge.
- **Rental assistance** includes connecting residents to local and state applications and grant funding sources, such as the Helen Robinson Wright Fund through First Parish Church in Watertown and Marshall Home Fund. Residential Aid for Families in Transition (RAFT) continues to be a source of funding for clients only if they have received an eviction notice or need help with moving costs.
- SSRS Clinicians provide **utilities and fuel assistance** by helping clients access Fuel Assistance for heating costs during winter months, the Watertown Emergency Utility Assistance program, and discounts and payment plans through utility companies. SSRS Clinicians communicate with utility companies to prevent shut offs for clients awaiting funding.

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- **Miscellaneous financial needs** often include one-time financial needs such as the purchase of a refrigerator or paying an ambulance bill. These needs are usually filled by local block grants, such as Helen Robinson Wright, Marshall Home Fund, and the Perpetual Benevolent Fund. Other financial needs are met by applying for monthly cash benefits for low-income families with children.
- For **mental health needs**, including coping with Substance Use Disorder and domestic violence, SSRS Clinicians discuss with clients their options for treatment and support, and submit referrals for other Wayside programs (such as Outpatient, In Home Therapy, and the Navigating to Emotional Wellness Program), therapists, treatment, and DV agencies.
- **Disability resources**, includes applying or maintaining disability benefits (Social Security Disability Insurance, Supplemental Security Income, Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled, and Children), applying for Department of Disability Services, and referrals to other disability resources.
- **Legal referrals** are made to free legal aid resources. The most common legal referrals are relating to immigration, housing, and family law.

Outreach

Referrals

This quarter, referrals to the SSRS Program came from the Refugee Support Group, Senior Center, City Hall, Public Library, Watertown Housing Authority, MBTA, Watertown Public Schools, Social Workers, Google searches, family, and friends.

Watertown Housing Authority

Two SSRS Staff tabled at the Education Fair at the Watertown Housing Authority's Education Fair. They were able to share resources with tenants who are interested in going to community college. SSRS Staff connected with existing and new clients.

The SSRS Program Coordinator attended the Willow Park Redevelopment Community Meeting to stay up to date with the project and to provide feedback to the plan on how to best support Willow Park families.

Health and Human Services Survey

The SSRS Program Coordinator met twice with the Health and Human Services Community Needs Assessment Team to share work that SSRS does to support Watertown residents. Wayside Multi-Service Center's Senior Program Director also met twice with the Assessment Team to discuss overall human services in Watertown ranging from primary prevention and public health promotion to intervention and treatment needs.

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Newsletter

The SSRS Clinicians email an occasional newsletter to share resources with SSRS clients. This quarter, resources shared were food security and summer food programs, free events calendar for children in Watertown, and SSRS Library event in July.

Community Partners and Engagement

The SSRS Program Coordinator leads monthly Human Services meetings with other town providers including Veterans' Services Officer Patrick George, Senior Center Case Worker Sheri Melenciano or Director Lydia McCoy, Housing Authority Social Worker Olivia Fields, Watertown Public Schools Community Outreach Counselors Jaimie Leonard and Stephanie Toyias, and the Watertown Police Clinician Julie Flateau.

The SSRS Clinicians continue to attend various community meetings, such as the monthly Watertown Community Foundation Resiliency Task Force and the Wellness (previously Hoarding) Task Force, Livewell Watertown, and Systems of Care meetings—these are meetings led by Riverside Community Care and bring together many providers to discuss current resources and programs.

Funding

Block Grant Funding

The SSRS Program continues to manage two small block grants through the Marshall Home Fund and the Helen Robinson Wright Fund which provide emergency financial assistance to residents in need. This quarter, the SSRS program was able to connect 9 *residents* to emergency financial assistance through these sources. Areas of need were rental, utility assistance, refrigerator, and transportation.

ARPA Funding

Wayside Youth & Family Support Network received ARPA funding from the City of Watertown for a three-year expansion of the SSRS Program to better serve Watertown residents, especially with housing and mental health needs, and to provide more follow-up for clients with high or multiple needs. This funding increased staffing from 40 hours to 80 hours per week. Two part-time staff joined the SSRS team in April and June, with English, Spanish, and Portuguese language capacity.

Since the expansion of staffing in Quarter 2, more time was able to be spent with each client whose needs require more intensive and ongoing intervention than in Quarter 1. SSRS Staff are

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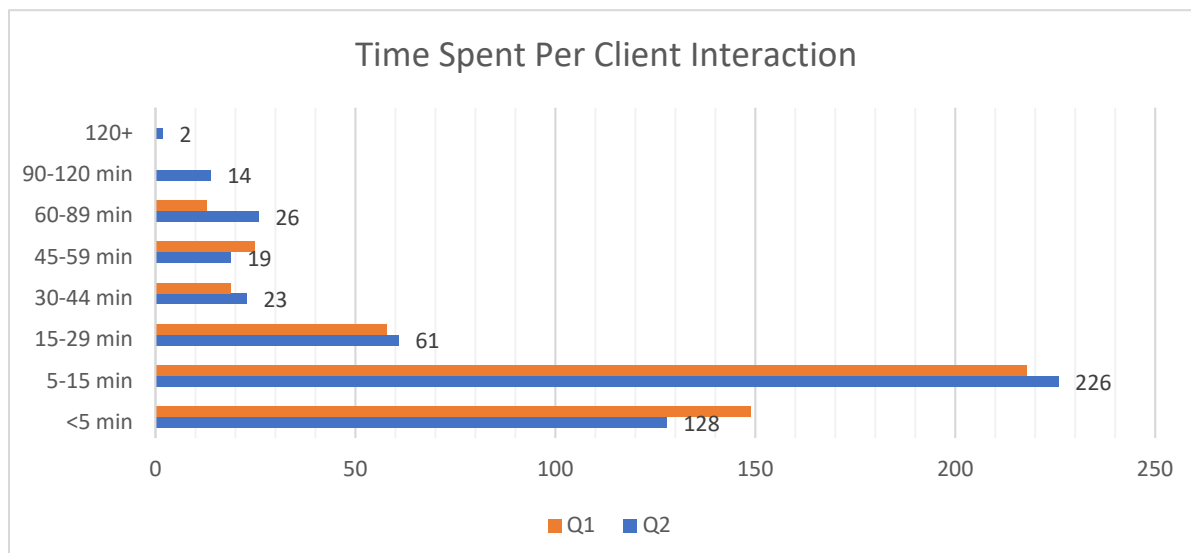
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now able to spend over an hour with some clients in order to more efficiently move toward sustainable solutions; something that was very limited in the past.



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