

Minutes
Mental Health Partners
Board of Directors
Thursday, December 18, 2008
6:30 P.M.

The Mental Health Partners Board of Directors met on this date in the cafeteria at Connections in Newton.

Members of the Board present included: Joseph Beaman, Jr., Kitty Barnes, Ray Von Beatty, John Dayberry, Lori Faulkner, Danny Graves, Dr. Anthony Frasca, Bruce Hawkins, Sr., Cynthia Houser, and Ronald Kendrick. Excused and/or absent for other equivalent circumstances were Todd Carswell, Michele Hamby, and Elizabeth Young. Mental Health Partners staff present included John Hardy, Vanessa Anderson, and Janice Cornett.

A quorum was present.

The meeting agenda was mailed to the media and Board members on December 11, 2008. There were no representatives of the media.

Handouts

The following items were distributed prior to the opening of the meeting: (1) 2008 Mental Health Partners' Consumer Survey; (2) Staff Holiday Giving Summary; (3) Draft Modification of Board By-Laws; (4) Resolution #01-2008; and (5) Post Card Regarding "*The Essential Governing Responsibilities of LME Boards*".

Tour/Overview of Connections Clubhouse

Prior to the opening of the meeting, Board members were given a tour of the Connections Clubhouse by Sarah Parham, Program Director, and William, a member of the Clubhouse. The Connections Clubhouse is a psychosocial rehabilitation program provided by Catawba Valley Behavioral Healthcare (CVBH). Sarah explained that the goal of the program is to promote and provide opportunities for adults with mental illness to lead meaningful and productive lives. The philosophy of the Clubhouse is that members have four basic rights: (1) the right to have a place to come; (2) the right to meaningful work; (3) the right to meaningful relationships; and (4) the right to a place to return. William gave the Board members a summary of his experiences over the past 12 years and described how the program at Connections has helped him.

Approximately 70 adults are members of the Clubhouse, with an average daily attendance of 50. There are three units that support the daily activities at the Clubhouse – kitchen unit, clerical unit, and snack bar unit. Many of the members work part-time in companies throughout the community as a means of transitioning to full time work. The Clubhouse also provides supported education in assisting members to obtain their GED or in returning to school to pursue a degree at Catawba Valley Community College.

Upon completion of the tour, the Board members returned to the cafeteria at Connections to a chili dinner with all the trimmings. The Connections staff and volunteers, Barbara Andrews and Mary LePage, had done a phenomenal job of decorating the cafeteria for the occasion and preparing the meal for the Mental Health Partners Board. The decorations definitely set the tone for the holiday season! John Dayberry led the invocation. Clubhouse members Anna and Zoina did a wonderful job of assisting Barbara and Mary in serving the meal and attending to the group during the meal.

Call to Order

Chair Joe Beaman, Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:47 P.M. and thanked everyone for their attendance. He expressed appreciation to Sarah Parham, William, the volunteers and members of Clubhouse for hosting the December Board meeting. Chair Beaman then introduced new Board member, Bruce Hawkins, Sr. Mr. Hawkins is the newly appointed commissioner representative from Burke County to the Mental Health Partners Board. Mr. Hawkins gave the Board some background information on his experience, including 41 years of service to Broughton Hospital. The Board welcomes Mr. Hawkins, and his experience in the mental health field will be a valuable asset to the Board.

Elizabeth "Beth" Young, principal at North Liberty School in Morganton, was also recently appointed to the Board as a representative from Burke County. Ms. Young had a commitment for tonight prior to her Board appointment, but will join us at the January meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of the regular session and of the closed session of the November 20, 2008 Board of Directors' meeting were presented.

Kitty Barnes made a motion that both the minutes of the regular session and the minutes of the closed session of the November 20, 2008 meeting be accepted as presented. Danny Graves seconded the motion.

There was no discussion, and it was unanimously voted to accept both sets of minutes as presented.

Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

Commissioner Comments

Catawba County Commissioner Kitty Barnes noted that copies of the *Catawba County Commissioners' Synopsis* for the November 17 and December 1 meetings were included in the Board packet. The December 15 meeting was a lengthy one. The settlement agreement with Mental Health Partners for fiscal year 2007-2008 was approved. The commissioners also reviewed the audit report for the past fiscal year and adopted the 2009 State and Federal Legislative Agendas.

Bruce Hawkins, Sr., Burke County Commissioner, stated that a great deal of concern has been expressed to the newly elected commissioners in regard to the need for a Convention Center at a cost of millions of dollars when so many other needs are present, especially with the current economic situation. The commissioners have reviewed the situation, but the convention center is too far in process in stop now. However, no county funds will be used to outfit the facility.

Director's Report

1. A Christmas party was held for the wards of Mental Health Partners this past Monday (December 15). Each ward received a \$25 gift card.
2. The staff of Mental Health Partners was treated to a holiday luncheon on Wednesday, December 17 in appreciation for their hard work this past year.

3. CVBH just received a three-year accreditation from CARF. Family N.E.T. received accreditation from CARF a couple months ago.
4. MHP continues to work with providers on their service dollars and predicting the dollars needed for services rendered through June 2009. The goal is to try to ensure a constant flow of funds.
5. Cooperative Christian Ministries, the Salvation Army, and other faith-based agencies are overwhelmed and struggling to meet the increased needs in the communities. Part of this is due to the holiday season, but economic conditions have forced more people to request help. MHP has tried to insert some services into the Salvation Army to assist where possible.
6. MHP staff “adopted” two families, one from Burke County and one from Catawba County, to try to assist during the holidays. Each family includes multiple children. Later in this evening’s meeting, Vanessa Anderson will give an update of what has been done to assist the families.
7. We are working on a three-way contract with the State and Catawba Valley Medical Center (CVMC) for the Community Hospital Indigent Inpatient Care Project. This project will increase the number of psychiatric inpatient beds available at the hospitals for indigent acute care. Priority for admission to one of these beds has been established in the following order:
 1. Admissions referred and authorized by MHP for the surrounding counties.
 2. Anyone in any Emergency Room waiting for admission to Broughton Hospital.
 3. LMEs in other regions of the state who are a party to a three-way contract with another community hospital.
 4. LMEs throughout the state not party to any three-way agreements.

The three-year contract with CVMC was effective December 1, 2008 and the total payment by the Division shall not exceed \$1.7 million per year. We are also in discussion with Frye Regional Medical Center for a similar six month contract.

8. The NC Council’s Fall Conference and Exhibition was held in Pinehurst on December 10-12. The three day conference was attended by three MHP Board members, 3 members of the Consumer and Family Advisory Committee (CFAC), and five members of the MHP staff. Other staff members drove to Pinehurst for a day to meet vendors or hear specific components of the conference.
9. Martin Lawing, a Deputy Sheriff for Burke County, was shot on December 11, 2007 while trying to serve an involuntary commitment order. Director Hardy interviewed Deputy Lawing prior to the Pinehurst conference. An update of the deputy’s life changing injuries was given at the conference and \$1000 was contributed by conference attendees as a token of appreciation to Deputy Lawing.
10. The January meeting of the MHP Board will be held at Turning Point in Morganton.

Consumer Satisfaction Survey

Vanessa Anderson referred the group to the 2008 Mental Health Partners’ Consumer Survey. She noted that MHP participates in this survey each year as part of the NC DMHDDSAS Customer Satisfaction Survey process. The survey is usually distributed through the provider network in October of each year and is back within a couple of weeks. The information collected is then summarized so the LME can look at how consumers feel about the services they are receiving.

This year's survey was distributed to 14 providers within Burke and Catawba Counties. Of those 14 agencies, 12 responded by returning completed surveys. The surveys are typically completed by consumers who come in for appointments with the providers during those couple weeks. We do not get good results when we mail surveys to the homes of consumers. Three age groups were surveyed with varying questions: (1) adults; (2) families with children 0-11 years of age; and (3) 12-17 year old youth. Surveys were compiled according to the age group. The results were mostly positive. One new component, the consumer's opinion of his/her physical health, was added to the adult survey this year.

We also attempt to get information from our consumers in other ways. Postcards are mailed to new consumers 45 days after beginning services, and again 6 months after receiving services. Thus far, there is only about a 4 percent return of the postcards. The Spring Forum is another avenue used to gain consumer input.

Staff Holiday Giving

Next, Vanessa Anderson presented an overview of the staff's "adoption" of the two families referred to during the Director's report. She referred to the handout of the *Staff Holiday Giving Summary*. Vanessa noted that the staff has been working with the Catawba County family (eight family members) since the week before Thanksgiving. The needs of the Burke County family (six family members) had not been identified at that time. Both families are experiencing medical issues with one parent and have suffered job losses. The Catawba County family also has a child with disabilities.

One side of the handout shows pictures of the two families, as well as some of the boxes of items collected from the staff for the families. The other side of the handout summarizes the needs identified, MHP contributions, staff contributions, and how the contributions were distributed between the two families. In total, \$7,841 was contributed to assist the two families with living expenses and to make the holidays a little brighter. Of that \$7,841, the staff had contributed \$4,741.

Consideration Items

Modification of MHP Board By-Laws

A draft modification of the MHP Board By-Laws was distributed prior to the opening of the meeting. Director Hardy explained that as a result of a presentation at the Pinehurst conference by Mark Botts, an attorney with the Institute of Government, it was evident that the current by-laws need some modifications. The Board has been treating the commissioner representatives as non-voting members due to their "ex officio" role. The by-laws need to be modified to allow the commissioners to have the same voting privileges and obligations as other Board members. This understanding has been confirmed through an email with Mr. Botts.

The by-laws also need to address the issue of the establishment of an ad hoc Nominating Committee, as well as Board expectations. Other changes will probably be necessary as we identify requirements under CARF accreditation.

It is requested that the Board review the proposed modifications, with formal adoption of the revised by-laws being added to the agenda for the January Board meeting.

Resolution #01-2008

Approved by the Mental Health Services of Catawba County Board in June 2008, this resolution extended the leadership terms of the Board's Vice Chair (Joe Beaman, Jr.) and Secretary/Treasurer (Von Beatty) to function as Chair and Vice Chair respectively of the new Mental Health Partners Board until that Board was able to elect officers, or up to six months, whichever came first. The purpose of the resolution was to maintain some continuity of Board leadership during the transition period.

The six month time frame will expire this month so we need to appoint a Nominating Committee to make officer recommendations to be voted upon at the January Board meeting. Chair Beaman asked Danny Graves and Tony Frasca if they would be willing to serve on the Nominating Committee. Both Board members agreed to serve on the committee. Todd Carswell was unable to attend tonight's meeting, but will be contacted and asked to chair the Nominating Committee.

Action Items

There were no action items.

Information Items

Chair Joe Beaman, Jr. reminded Board members of the revisions for Board manuals that were included in the December Board packets and encouraged them to keep their Board manuals updated. He also reviewed the information items with the group.

Director Hardy referred to the post card distributed prior to the opening of the meeting. The post card provides information on "*The Essential Governing Responsibilities of LME Boards*". This is an online educational resource for LME Board members and is provided by the UNC School of Government. It is a 2½ hour presentation, divided into five segments. We must eventually document that our Board members have received this training. The training can be done individually or as a group. The Board was asked to consider the training and give input as to how they would like to manage this.

Von Beatty suggested that Board members manage the training individually, but discuss each segment as a group during a monthly Board meeting – one segment each month for five months. Board members agreed with the suggestion. Director Hardy will develop a schedule so all Board members will train on the same segment during the same month.

Adjournment

With no other business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:46 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice D. Cornett
Administrative Assistant II/Clerk to the Board