

MINUTES

Ashtabula County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board February 26, 2024

The Ashtabula County Mental Health and Recovery Services (MHRS) Board met in a regular session on Monday, February 26, 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 5:01 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. Pat DuPuy; Mr. Joseph Loftus; and Mr. Joseph Owens.

The following Board Members were not in attendance: Ms. Deborah King, Board Vice-President

MHRS Board Staff in Attendance: Ms. Miriam Walton, Executive Director; Ms. Kaitie Park Hart, Assistant Director; and Board contractor Ms. Mary Ann Hill was on via Zoom.

Visitors: Mr. Paul Bolino, Community Counseling Center; Signature Health; Ms. Vanessa Jackson, Lake Area Recovery Center; Ms. Angela Dougherty, Family Pride; Mr. Richard Trice, Glenbeigh.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: The Minutes of the January 2024 MHRS Board meeting were reviewed. After some review, Mr. Block moved that the minutes be approved as submitted. Mr. Owens seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski called for a vote.

Five Yes; Zero No; Mr. Loftus Abstained. Motion passed.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

FISCAL REPORTS— Ms. Walton reviewed the financial reports for January. Ms. Walton explained to the Board that, after consultation with the Board contract CPA, Ms. Denise Casto, Ms. Walton would like the Board to consider not moving funding into the Contract Services line item as approved at the last Board meeting but rather adjust the expenditures to areas that are more suitable to the actual expenditures. Ms. Casto had suggested that everything above the 99 section of the financial reports be more closely related to actual Board operating expenses and keep activities that were pushed out to the community and more client services related in the 99 area. This move will give the Board a clearer picture of the expenditures purposes and increase monitoring abilities. Ms. Walton referred to the budget monitoring sheet that is the next to last report in the packet. The Board reviewed the report and discussed the suggested change. The Board was comfortable with the Ms. Casto suggestions. Mr. Block asked if this sheet could also be subtotaled to show the Board the operating section total and the 99 service area totals as well as the cumulative total. Ms. Walton said yes and that she would discuss it with Ms. Casto. Mr. Block also asked about the \$60,000 budgeted in line 50. Ms.

Walton stated that she believed that this was a previous grant that we were not sure if we were getting it again at the time of the budget but that she would double check and get that answer for the Board. Ms. Walton also informed the Board that Ms. Casto has been doing additional training with Ms. Walton, Ms. Hart, and Ms. Battaglioli. We are also working on five-year projections for the Board. After additional discussion Ms. Deak moved that the Board accept the financial reports for January as submitted. Mr. Owens seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski called for a vote.

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

REPORTS:

BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

1. Ms. Brunarski informed the Board that Mr. Crawford has resigned from the Board due to health problems and that he thanked the Board for their support over the years. The Board and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services regretfully accepted his resignation. Mr. Block asked about what the Board does to recognize departing Board members. Ms. Walton stated that pre-COVID we did plaques, but nothing has been done recently and we need to revive the practice of recognizing those that serve. The Board had a discussion about plaques and decided to do letters of recognition instead of plaques. We reviewed a list of those that left the Board during COVID. Ms. Walton will do letters for Board approval for the next meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Ms. Walton informed the Board that staff are in discussion with the County Commissioners office regarding a Board credit card. The Auditor of State new Guidance for Boards clearly allows credit cards, and this would be extremely helpful for things that must be done online and for the minimal travel that the Board does throughout the year. Board staff will develop a policy and procedure for using the card once we are sure that we will be getting one.
2. Ms. Walton stated that the outside counsel has been approved and that we have engaged Mr. Larry James. Mr. James is highly recommended, and we have been working with him to develop the 120-day notice and the update of our contracts. introduced the newest staff member, Christy Fisher.
3. Ms. Walton presented that the Board levy can appear on the ballot for the first time in November 2024. Ms. Hart will start the process in May with a discussion with the County Commissioners and the Budget Commission. Once the Board knows that the levy will be moving forward in November, the Board will need to form a Levy Committee and approve an allocation of funds to be moved into the levy account at Huntington Bank. Presently Ms. Deak is the treasurer of the Levy funds; however, she will be leaving the Board in June, and a new treasurer will need to be appointed by the Board.
4. Ms. Walton mentioned the Auditor of State training and the Ethics Commission training that staff attended at the end of January. Ms. Hart discussed the Ethics training and the plan to do Board training in the Fall with Ashtabula, Geauga, and Lake County Boards. Board staff explained the importance of this training and that it

would constitute the annual training required by ORC 340 for Board members. Staff also stated that it was a very enjoyable and informative training. Ms. Walton stated that the training covered a variety of issues and conflict of interest. Ms. Walton asked Ms. Deak if she minded being used as an example of what to do. She agreed. Ms. Walton stated that, as the Board knows, Ms. Deak has a family member who recently took a job with one of the Board's contract providers. This is allowable by ORC 340 but Ms. Deak must also follow Ohio Ethics Law as well. The solution was to be open about the potential conflict and thus Ms. Deak cannot deliberate or vote on any issues around that provider. Most areas of potential conflict can be managed when everyone is open about a situation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. GRANT SEARCHES— Ms. Walton stated that Ms. Hart is meeting with Catholic Charities about a potential OhioMHAS landlord incentive grant. This funding would attempt to bring in new landlords to rent to individuals with a severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI) and those with an SPMI and being released from jail or prison. OCJS pre-award conditions have also been completed for the Conneaut Renewal Court grant.

B. COALITIONS AND UPCOMING EVENTS: Board members had no questions.

1. **Suicide Prevention**— See Reports
2. **Prevention Coalition**—See Reports.
3. **Housing Continuum of Care**—See Reports.
4. **Substance Abuse Leadership Team**—See Reports.

C. QUARTERLY REPORTS—See reports in Board binders.

D. CRISIS EXPANSION WORK—Ms. Walton updated the Board on the crisis expansion work. Mobile Crisis is now expanded to 8 p.m. Monday-Friday. 24/7 crisis intervention continues as usual.

E. OFFICE SPACE— Ms. Walton and Ms. Hart have been meeting with vendors to move the process along. Awaiting estimates. Also working with the County Commissioners on details like cleaning and getting the tile and carpet cleaned. Most likely will not have full access to space until after the beginning of April.

F. CULTURE OF QUALITY-Ms. Walton stated that staff received the award at the end of January. Plaque was passed around. Mr. Block asked about doing a press release. Ms. Walton stated that we would get that completed.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. 120-DAY NOTICES FOR SFY 2025 TREATMENT PROVIDERS**—Ms. Walton presented the draft 120-Day Notice and explained the requirements under ORC 340 to complete these each year and get them to Providers 120 days before the termination of their SFY 2024 contracts. Ms. Walton also stated that she and Ms. Hart will be meeting with as many Providers as possible before the end of March to begin the budgeting process for SFY 2025. Mr. Block read the 120-Day Resolution into the record and moved that the Board approve these for submission

to the contract Providers. Ms. Brunarski seconded the motion. Ms. Brunarski called for a vote.

Six Yes, Zero No. The motion passed.

- B. MS. WALTON'S RETIREMENT RECEPTION-** Ms. Hart reminded the Board members that we will be having a small retirement reception for Ms. Walton from 3-5 before the next Board meeting.

COMMUNICATION—None.

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

Six Yes; Zero No. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Board meeting is set for March 18, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.

Ms. Megan Brunarski, Board President

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Margaret Brunarski". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Minutes Prepared by Miriam Walton