



## **Geauga County Mental Health and Recovery Board – May 25, 2022**

Meeting: Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm at the Board Administrative Offices located at 13244 Ravenna Road, Chardon, Ohio 44024.

This meeting was in person with no virtual option.

The meeting began at 6:05 pm on May 25, 2022. The following Board officers were in attendance: Jennifer Malainy, Chairman, Steven Oluic,( arriving at 6:20 pm) , Vice Chairman, Michael Petruziello, Treasurer, Alberta Chokshi, Secretary and Board members: Ann Bagley, Walter 'Skip' Claypool, Marty Fay, Jimmy Lee Holden, Dr. Vanessa Jensen, Kathy Johnson, Linda Miller, Gregory J. O'Brien and Mary Ruth Shumway. Dr. Caroline Lesyk was not in attendance. Staff Members in attendance were Aimie Martin-D'Arienzo, Interim Director, Jim Mauser, Finance Director and Teresa Slater, secretary.

The Meeting began at approximately 6:05 with the Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance. An updated Agenda was available

The Chair introduced Judge Carolyn Paschke, Geauga County Common Pleas Judge and the Judge who oversees the New Leaf Program (Drug Court). Judge Paschke started by stating that she had two general points to cover.

- First is to describe the New Leaf program
- Second is to discuss what she has found for the need for mental health services in the jail.

She began by discussing the increased volume the Common Pleas Court is experiencing due to a change in the backlog of the State crime lab. This backlog has been remedied and the Court is on track to increase from a normal 225 felony cases a year to 300. She reminded the members of the difference between Municipal Court (low level offenses) and Common Pleas (felonies) and distinguished between jail (interim and short-term incarcerations) and prison (longer terms, out of county). Judge Paschke described the purpose of the New Leaf program or drug court to address recidivism and help those incarcerated, especially for drug related offenses, to succeed after they are released or are on community control (probation). This is a new program (3 years) and during this time they have achieved a 69% success rate with 6 graduates and 2 more graduating in the coming days. Participation is voluntary and individuals must be successful at six phases before graduation. The treatment team includes individuals from Lake Geauga Recovery, Prosecutor's office, Public Defender, Northeast Ohio Community

Alternative Program (NEOCAP), Family Pride, Sheriff's office, Job and Family Services and Community Control (probation). NEOCAP is Northeast Ohio Community Alternative Program More information can be found here: <https://www.neocap.org/>

The Ohio Supreme Court (grant funding source) permits 23 individuals to be enrolled at any one time. More information about the New Leaf program can be found here:

<https://co.geauga.oh.us/commonpleas/NewLeafProgram>

Judge Paschke then addressed the second point of mental health needs in the jail. She stated that approximately 85% of those in the jail have mental health issues. Medication is effective, but there is no treatment program. She has started exploring a treatment program in the jail similar to other Intensive out-patient programs (IOP) found in other settings. It would be a three-part program including medication management, intensive therapy and work on re-entry skills and goals.

Judge Paschke asked for questions and most of these came from Mr. Claypool. He expressed his opinion that this program is very expensive and referred to an unnamed source who had told him that it might cost a million dollars a person. Judge Paschke responded that they have a grant from the Ohio Supreme Court and are using personnel from already funded programs, including all the members of the team mentioned above. Mr. Claypool also questioned Judge Paschke as to the success rate and whether it has been 69%. Judge Paschke explained that this figure includes those who are still in the program and are proceeding through the six stages. She explained that the individuals in the program are high risk, but that those are the individuals who need this type of program the most in order to be successful. They often have no family support and this program provides that.

**Meeting Minutes** – After some discussion the Board approved the minutes from April 20, 2022 and May 4, 2022. There was an objection to a section on Page 13 of the April 20 minutes concerning the purpose of the executive session. The objection was that “a succession plan for an executive” is not a proper purpose for an executive session. The Chair stated that this has been dealt with. **Observer Note: These minutes are not yet posted.**

### **Chairman's Report**

The Chair announced that the Board had received information about Sunshine Law training.

### **Interim Executive Director Report**

The Interim Director confirmed that she was asked not to review a policy matter – it was not clear what this referenced. She announced that she will be on vacation for the next Board meeting. There was some confusion as to whether the Board would meet as scheduled, but it was confirmed that they will meet as scheduled. This meeting date was not announced.

### **Committee Reports**

It was reported that there had been a joint meeting the previous night with the Finance Committee, and they had reviewed all the Request for Proposals (RFP's) from the Agency and the Board would be considering them later in the meeting.

The Finance Committee reported the same thing but also added that the reserves are too high as the County Budget Commission has asked to see a plan for using these funds. Mr. Oluic stated that the County Auditor was “getting out of their lane” and he suggested that they keep the money as submitted because they have to plan “for a rainy day”. It was stated that the Commissioners want a five-year capital expenditure plan. The interim Chair stated that she would submit information to the Budget Commission.

**Housing**– Mr. O’Brien spoke about the recommendation of the Housing Committee regarding housing that would be built through Mental Health and Recovery. He stated that they had a Zoom meeting with Craig Swenson from JFS (Juvenile and Family Services) and that there was agreement about the need for housing in the County. Mr. O’Brien stated that there were two possible locations: The Center Street Location in Chardon once county offices have moved to the new County office building, and another parcel adjacent to the property currently owned by Geauga Mental Health and Recovery. Mr. O’Brien asked for a motion for a Request for Quote (RFQ) to bring in an architect to see what was possible. Mr. Claypool wanted to know why this housing was necessary and wanted a discussion with the whole board. Mr. O’Brien stated that Mr. Swenson from Jobs and Family Services (JFS) will be attending the next Board meeting to give a presentation on the need for housing. Mr. Oluic stated that the Board has already heard a great deal of information on this need and that presently Geauga County is spending money to send a lot of people outside the County because we don’t have housing in the county.

#### **Board Review and Action Items – All approved**

Resolution 22-05-1 **System of Care Funding Allocations for SFY2023** – There was some discussion but approved.

Resolution 22-05-2 **Disposition of Board Vehicle**

Resolution 22-05-3 **Administrative Budget for SFY2023** – There was a question about salaries and it was stated that the Board will be talking about salaries in the Executive Session. Certain Board members were confused about what was going to be discussed in Executive Session.

**Observer Note:** “Employee Salaries” had been the stated purpose for the executive session on the Agenda mailed out prior to the meeting. The revised Agenda (available at the meeting and apparently mailed to Board members that morning) had a different purpose stated for Executive Session as stated below in the Agenda.

**Funding Allocations** - The board approved the following funding allocations with a clear majority for each one. These approvals were in line with the RFP’s but the amounts were not read.

- d. Resolution 22-05-4 Signature Health Grant Award for SFY2023
- e. Resolution 22-05-5 Geauga Sheriff Grant Award for SFY2023
- f. Resolution 22-05-6 Torchlight Allocation for SFY2023
- g. Resolution 22-05-7 Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers Allocation for SFY2023
- h. Resolution 22-05-8 NAMI Geauga Allocation for SFY2023
- i. Resolution 22-05-9 WomenSafe Allocation for SFY2023
- j. Resolution 22-05-10 Family Pride Allocation for SFY2022

There was an additional item not listed on the original Agenda: Permanent Supportive Housing Grant Award. Mr. Claypool asked why there had to be a case manager for Metropolitan Housing Project and Mr. Petruziello explained the need and also that it would be someone from Ravenwood. This was approved

### **Financial Report**

It was also stated that there will be funds left at the end of the fiscal year. The estimate was \$520,000

### **Old Business – none mentioned**

#### **Discussion Items:**

Industrial Appraisal -- Discussion about an Industrial Appraisal – it was stated that this will be an overview by the insurance agent to re-appraise. They will be sending a proposal with costs.

Comment that individuals could have attended prior meetings had zoom been available. The chair stated: “We’re not going to Zoom” Another person commented that Zoom is going away in June. **Observer Note:** This comment is apparently a reference to the fact that Ohio Public Meetings Act has permitted zoom meetings as an alternative to in person until July 1 2022. There is nothing in ORC that prohibits an agency from having Zoom access to meetings after that date. For more details see <https://www.ohiotownships.org/covid-19-open-meetings-act-changes-and-remote-meetings-to-ols>

**Nominating Committee** – It was stated that nominations for next year’s officers are not ready and that they will be sent with 5 days’ notice as required.

#### **Public Comments**

The Agenda order was modified to permit Public Comment before the Executive Session as it was stated by one of the Board members that there would be no action after the Executive Session.

Mary Briggs, a community member, spoke for 7 minutes. She said that she had heard from many sources that Diane Grendell would be appointed as the next Director of the Board. No comment from the Board. She then provided a list of events going on in the County that she said would provide mental health support to people of the diverse community who live in the County. In particular she mentioned a Gay Pride event on June 18<sup>th</sup> in Chardon

Clarifying question was asked by this Observer as to whether the Board would come back into Regular Session prior to adjourning. It was stated that they would but they wouldn’t take any action. All were asked to exit.

**Purpose of Executive Session** listed on the revised Agenda was: “Executive Session to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, or demotion of a public

employee or official, or the investigation of charges of complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual pursuant to ORC Section 121.22(G)(1).

Observer Note: The following notice appears on the website: Special Meeting for Executive Session on June 1, 2022 at 6:00 PM to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G)(1).

**Next Special Board meeting** will be June 1, 2022 at 6 pm (canceled as of June 1, 2022)  
Next full Board meeting Wednesday, which would be June 15th at 6 pm

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

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

Observer: Gail Roussey

Submitted: 5/28/22

Editor: Betsy Kubbins

Reviewer: Shelly Lewis

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