



Geauga Board of Mental Health and Recovery Services - 4/20/2022

Regular Board Meeting 4/20/22, 6:00 p.m at 13244 Ravenna Rd, Chardon, OH. In-person only.

Attendance: Board members attending in-person included Chair Jennifer Malainy, Vice Chair Steven Oluic, Treasurer Michael Petruziello, Secretary Alberta Chokshi, Ann Bagley, Walter Claypool, Marty Fay, Jimmy Lee Holden, Dr. Vanessa Jensen, Kathy Johnson, Linda Miller and Mary Ruth Shumway. Dr. Carolee Lesyk and Gregory O'Brien were absent.

Staff attended in-person and included CEO/Executive Director James Adams, Associate Director Amie Martin-d'Arienzo, Finance Manager Jim Mausser, Administrative Support Teresa Slater

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Minutes- Minutes from the March 16 and Mar 24 meetings were presented for approval.

- Discussion raised regarding the adjournment after the March 24 meeting and whether protocol was followed because the public was not admitted back in when the Board returned from Executive Session.
- The Chair determined that there was no problem since there is no requirement that the public be brought back in and that adjournment was proper.
- The wording in the Minutes were changed to reflect that the Board came out of Executive Session into regular session and adjourned. Minutes approved from the Mar. 16 and Mar. 24 meetings. **Reviewer's comment: there in fact IS a requirement that Executive Session both begin AND end in open session. Open session requires inclusion of all members of the public who wish to attend. See ORC**

Guest speaker, Scott Hildenbrand, Geauga County Sheriff

- Sheriff Hildenbrand began by stating that "at the risk of looking like Joe Biden" he would be referring to his notes while speaking.
- The Sheriff stated that the biggest challenge they face at the jail are with inmates who come in with mental health issues. Eighty percent of their inmates have mental health issues, and 34% are on some medication. The jail spends over \$30,000 per year just on medications.
- The intake is a particular challenge. There are only 9 cells and they must limit intake to violent crimes or those with mental health issues. They are expanding that area to accommodate the increase in number of people coming through.
- They no longer have a full time therapist working there, and Ravenwood only provides them with 10 hours per week because Ravenwood does not have enough staff. Many prisoners are not getting treatment.

- Because a significant percent of the prison population have previously diagnosed mental health disorders, jails have become de facto treatment centers. Many have no place to go when they get out, and they need supervision. There needs to be somewhere else for these people to go beside the jail.

Mr. Oluic suggested that maybe the County needs to create a step down unit. There was a suggestion that the Board look into the Mental Health Court run by Judge Paschke.

Chairman's Report - Chair Jennifer Malainy asked Jim Adams whether he had had any conversations with anyone from SOGI (Geauga Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Support Network). Mr. Adams replied that he had spoken a couple times with Chris (Steigerwald).

CEO Report - Mr. Adams pointed out that the Board has supported housing for those with addiction and mental health issues. He has applied for a grant for \$950,000 for additional supported housing consisting of six person house with staff. Area on Aquilla Road has space for another facility. He applied for a total of 2 grants totalling \$1.5 million.

Comment was made that the TLC facility is full all the time with Lake County residents and Mr. Adams stated that that was a funding issue.

Mr. Petruziello asked why Metzenbaum isn't available and was told that the Director there said the beds are full though the facility is flexible.

Mr. Adams also responded to a question about whether he would seek assistance from churches who offer housing and he said he would. The site at 470 could also be used for drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

Mr. Claypool stated that before building anything there needed to be a plan, including types of patients and criteria for admission into a facility. Mr. Adams stated that the grant proposals require much of that information.

Committee Reports

- Agency Relations - has met and will continue to meet. The May 24 meeting from 6:00-7:30 is to recommend and review RFPs prior to the full Board meeting to vote on RFPs for this year. There will be other meetings of the Committee in May as well.
- Finance - None
- Planning and Policies Committee- Mr. Claypool stated that surveys were sent to the Board; surveys will also be sent to stakeholders.
- Housing Committee – Mr. Oluic stated that he has had meetings and visited facilities. There is a need to speak to JFS (Job and Family Services) and then will have a draft plan to present to the Board.

Board Review and Action Items

- Resolution 22-04-01 Behavioral Health Care Levy. Mr. Petruziello expressed doubt about the numbers being served. 12,000 people seems like a lot and students should not be served by them; that is the parents' job. It was explained that those numbers include prevention services.

Discussion was had about waiting to vote on this but concern was raised that the process for getting this on the ballot is complex and it might not make it on time. The language was amended to reflect that wellness is included in the levy and the Resolution passed.

- Financial Reports - report on amounts expended to date (\$1.83 million through March). Report on expenses and reserves which total over \$4 million.

Old Business

Question was raised regarding whether there was any information on appraisal of Board properties but Mr. Adams said he had not spoken with the insurance agent.

The HUB activity packet has been sent out.

New Business – None

Discussion Items:

- Torchlight Youth Mentoring Alliance request for an additional \$25,000 for their foster care program for the current fiscal year ending in June was passed. That would bring their funding to a total of \$85,000 for this fiscal year.
- Creation of a Technology and Communication Committee – Dr. Jensen asked that it be placed on hold.
- Staff calendars – No comment.
- Process and Performance Audit Overview and Discussion – Mr. Claypool wanted to know what involvement Mr. Adams has in agencies seeking funding from the Board. He wanted to know if Mr. Adams was coaching agencies on how to get funding. Mr. Adams said that he speaks generally with them about the process.
- Mr. Claypool wanted to know if the Board needs to return money to taxpayers because of the large cash reserve on hand. Mr. Adams replied that grant funds had made up a lot of the money they would otherwise use tax dollars for and the reserves are there for when grant funds are no longer available. The Board's reserves are not out of the ordinary for an organization like this. He did inquire as to whether unused funds should be moved into an interest bearing account.
- Mr. Claypool was advised that levy money does not have to be spent.

Executive Session - the Chair then requested to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing "The Succession Plan."

Mr. Adams requested that any discussion of his employment be had in public. The Chair stated multiple times that the purpose of the Executive session was to go over the Succession Plan. She also stated several times that Mr. Adams was not being removed.

Mr. Claypool pointed out that it was not appropriate to go into Executive Session to address a succession plan. The Chair then stated that the purpose was to consider the employment status

of a public employee as set out in ORC Section 121.22(G)(1). Motion passed 8-3 to go into Executive Session. Board returned from Executive Session at 8:06 and passed two motions:

- Motion to seek opinion from County Prosecutor regarding the Board's ability to seek outside legal counsel passed 8-3.
- Mr. Petruziello motioned to hire outside counsel if approved by the Prosecutor and motion passed 8-4.

Reviewer's Comment: it is unclear why GCMHRS is seeking outside legal counsel.

Public Comment

- Vicki Clark from TLC stated that housing mentally ill patients is critical as they do much better than when in jail. Some will cycle in and out of treatment but many will stabilize and get jobs and housing. TLC very had to expand so they would need a new facility to address additional patients.
- Kim Carter from NAMI Geauga also spoke. Suggestion was made to bring someone in from Judge Paschke's Mental Health Court and the Chair requested that it be placed on the agenda.
- Mary Briggs also spoke and thanked the Board for its work.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20.

Next full Board meeting will be Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 6 pm at the Administrative Offices.

Additional Information available here: <https://www.geauga.org/about-us/>

Minutes available here: <https://www.geauga.org/board-minutes/>

Observer: Aimee Gilman

Reviewer: Shelly Lewis

The League of Women Voters of Geauga is a 501(c)(3) nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. They do not support or oppose individual candidates or parties. Learn more about the LWVG at www.lwvgeauga.org.