

Haywood County “Toeprints”

November 15, 2021

Vol. #12 Issue #8 (Subject: Vicki Hyatt, Liberal Hack News Editor, introducing “ThruCare”.)

www.haywoodtp.net

What’s Happening?

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform Haywood County Taxpayers of what transpires at the bi-monthly County Commission Meetings. This newsletter will be written from the perspective of a casual observer, myself. Any opinions expressed will be mine.

Vicki Hyatt finally responds to “ThruCare” Opening.

Vicki Hyatt posted an article on the Mountaineer on 11/15/2021:

“County gets creative to manage jail issues”

By Vicki Hyatt vhyatt@themountaineer.com

https://www.themountaineer.com/news/county-gets-creative-to-manage-jail-issues/article_a44ccf0e-4035-11ec-8f89-c36ca7ed3419.html



Vicki Hyatt, The Mountaineer

The article comes nearly a month after the job opening in the County for a ThruCare position was posted on www.haywoodtp.net. In addition, it was disclosed that there were two, not one, proposals for plans for a new jail, again posted on www.haywoodtp.net.

<https://www.haywoodtp.net/pubII/211015ThruCareProgramDirector.pdf>

<https://www.haywoodtp.net/pubII/211112HemphilRandelProposal.pdf>

The article is loaded with contradictions as to what is happening in the real world.

The full article is reprinted at the end of this newsletter. Vicki Hyatt’s text is in Italics, while my comments are in non-italic print.

Homeless Task Force Meeting, 9/23/2021.

I attended the Homeless Task Force meeting on 9/23/2021. My notes for this meeting follow immediately after this newsletter. The meeting started late, and was “facilitated” by Amy Murphy-Nugen (a.k.a. Down Home NC Hack). The meeting was video recorded. It was one of the worst run meetings I have attended in years. Dale Burris made a motion, in effect killing consideration that the Task Force recommend anyone/position to the Waynesville Aldermen about moving forward with dealing with the homeless. This would have flushed Amy Murphy-Nugen’s (a.k.a. Down Home NC hack) work for the last year and a half down the toilet.

Instead, Amy Murphy-Nugen (a.k.a. Down Home NC Hack) let the meeting ramble for a half an hour, getting multiple feedback’s from members about trying to salvage her program. The motion failed.

The Navigator.

It was during this half hour period that the term “Navigator” came up. I had heard it only one time before, and that was the term given to people helping select an ObamaCare Health Plan.

Kevin Ensley pitched that they already had approval to hire a “navigator” to assist people coming out of jail. The concept was acknowledged by other people, including Sheriff Christopher. This was supposed to complement the work being done by this Task Force.

WTF?

Haywood County HR.

I made a Request for Public Information to Kathi McClure, HCHR, to find out about this navigator.

Subject: Request for Public Information - "Navigator", #1
Date: Wed, 13 Oct 2021 19:47:14 -0400
From: Monroe Miller
To: Kathi McClure
CC: Bryant Morehead

Ms. McClure,

This is a Request for Public Information. At the last Homelessness Task Force Meeting on 9/23/2021, there was discussion from the Sheriff and County Commissioner chair (ensley) about the Sheriff’s department hiring a “navigator”. I don’t recall this being brought up at any county

commissioner meetings, but there are a few I missed.

Please provide the job description for this "navigator".

Please provide the name of the person, if one has been selected, for this position.

Please provide the salary range for this person.

Will this person, if not selected already, go through any vetting process or hiring process?

Thank you,

Monroe A. Miller, Jr.

Response was:

Subject: Request for Public Information - "Navigator", #1
Date: Thu, 14 Oct 2021 11:49:26 +0000
From: Kathi McClure
To: Monroe Miller
CC: **Bryant Morehead**

Mr. Miller,

Good morning. I hope this email finds you doing well. I believe the position you are referring to is entitled Thru Care Manager. I will collect this information and respond to this request by the end of business tomorrow.

Best regards,

Kathi
Kathi McClure, PHR, SHRM-CP

ThruCare Manager?

The job listing is posted on the Haywood County website:

<https://www.haywoodcountync.gov/737/Job-Postings>

It states in part that this is not the "navigator" position, but the person who will establish what the navigator is. More clarification from Kathi McClure...

Subject: Re: Thru Care Manager
Date: Thu, 14 Oct 2021 10:23:49 -0400
From: Monroe Miller
To: Kathi McClure
CC: Bryant Morehead, Tracy Wells

Ms. McClure,

Thank you for directing me to the ThruCare Manager job opening on the Haywood County website.

In the job description, it says:

Description of Responsibilities and Duties

The tasks listed below are those that represent the majority of the time spent working in this position. Management may assign additional tasks related to the type of work of the position as necessary.

Supervisory:

Plans, coordinates and manages the daily activities of the County Thru Care Program.

Supervises the work of the following staff: Jail Navigators, Health Coordinator, and Resource Coordinator ...

It describes interaction with "Jail Navigators". I want to be clear that we are not talking about two different job descriptions here. Who are the current "Jail Navigators" that the ThruCare Manager will be interacting with?

Monroe A. Miller, Jr.

Response.

Subject: RE: Thru Care Manager
Date: Thu, 14 Oct 2021 14:29:17 +0000
From: Kathi McClure
To: Monroe Miller
CC: Bryant Morehead, Tracy Wells

Mr. Miller,

Currently at this time, those position have not been fully developed. I do not believe final job descriptions have been completed and no individuals are designated for these roles or the position/s have been finalized for recruitment. The purpose of the Thru Care Manager position is to get this program started in Haywood County and additional positions may be added later. When this does occur, these individuals will go through the same hiring process as all or our potential new hires.

I hope this is helpful information.

Best regards,
Kathi
Kathi McClure, PHR, SHRM-CP

This directly contradicts statements made by **Vicki Hyatt** and **Bryant Morehead** in **Vicki Hyatt's** article entitled:

"County gets creative to manage jail issues".

They are claiming that the ThruCare position is the “Navigator”. What is happening it this sets the stage for a whole new bureaucracy within Haywood County Government.

In addition, the employment opening states the following:

Description of Responsibilities and Duties:

“Supervises the work of the following staff: Jail Navigators, Health Coordinator, and Resource Coordinator. ...”

Duties also include providing guidance and assistance with personnel matters that have the potential to result in formal disciplinary action, approving disciplinary documentation prior to action being taken and assisting in termination of employees in all departments. ...”

WTF?

So here we have **Vicki Hyatt** and **Bryant Morehead** attempting to whitewash this program with her [expletive deleted] article.

These are a few of the bold faced misconceptions in her article:

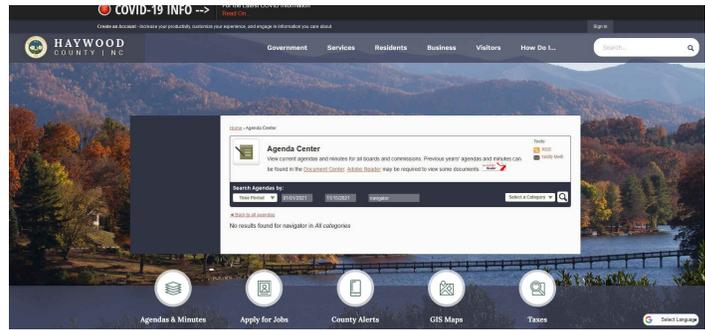
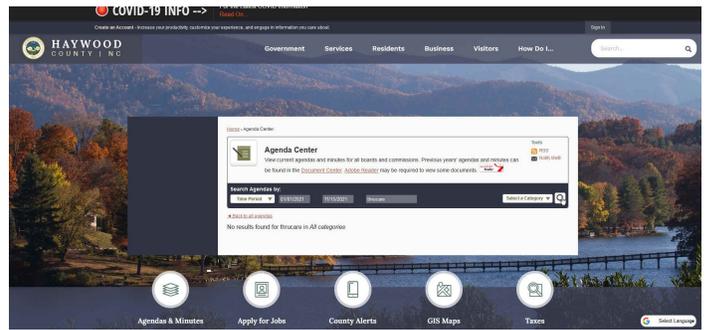
- Implying that the ThruCare individual is the Navigator,
- The program will operate for a trial period to assess its effectiveness? Nothing about that in the job opening.
- Implying that the new jail is years away. There is not even an RFQ or RFP for this new jail.
- No mention of the second set of jail plans by Hemphill-Randell Associates.

<https://www.haywoodtp.net/pubII/211112HemphillRandelProposal.pdf>

Etc., etc., etc. ...

A search of the past year’s minutes of county commission meetings reveals no mention of instances of the phrase -

- Navigator
- ThruCare



Legend: If any name is in **bold**, it can’t be a good thing.

Monroe A. Miller, Jr.
Haywood County Taxpayer
2200 Camp Branch Road
Waynesville, NC 28786
www.haywoodtp.net
Si vis pacem, para bellum

Let’s go Brandon

SEP 23 2021

①

Homeless Task Force

9/23/21

Redacted. Redacted. Redacted. Redacted. Redacted. Redacted. Redacted. Redacted.

😊	☹️	8 audience 12 Members.
Good Guys	Bad Guys	
Date Burusa	Enoley III	
Joslyn	Amy	
Sheriff	Sutton	
Trantham		

Who?
guy sitting in
Far corner with
Apple Laptop
Probably Lotshaw

5:40P

Amy delaying Vote on Dale's Motion. ☹️
1/2 hour discussion.

Very Poor "Facilitate"/"Chair". Rambling - NO Director.
Motion - Remove all 3 positions.

6:15 vote For Against ~~Remove~~ ^{Remove} ~~Chair~~ 3 people
all NO

This is a typical Committee. The reason I will never be on a Committee!
CARES Director, 1 Employee.
Another Motion - Joslyn.

6:30P

THIS IS A CLUSTER F***!

County gets creative to manage jail issues

By Vicki Hyatt vhyatt@themountaineer.com 11 hrs ago



As the county's jail population continues to grow, and a new jail is on the drawing board but at least three or four years out, another solution is being eyed.

The county is advertising for a thru-care coordinator, a person who would assess those charged with crimes to link them to needed services.

[According to Kevin Ensley and Sheriff Christopher, this responsibility would fall under the navigator, not the ThruCare individual. The Navigator position has not even been defined.]

"At the foundation, through care is a pretrial program based on a validated risk assessment," Haywood County Manager Bryant Morehead said in a recent interview. "There are lots of these programs around the country that are very effective."

[What are these lots of programs Morehead is referring to?]

The pre-trial release program currently used in Haywood has resulted in offenders being released, failing to show up for their court appearance, and then being jailed for failure to appear. It is a situation Sheriff Greg Christopher partially blames for the burgeoning jail population.

Under a thru-care program, Morehead said the coordinator would work with court officials, mental health specialists, social workers and counselors to help link offenders to the care they need.

[This would be the navigator, not the ThruCare person.]

"It would create an umbrella of services to help people change their lives and not come back to jail," Morehead said.

The application period for the coordinator is still open, but once filled, the individual will report directly to the county manager and likely be located in an office at the Justice Center.

[Justice Center? Why not the Sheriff's Office?]

"I would think the day-to-day work would be with court services to give judges good information about a person after they've been assessed," Morehead said. "We want someone with experience in pre-trial in North Carolina. We already have a great program through our partnerships with Haywood Pathways Center and Vaya. There are peer support specialists in the jail and we're really looking at a way to help people move past their addiction and mental health problems."

[Again, this would be the navigator, not the ThruCare person.]

The state's failure to adequately support mental health services is a huge driver for local programs — ones that are becoming essential to addressing a rising jail population during a time when there's a shortage of space across the region.

[I'm not sure the Governor would be in agreement with this statement.]

Morehead said the program will operate for a trial period to assess its effectiveness.

[WTF? The county is opening a position for \$65K - \$75K, and it is only a trial program? Who is going to apply for this?]

A tipping point

Sheriff Christopher is facing a monumental challenge with an overflowing jail population. Arrestees are often held in the booking area until a cell opens up, as there are often no other open cells in the region to transport inmates.

There are also state rules about housing offenders. For instance someone facing serious felony charges cannot be put in the same block as someone who's jailed for not paying child support.

"Failures to appear have increased, which has helped to increase the jail population, but we have also arrested a lot of people for different crimes that has caused them to get a high bond simply because of the seriousness of the crime," Christopher said.

As Christopher understands it, the risk-assessment component of a thru-care system, along with an electronic monitoring system, would provide another level of accountability for someone to show up in court and would offer a link to the appropriate type of care to reduce the likelihood of returning to jail.

For the past three years, the recidivism rate for those jailed in Haywood fluctuated between between 40.97% and 42.3%.

"That means basically, four out of every 10 people who are arrested in this county are arrested more than once during a fiscal year," Christopher said.

Last year, there were 3,241 bookings into the Haywood County Jail, and of that number 822 were arrested just once, Christopher said.

"That tells us that we continue to see the same people multiple times throughout a year. I feel if we could get families to help us, and if we had more rehabilitation help and drug court and we had more mental health help, those four things, would provide a better level of accountability for us."

Christopher said when treatment is court-ordered, there is more leverage to make it happen.

"When people are trying to make that choice for themselves, unfortunately, it is difficult to make good choices," Christopher said of those facing addiction.

New jail years away

The Haywood County Commissioners have been weighing the need to expand the jail to accommodate the rising numbers, as well as meet the new jail standards requiring offenders need to be grouped according to the severity of their offense.

The county's jail is licensed for 149, but that number includes an often-closed 40-bed dormitory-style jail annex where it is almost impossible to segregate offenders according to crime severity.

In past meetings, commissioners have discussed a \$16 million addition to the jail that would add 145 beds, but there are a number of issues to resolve before that can happen.

Geotechnical issues are under evaluation, and talks are under way with railroad officials concerning use of its right-of-way that might be necessary for one of the possible designs, Morehead said.

[The county is already spending money on putting this new jail in, and there is no RFP or RFQ.]

Whether the existing jail annex will remain on the site is an issue yet to be resolved once an architect is selected and the project goes forward, Morehead said.

“That building is 40-plus years old and would need a lot of work to keep for another 20 years,” he said. “That site has its challenges with the existing jail and sheriff’s office, the county garage, the Pathways center, the convenience center, and the EMS base. It’s all right there in a tight space.”

Given the situation where there aren’t enough places to house prisoners, either locally or within the region, along with the situation where an expanded jail is years away, something needs to be done soon.

“That’s why we’re hiring a thru-care manager because if we started turning dirt today, it would probably be close to 36 months before the jail open,” Morehead said.

[Editor’s Note: It would not hurt if **Vicki Hyatt** bothered to run her work through a spell checker before she publishes it.]