



Inclusion Through Diversity

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December 20, 2016  
TWO PAGES

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### Highlights of the **December 20, 2016** meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature

#### **Legislature Supports Creation of Behavioral Health Mobile Crisis Team**

The Legislature, by unanimous vote, authorized the County to enter into agreements necessary to support development of a Behavioral Health Mobile Crisis Team by the Tompkins County Mental Health Department. The Team will fulfill the community need for round-the-clock behavioral health crisis assessment, intervention, and stabilization services, for individuals and families experiencing urgent concerns related to mental health and substance abuse issues.

Public Health Director Frank Kruppa told Legislators the program will expand the department's existing Emergency Services Program, with a team of providers and social workers available to work to deescalate situations and connect people with services to help them. Development of the Team, it was noted, will increase public safety, decrease unnecessary hospitalizations, and decrease unnecessary legal involvement or incarcerations for those experiencing behavioral health crises.

The Department will enter into a professional services agreement with the non-profit Care Compass Network (the region's Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment provider), which will provide two years of start-up funding, including financial support for individuals who are otherwise unable to pay for mental health services. Kruppa said the project is projected to be self-sustaining after the initial two-year period, with any additional expense expected to be covered by generated revenue.

*Contact: Frank Kruppa, Public Health Director, 274-6674; Leslyn McBean-Clairborne, Chair, Health and Human Services Committee, 277-5104*

#### **Legislature Expresses Appreciation to Retiring Foodnet Director Steve Griffin**

The Legislature approved a Resolution of Appreciation for retiring director Steve Griffin, after 40 years of service with Foodnet. The Legislature praises Griffin as "a compassionate and dedicated leader, known for his integrity, his competence, and his unfailing courtesy to all," and that he "leaves a legacy of service, caring and generosity that has made this community a stronger and better place," improving the health and quality of life for older adults in Tompkins County.

Mr. Griffin called in a real privilege to serve in this capacity and to work closely with the County Office for the Aging and others throughout the community. "We have a really wonderful working relationship with county government and community partners," he said. "Together, we've really achieved so much."

*Contact: Leslyn McBean-Clairborne, Chair, Health and Human Services Committee, 277-5104.*

#### **Tyler Romer Recognized as Distinguished Youth**

The Legislature recognized Tyler Romer of Trumansburg as the latest Tompkins County Distinguished Youth. Nominated by John Ullberg, Tyler was recognized for initiating his Eagle Scout project responding to parents' safety concerns and supervising the design and construction of a fence to separate the Mini Village playground in the center of Trumansburg from an adjoining parking lot. Ullberg noted that the project required Tyler to coordinate the views of many people, to listen and sort out options, to learn about materials and construction techniques, as well as assembling a team and doing fund-raising, as well as learning how to successfully complete a complex task in a group environment—resulting in a project that not only did the intended job, but

also forged many personal connections and contributed to a wonderful sense of community. The Distinguished Youth Award is cosponsored by Specialty Trophy and Awards, Bangs Ambulance Service, Purity Ice Cream, and Cayuga Radio Group.

*Contact: Legislature Office, 274-5434/*

Among other business

No one commented at a second public hearing on recommended amendments to the County Charter, the second hearing necessary because of recommended wording changes since the first hearing was conducted November 15<sup>th</sup>. The proposed Local Law amending the Charter is scheduled to be considered by the Legislature in January.

The Legislature approved \$58,504 in contingent funding to support costs associated with additional core routers in the County's two data centers and overtime pay and fringe costs related to Affordable Care Act implementation and the required processing of nine years of retroactive payments for the Sheriff's Office Road Patrol.

Chair Rich John reported that the Legislature's special Jail Study Committee is moving forward in its work, at its most recent meeting hearing a series of presentations, followed by discussion among treatment providers, with a reported consensus that more could be done to reach people sooner who are in jail and transition them into treatment. He said the committee's next meeting January 19<sup>th</sup> will be a public information session where the committee will seek public input.

Chair Leslyn McBean-Clairborne reported that the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee last week discussed potential ways to respond to the concerns of members of the LGBTQ community at the committee's previous meeting—the aim to engage the community on expressed issues of concern including employment, safety, and housing. She said potential alternatives discussed included the idea of hosting a summit focusing exclusively on these issues or ways in which to become involved in other programs. She said the County's next Workforce Reading and Discussion Program might also focus on LGBT issues.

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