

MINUTES

Ashtabula County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board August 21, 2023

The Ashtabula County Mental Health and Recovery Services (MHRS) Board met in a special session on Monday, August 21, 2023, at 5:00 PM. This meeting was held in person with a Zoom option for the public.

Board President Ms. Brunarski called the meeting to order at 5:11 p.m. and asked for a roll call of members and staff in attendance.

Board Members in attendance: Ms. Susan Deak; Mr. Alan Block, Board Secretary; Ms. Megan Brunarski, Board President, Ms. Deborah King, Board Vice-President; Mr. Matthew Crawford.

The following Board Members were not in attendance: Ms. Pat DuPuy and Mr. Joe Loftus.

MHRS Board Staff in Attendance: Ms. Miriam Walton, Director; Ms. Kaitie Park Hart; and Ms. Bridget Sherman. Board contractors Ms. Mary Ann Hill and Ms. Patricia Wagner.

Visitors: Mr. Gary Seech, Glenbeigh; Mr. Paul Bolino, Community Counseling Center; and Ms. Angu Daughtery, Family Pride.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: The Minutes of the June 2023 MHRS Board meeting were reviewed. After some review, Ms. Deak moved that the minutes be approved as submitted. Mr. Block seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski called for a vote.

Five Yes; Zero No; None Abstained. Motion passed.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

FISCAL REPORTS— Ms. Walton reviewed the June Draft and July final financial reports. Ms. Walton walked the Board through a new report that will allow the Board to better monitor the budget versus actual expenditures. Mr. Block stated that he liked the new report and thought it would be helpful. After further discussion around June 2023 reports, Ms. Deak moved that the Board table approval of the June 2023 financial reports until they are finalized. Ms. King seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski called for a vote. Five Yes; Zero No; None Abstained. Motion passed.

REPORTS:

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

1. Ms. Brunarski stated that there would be further discussion of the Board Executive Director's evaluation later in the meeting. Ms. Brunarski asked Ms. Walton to explain the possible changes to Board composition based on HB 33. Ms. Walton

explained that HB 33 will allow the County Commissioners, in consultation with the Board, to reduce the number of Board members. Since the Board currently is a 14-member Board, it could go down to 12 or 9. With the change the state would appoint one third of the Board members and the County Commissioners would appoint 2/3rd. Currently the Board averages 10-11 members at any time. At this moment the Board has seven members due to 3 resignations that came close together. The Board members discussed the possible configurations. Mr. Block stated that he would be concerned reducing to 9 as sudden resignations like we just had could leave the Board with very few members. Ms. Walton stated that she is meeting with the Commissioners to briefly go over the process and that she will voice the Board's concern about going to low. Ms. Walton informed the Board that the process would be for the Commissioners to meet with the Board sometime after October 3rd prior to making any changes. The decision is theirs, but it must be made in consultation with the Board.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Ms. Walton asked if anyone had any questions regarding her Executive Director's Report. There were none.
2. Ms. Walton requested that the Board approve a contract amount for the Help Network as the Board's hotline and 988 connection. Ms. Walton explained that she did not budget anything beyond the \$7,000 for the after-hours Warm Line as she was waiting to hear from Help Network concerning that funding that they expected to receive from OhioMHAS and whether they would need to resume funding from the Boards. Ms. Walton stated that she recently heard from the Help Network Director and the Board can now go forward with a contract amount of \$37,950, in addition to the already approved \$7,000. Mr. Block moved that the Board approve the funding. Ms. King seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski asked for a vote. Five Yes; Zero No; None Abstained. Motion passed.
3. Ms. Walton informed the Board that the amount of the requested carryover this state fiscal year is \$304,004. The Board has already developed plans with the local Providers and other partners to expend these funds. We will begin spending the funding as soon as we receive approval from OhioMHAS.
4. Ms. Walton informed the Board that we received \$12,500 from OhioMHAS to assist with mental health hospital stays in private units due to the state hospital not having the capacity at times to receive our residents in a timely fashion. The Board had been using local levy dollars, but this year Ms. Walton wanted to make sure we were participating in the program before she retired. Most of the bed days are purchased through APMC.
5. Ms. Walton discussed September 18th and the Week of Appreciation for Behavioral Health Workers. The Board will be taking out full page ads in the local papers and placing thank you messages on social media. The Board will also be taking portfolios to the social work students in the new KSU-Ashtabula program.
6. Ms. Hart discussed August 31st as Overdose Awareness Day and invited Board members to feel free to stop by. There will be events starting at noon and a proclamation by the County Commissioners at 2:30.
7. Ms. Walton reviewed other changes that would affect the Boards because of HB 33.
8. Ms. Walton passed out the Family Pride flyer for the new Board funded program and

outreach to the senior population.

9. Ms. Walton also updated the Board on the Youth for the Future 988 image and the media that was purchased for the boys to distribute. The Board purchased magnets, window clings and 8x10 posters.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. GRANT SEARCHES— Ms. Walton informed the Board that we have the opportunity to apply for additional HUD Continuum of Care housing vouchers to include families that are homeless. With this grant the match would be 5 vouchers from the Ashtabula Metropolitan Housing Authority. Ms. Weaver, the Board housing consultant, has met with the Housing Authority and they have agreed. Ms. Walton would like the Board's permission to apply for the funding. It would be \$175,000 for 15 vouchers. Ms. King moved that the Board move forward with the grant application. Ms. Deak seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski asked for a vote. Five Yes; Zero No; None Abstained. Motion passed.

B. COALITIONS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:

1. **Suicide Prevention**— Ms. Sherman reported that registration for the One Life race is on Stasny Road Racing web page. There is a new venue and route this year beginning at the Lampson Road Staging Area of the Greenway Trail. Ms. Sherman also reminded Board members that the art show is scheduled for November.
2. **Prevention Coalition**— Ms. Hart informed Board members that the Recovery Out Loud event is September 2nd in North Park in Ashtabula from 11-2. The Board will have a table at the event. Ms. Hart also let the Board know that the PART conference is planned for October and will be held at Lakeside High School.
3. **Housing Continuum of Care**—See Above.
4. **Substance Abuse Leadership Team**—Ms. Walton mentioned the work being done around the Maternal Health Hotline as a stigma reduction activity. The Board should see more on this campaign soon.

C. QUARTERLY REPORTS—Ms. Walton pointed out the end-of-the-state-fiscal-year quarterly reports. Ms. Brunarski asked about the Mission program since the Common Pleas Mental Health Court is closing. Ms. Walton explained that Mission is currently being used in Conneaut with Renewal Court participants and with participants in Family Drug Court. There is also a plan to use it with some folks in Adult Probation through the Common Pleas Court. Ms. Walton and Ms. Hart had a meeting with the Mission staff and the Probation leadership last week and we think it will allow the program to serve some of the same individuals it might have served in MH Court but through Probation instead.

D. CRISIS EXPANSION WORK—Ms. Walton updated the Board on the Adam and Amanda projects through our state hospital collaborative. Ms. Walton also discussed the preliminary work about a crisis stabilization center.

E. OFFICE SPACE—Will be reviewed in Executive Session.

F. CULTURE OF QUALITY—Ms. Walton updated the Board on the process. The

review will be on September 18th and 19th.

G. BOARD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION—Mr. Block asked when the Board will complete Ms. Walton’s evaluation. Ms. Brunarski stated that with the departure of Rev. Werner she will need to meet with Ms. Wagner and review the evaluation. This includes the Board self-evaluation as well. Ms. Brunarski stated that she hopes to have everything finished during the September Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. STRATEGIC PLAN**—Ms. Walton explained that the state CAP process did not allow the Board to address all the areas of need so an addendum to the CAP has been developed to address some of those issues and the evaluation and quality improvement of the programs the Board funds through contracts with our Providers. Ms. Hart discussed the process and development of the plan and walked the Board members through the sections. Ms. Walton asked if there were any questions or concerns about the process or the document. Ms. Hart explained that the quarterly reports will be reflective of both the CAP and the Strategic Plan so that Board staff and Board members have a monitoring tool that reflects our needs assessment. After some discussion, Mr. Block moved that the Board adopt the Strategic Plan. Ms. Brunarski seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski asked for a vote. Five Yes; Zero No; None Abstained. Motion passed.
- B. PERSONNEL POLICIES UPDATE**—Ms. Walton pointed out the section that is updated. The policies stated that the Board had progressive discipline but did not outline what that was. The language used is from the County policies and should bring everything up to date and in compliance with the COQ review. Ms. Brunarski moved that the updates be approved by the Board. Ms. King seconded the motion Ms. Brunarski asked for a vote. Five Yes; Zero No; None Abstained. Motion passed.
- C. RECOVERY OUT LOUD**— Ms. Walton wanted to inform the Board that she used Director’s budget funding to donate \$500 to Recovery Out Loud.

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Ms. Brunarski moved that the Board go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing personnel and property matters. Ms. Deak seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski called for a roll call vote: Ms. Deak, yes; Mr. Block, yes; Ms. King, yes; Mr. Crawford, yes; Ms. Brunarski, yes. The Board entered Executive Session at 6:17 p.m. Ms. Walton asked if any staff or visitors attending virtually wanted to rejoin after the Board came back from Executive Session and all persons declined.

On a motion from Mr. Block and a seconded by Mr. Brunarski the Board returned from Executive Session at 7:00 pm.

ACTION AS A RESULT OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION: Based on discussions in Executive Session, the Board is unable to take action regarding the pending property lease.

Ms. Brunarski put forth the following motion:

It is so moved that the Board employ Ms. Kaitie Hart for the position of Executive Director at a starting salary of \$90,000 beginning March 1, 2024. The Board's Personnel Policies will determine all other benefits.

During her training period, full administrative authority remains with the current Executive Director until March 1, 2024, at which time Ms. Hart will assume administrative authority.

The outgoing Executive Director will provide ongoing consultation to the new Executive Director from March 1, 2024-March 31, 2024.

Ms. King seconded the motion.

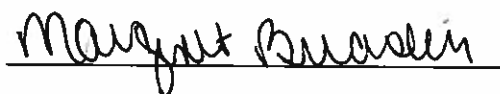
Ms. Brunarski called for a vote. All five Board members present voted yes. There were zero no votes and zero abstentions. The motion passes unanimously. Ms. Brunarski and the other Board members congratulated Ms. Hart.

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Brunarski moved that the meeting be adjourned. Ms. King seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski called for a vote.

Five Yes; Zero No; No Abstentions. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Board meeting is set for September 18, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

Ms. Megan Brunarski, Board President

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Margaret Brunarski", is written over a horizontal line.

Minutes Prepared by Miriam Walton