

**Minutes  
Mental Health Partners  
Board of Directors  
Thursday, February 18, 2010  
7:00 P.M.**

The Mental Health Partners (MHP) Board of Directors met on this date in the dining area of Change Center in Morganton.

Members of the Board present included: Joseph Beaman, Jr., Cynthia Houser, Danny Graves, Ronald Kendrick, Lori Faulkner, Dr. Anthony Frasca, Bruce Hawkins, Sr., and Elizabeth Young. Excused and/or absent for other equivalent circumstances were Kitty Barnes, Ray Von Beatty, and Michele Hamby. Mental Health Partners' staff present included John Hardy, Lori Mathes, and Janice Cornett. Linda Pilkenton, Ashleigh Murphy, and Ada Lewis were in attendance to present an overview of the services provided by Change Center. Five consumers receiving services at Change Center were also in attendance.

A quorum was present.

The meeting agenda was mailed to Board members and the media on February 12, 2010. There were no representatives of the media present.

#### **Handouts**

The following items were distributed prior to the opening of the meeting:

1. Minutes of the February 10, 2010 meeting of the Budget/Finance and Executive Committees
2. Amended Budget Revision, February 2010
3. Spreadsheet of Proposed Budget Request to Catawba County for FY 2010-2011
4. Auditors' Questionnaire for Board Members
5. *"Mental Health Partners Today"* Newsletter - Volume 2, Number 1
6. Catawba County Commissioners' Synopsis – February 15, 2010
7. North Carolina Council Update – January 2010

#### **Call to Order and Welcome of Guests**

John Hardy, Area Director of MHP, called the meeting to order at 7:06 P.M. and welcomed all in attendance.

#### **Invocation**

Bruce Hawkins, Sr. led the invocation.

#### **Presentation - Change Center**

Director John Hardy introduced Linda Pilkenton, Clinical Director of the Change Center. Ashleigh Murphy, Site Director of Change Center, and Ada Lewis, Assistant Site Director were also present and had greeted Board members upon their arrival. Ms. Pilkenton explained that Change Center is a Psychosocial Rehabilitation Program operated by Carolina Residential Services, Inc. (CRS). She

introduced five consumers who receive services at Change Center. The consumers introduced themselves and shared their individual experiences with Board members. They talked about what their lives were like before they started coming to Change Center and the positive changes (both physical and mental) that have occurred as a result of the services they receive. All are living independently and see Change Center as a support center. They spoke of feeling better physically and an increase in self-esteem as a result of being able to better manage their own lives. One consumer has been coming to Change Center for 15 years and another for 25 years. Ms. Pilkenton noted the low hospitalization rate among the consumers at Change Center and credited this to the communication and support received from staff and each other.

At the conclusion of the presentations from the consumers, Ms. Pilkenton described an average day at Change Center, beginning with the 8:00 A.M. transportation route to pick up consumers. There are five routes within the county and all consumers arrive at the Change Center and are ready to begin the day by approximately 9:30 A.M. Change center has about 60 consumers and serves 45-48 people daily. There are 2-4 groups occurring at the same time, some at Change Center and some in the community. Some of the classes offered include anger management, music therapy, social relationships, computer skills, coping with depression, grocery shopping, independent living, housekeeping, healthy living, community integration, and community resources. Consumers from Change Center also deliver Meals on Wheels in the community. The day ends at 2:15 P.M. and the routes begin again to transport consumers home.

Budget constraints make it difficult to schedule events on weekends except for rare occasions. Last year a group of consumers from all CRS facilities were taken on a beach trip. Ms. Pilkenton is hopeful that a beach trip will be possible again this year.

There is an unmet demand for services at Change Center, with 5-6 people on a waiting list. The increased demand may be due to environmental reasons with the current economy, more people seeking help as the stigma associated with mental illness lessens, or perhaps a combination of both. The Change Center is seeing more young people and more people with dual diagnoses. The influx of younger consumers results in some conflict with the current population served at Change Center and it is hoped that perhaps a second location can be opened sometime in the future.

Upon conclusion of the presentation, the consumers asked Board members to introduce themselves and tell a little about what they do. The Board answered questions from the consumers and there was a brief discussion of the process for a provider to become a CABHA. Board Chair Joe Beaman, Jr. then thanked the consumers for sharing their experiences with the Board and thanked Ms. Pilkenton and Change Center staff for the informative overview of the services provided at Change Center. The consumers and staff of Change Center then excused themselves from the room.

## **Minutes**

The meeting resumed with the review of minutes. The minutes of the January 21, 2010 meeting of the Board of Directors and the minutes of the February 10, 2010 meeting of the Budget/Finance and Executive Committees were presented.

Bruce Hawkins, Sr. made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 21, 2010 meeting of the Board of Directors and the Budget/Finance and Executive Committees' meeting minutes of February 10, 2010 as presented. Danny Graves seconded the motion.

There was no discussion, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

### **Citizen Comments**

There were no citizen comments.

### **Commissioner Comments**

Catawba County Commissioner Kitty Barnes was unable to attend tonight's meeting. The synopsis of the February 15, 2010 meeting of the Catawba County Commissioners was distributed prior to the opening of the meeting.

Burke County Commissioner Bruce Hawkins, Sr. noted that the last several meetings of the Burke County Commissioners had been fairly routine. Some minor issues had been addressed. The annual retreat for commissioners was held last Friday (February 12) in preparation for the upcoming budget for FY 2010-2011. Commissioners will meet with department heads on March 5 to hear budget concerns.

### **Director's Report**

1. MHP is in the early stages of exploring the possibility of a Federal Bureau of Justice grant that would look at a better interplay between the criminal justice system and mental health services. These grants (\$250,000-\$300,000 per year) also focus on training programs for criminal justice and mental health and substance abuse treatment personnel; law enforcement strategies to provide response options that are tailored to the needs of people with mental illnesses; and providing mental health co-occurring treatment and transitional services for those incarcerated or transitional reentry programs for those released from a correctional institution. Application deadline is April 8, 2010.
2. The earlier grant of \$1,000,000 for the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP) is ahead of its number of family targets already for this year and is in high demand with about 21 situations solved in some manner.
3. A "point in time" homeless count was recently conducted. While the data is still being sorted, the preliminary look indicates the homeless count is up.
4. A report from Tara Conrad, System of Care Coordinator, on children in residential services has indicated that we went from 52 children in Level III and IV group homes to 17 since July 2009. There has been a major push from the State to reduce the number of children in residential settings and either move them back to their families or into therapeutic foster care. It has taken a joint effort of many people in the local Department of Social Services agencies, provider agencies, families and the LME to carefully review all cases and to assure that children were in the best kind of living and treatment circumstances to assure both safety and progress with identified problems.
5. The State's cash flow to local programs continues to ebb and flow. Current dollars owed to MHP are \$2.3 million, with the impact mostly being in the provider world.

6. The Director spent some time in Raleigh last week working on several State related issues like the Enola Group no longer being able to use the HUD funded group home built in the early 90's in Morganton. The owner, ARC of NC, is looking to see if the State might be able to use the group home in some fashion, one idea being for children with autism. The developmentally disabled consumers once in the group home, known as Signature House, have been relocated into foster family kind of situations.
7. The State still intends to move forward with the new hospital at Broughton, but no one has yet addressed the resources to staff it. There was a commitment for the community to get a detailed presentation on the new facility.
8. Local Governments, as well as the State, are continuing to struggle with squeezes on traditional revenue sources. Sales tax numbers have been up and down, and less predictable than before.
9. The sixth 40-hours CIT (Crisis Intervention Training) has been conducted. The training was held at the Hickory Police Department with 13 officers in attendance from several area law enforcement agencies.
10. The next MHP Board meeting will be held at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, March 25, 2010 at Grace Hospital.

## **Action Items**

### **Budget Revision, February 2010**

An amended budget revision was distributed prior to the opening of the meeting. The amended revision reflects an additional \$69,817 in Catawba County Funds. The proposed revision decreases the current MHP budget of \$22,571,440 by \$278,183, bringing it to \$22,293,257. The revision includes the following:

- **(\$400,000) Mental Health Fund Balance** – The State had previously required MHP to allocate \$400,000 from fund balance to mitigate service funding reductions. Final audit findings for FY 08/09 showed fund balance to be less than the recommended amount. Therefore, MHP asked the State to relieve the \$400,000 requirement and that request was approved. This revision would take the \$400,000 out of the budget and restore it to fund balance.
- **\$52,000 Burke County Funds** – MHP has received an increase of \$52,000 in Burke County funds to be utilized for enhanced services in that county. The funds are based on five months of funding for this year; they are to be annualized in SFY 2010/2011. Funds will be utilized for support of Burke County Client Emergency Assistance, a psychiatric nurse position at Catawba Valley Behavioral Healthcare's (CVBH) Burke site, and indigent inpatient care at Grace Hospital.
- **\$69,817 Catawba County Funds** – Catawba County is increasing its per capita allocation to MHP by \$90,083 to reflect the same per capita contribution as Burke County. This addition will increase the previously agreed upon independent base rate from \$262,482 to \$352,565. The increased funding will be added to psychiatric support through CVBH and Family N.E.T., Catawba County Client Emergency Assistance, and overtime/transport with involuntary commitments through Catawba Law Enforcement. The revision also includes support for the Sex Offender Program.

The contracted services funded by Catawba County will experience a 2% reduction (\$20,266), which will decrease the contracts with CVBH and Family N.E.T. The net result of the increased per capita allocation minus the reduction in contract funding is \$69,817 (\$90,083-\$20,266).

Dr. Tony Frasca made a motion to approve the proposed revision to MHP's budget for FY 2009-2010 as presented. Bruce Hawkins, Sr. seconded the motion.

There was a brief discussion, and the motion then passed by unanimous vote.

### **Review of Counties' Budgets, FY 2010-2011**

The proposed request to Burke County for funding for FY 2010-2011 was enclosed in the Board packet. The proposed request to Catawba County was distributed prior to the opening of the meeting. Director Hardy presented an overview of each of the proposed requests.

The allocation from Burke County for FY 2009-2010 was \$151,410. An additional \$52,000 in funding to MHP was approved in January 2010 for a total of \$203,410. The \$52,000 was for five months (remainder of FY 2009/2010); annualized this would be \$125,000. Therefore, the proposed funding request to Burke County for FY 2010-2011 is in the amount of \$276,410 (\$151,410 + \$125,000).

As of February 2010, Catawba County's funding for FY 2009-2010 is in the amount of \$1,345,613. The proposed request for FY 2010-2011 is \$1,346,317.

Director Hardy noted that there are some commonalities between the two counties, but also some differences. He explained some of the factors considered in determining county share funding and answered questions from Board members.

Ronald Kendrick made a motion to approve the funding requests to the counties for FY 2010-2011 as presented. Bruce Hawkins, Sr. seconded the motion.

Lori Faulkner asked for clarification concerning MHP's role in gun permits. Director Hardy explained that MHP queries its system to check on whether or not a person requesting a gun permit has a record with mental health. With that clarification, the motion to approve the funding requests to the counties was passed by unanimous vote.

### **Information Items**

Chair Joe Beaman, Jr. reviewed the information items with the group. He informed the Board that Todd Carswell had resigned from the Board effective today (February 18, 2010). Mr. Carswell not only served as Chair of the Budget/Finance Committee, but also as the Board representative from Burke County on the Human Rights Committee.

Beth Young volunteered to replace Mr. Carswell as the Board's Burke County representative on the Human Rights Committee. Danny Graves volunteered to return to the Budget/Finance Committee to fill the vacancy created by Mr. Carswell's departure. Board members thanked Beth and Danny for volunteering and they were so appointed to the respective committees.

Other information items contained in the Board packet included two news articles about MHP that were published in the *"Catawba Valley Citizen"*, the Human Resources Report , and the financial reports for January 2010. Lori Mathes, Finance Officer for MHP, noted that the financial report shows revenue less than expenditures and explained that this is due to the \$2.3 million outstanding from the State. LME funding for December 2009 and January 2010 have not yet been received. In addition, Single Stream Funding, Federal, and Three-Way Contract payments for January are also outstanding.

The newsletter *"Mental Health Partners Today"* was distributed prior to the opening of the meeting. The newsletter contains information about the State's plan to create Critical Access Behavioral Health Agencies (CABHAs).

A questionnaire from MHP's auditing firm, Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, P.A., was distributed to all Board members prior to the opening of the meeting. In compliance with fraud standard, SAS 99, each Board member is requested to complete the questionnaire (four questions) and respond directly to the auditing firm. Responses can be mailed or emailed to Martin Starnes & Associates. The mailing address and email address are included on the questionnaire. For the convenience of Board members, Janice Cornett has attached a stamped envelope addressed to the auditing firm to the questionnaire and has also scanned the questionnaire and emailed it to all Board members for those who prefer to respond electronically. Questionnaires and envelopes will be mailed to Board members not in attendance tonight.

The NC Council Update for January 2010 was distributed prior to the opening of the meeting.

### **Adjournment**

With no other business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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