

MINUTES

Ashtabula County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board January 22, 2024

The Ashtabula County Mental Health and Recovery Services (MHRS) Board met in a special session on Monday, January 22, 2024, 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 5:04 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; Ms. Pat DuPuy and Mr. Joe Owens.

The following Board Members were not in attendance: Mr. Matthew Crawford and Mr. Joe Loftus

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

Visitors: Mr. Paul Bolino, Community Counseling Center; Ms. Kalee Peterson, Signature Health; Mr. Jamie Dials, Signature Health; and Ms. Vanessa Jackson, Lake Area Recovery Center.

SWEARING OF NEW BOARD MEMBER: Ms. Brunarski swore in Mr. Owens, welcomed him, and introduced him to the Board members. Mr. Owens said he was happy to join the Board. Mr. Owens stated that he is currently working with youth at the Youth Opportunities program as the Homeless Outreach Coordinator.

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

Six Yes; Zero No; Zero Abstained. Motion passed.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

FISCAL REPORTS— Ms. Walton reviewed the financial reports for October, November, and December 2023. Ms. Walton explained that we should be around 42% of expenditures for the SFY. We are at 37%, but that is good, and we are expecting the rate hike for Medicaid that the Board adopted for Medicaid billable services for individuals not eligible for Medicaid to increase expenditures slightly. The budget Contract Services is over budget, but that is due to the unexpected revenue we received as pass through for Forensic Center and a Beatitude House grant. Ms. Walton asked for the Board to consider approval of a budget increase for Contract Services or leave it as is and note the reason for the revenue and expenditure increases. Ms.

Deak seconded the motion. After some discussion Ms. Deak moved that the budget line Contract Services be increased to reflect the unanticipated revenue and expenditures. Ms. King seconded the motion. Brunarski called for a vote. Six Yes; Zero No; Zero Abstained. Motion passed. Ms. Brunarski then moved that the October, November, and December 2023 financial reports be approved as presented. Ms. King seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski called for a vote. Six Yes; Zero No; Zero Abstained. Motion passed.

REPORTS:

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

1. Ms. Brunarski stated that she had no report at this time.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Ms. Walton informed the Board that staff have been working to clean up and dispose of things for the move. Along with the statutory shredding that we do this time of year, Ms. Walton presented the Board with the list of items that need to be deemed by the Board as obsolete/unusable so we can dispose of them either through the county online auction or the garbage. Ms. Walton mentioned that we do not auction off our computers as most of them are obsolete by the time we stop using them and that cleaning them so we can be sure there is no Protected Health Information is difficult. Ms. Brunarski asked about the copier. Ms. Walton explained it is our old copier in an office that does not work reliably. The copier in the central office area is new. Mr. Block moved that the list of items be approved as obsolete and that the Board staff take the proper steps to dispose of the items. Ms. King seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski called for a vote. Six Yes; Zero No; Zero Abstained. Motion passed.
2. Ms. Walton introduced the newest staff member, Christy Fisher.
3. MS. Walton discussed the HRSA Maternal Mental Health Hotline work and asked Board members to assist the work by taking some window clings and passing them out to businesses or other venues they knew of where they might help advertise the line.
4. Ms. Walton discussed the work around the April eclipse. Ms. Battaglioli has been attending the County EMA eclipse monthly meetings. The Board briefly discussed the impact this event may have on the County.
5. Ms. Walton continues to complete the agreement for our new outside counsel, Mr. Larry James. The Commissioners approved outside counsel for the Board and the process is moving along so we should have our 120-day notices for the February Board meeting for Board approval.
6. Ms. Hart, Ms. Battaglioli, and Ms. Walton will be in Columbus next week for trainings.
7. Ms. Walton stated that one of the trainings staff will attend in Columbus is Ethics training. Ms. Walton stated that this is an important issue for all of us to be aware of as we work together. Ms. Walton recommended that the annual Board training this year be a training on ethics as it relates to behavioral health Boards.
8. The RAM Clinic has been scheduled for the weekend after the eclipse. The Board will have a table and any Board member interested in joining us should contact Ms. Hart. Ms. Walton asked if the Board wanted to donate \$1,000 to the operating needs

for the event as we did last year. Ms. Brunarski moved that the Board donate \$1,000 to this year's RAM event. Ms. King seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski called for a vote. Six Yes; Zero No; Zero Abstained. Motion passed.

9. Board staff will be working through the contract process earlier this year for training purposes.
10. Ms. Walton Miriam will be the representative to go to Washington DC for HRSA grant reverse site visit. HRSA is requesting that one member from each of the four counties attend along with the staff from Ohio University and PIRE.
11. Ms. Walton described the newly opened Signature Health Everette House- opened in Mentor. Ms. Walton explained that this is part of a Northeast Regional collaborative project. Now that the facility is open the Ashtabula Board may have the opportunity to use it for some Ashtabula County residents who need this level of care after or to divert a mental health hospital stay. Ms. Walton asked if the Board would consider allocating some funding if we do receive a request for a stay in the amount of \$50,000. After some discussion regarding the project and how individuals would access the program, Mr. Block moved that the Board allocate the \$50,000 to pay for individual placements at Everette House. Mr. Owens seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski called for a vote. Six Yes; Zero No; Zero Abstained. Motion passed. Ms. Walton reminded Board members that we also have crisis beds through the collaborative project.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. GRANT SEARCHES— Ms. Walton stated that we are still awaiting notification on the OCJS grant for Judge Iarocci and the new HUD grant. Looking at a few other opportunities but nothing definite.

B. COALITIONS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:

1. **Suicide Prevention**— Ms. Sherman stated that the reports are in the binders. The Board discussed the increase in suicide numbers and the data surrounding it based on the coroner's information. Waiting for 4th quarter reports.
2. **Prevention Coalition**— Ms. Hart asked if anyone had questions on the reports.
3. **Housing Continuum of Care**—See Above.
4. **Substance Abuse Leadership Team**—Ms. Hart asked if there were any questions on the reports.

C. QUARTERLY REPORTS—In the Board binders.

D. CRISIS EXPANSION WORK—Ms. Walton updated the Board on the crisis expansion work. Expansion to 8 p.m. is moving forward.

E. OFFICE SPACE— Board staff have the keys to the new office space. Ms. Walton discussed the next steps, security needs, etc. Staff will be viewing the new space on Friday. Mr. Block asked about a realistic move-in date. Ms. Walton stated that it depends on how quickly we can get the security put in, office furniture ordered, etc. Internet and IT needs will also need to be addressed. Concerned that it will up to 10 weeks or more.

F. CULTURE OF QUALITY-Ms. Walton updated the Board on the review. The Board did receive a three-year certification.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. ANNUAL APPROVAL OF HEALTH OFFICERS**—Ms. Walton presented the list of possible Health Officers from Community Counseling Center and Signature Health. Ms. Walton explained to Board members what Health Officers do and why the Board has the statutory responsibility to appoint the officers. Ms. Walton discussed that some of the officers were trained last year, and any new officers were required to attend the online training offered through the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (our Association). Ms. Brunarski moved that the Health Officers as presented. Ms. King seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski asked for a vote. Six Yes; Zero No; Zero Abstained. Motion passed.

COMMUNICATION—None.

OTHER:

- A.** Board staff would like to have a retirement reception prior to the March Board meeting.
- B.** Ms. King let everyone know that she will not be able to attend the February Board meeting.

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Board meeting is set for February 26, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

Ms. Megan Brunarski, Board President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Megan Brunarski", is written over a horizontal line.

Minutes Prepared by Miriam Walton