

**S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING**

***Pee Dee Mental Health Center***

***125 East Cheves St. Florence, SC 29506***

***April 5, 2019***

***CALL TO ORDER***

The April 5, 2019 meeting of the South Carolina Mental Health Commission was called to order at 10:23 a.m. by Dr. Alison Evans, Chairperson, in the Bevis Room of the Pee Dee Mental Health Center, 125 East Cheves St. Florence, SC. Mr. Dennis Sullen provided the invocation.

***INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS***

Dr. Evans, Chair, welcomed Lisa Spears, Florence School District 1, Sheila Miller, Palmetto Lowcountry Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse (Charleston), Gloria Davis McClary, Director of the Durant Children's Center (Pee Dee Coalition), Teresa Meyers Ervin, Florence City Council, Gloria Rendon, Lighthouse Care Center, Conway, and Pressly Coker, Hartsville (Former PDMHC Intern).

***APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

***On a motion by Ms. Louise Haynes, seconded by Mr. Greg Pearce, the Commission approved the Agenda for today's Business Meeting.***

***All voted in favor to the above motions; all motions carried.***

***APPROVAL OF MINUTES***

***On a motion by Mr. Bob Hiott, seconded by Ms. Louise Haynes, the Commission approved the minutes from the Business Meeting of March 1, 2019.***

***All voted in favor to the above motions; all motions carried.***

***APPROVAL OF PROPOSED REVISIONS TO 2019 COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE***

***On a motion by Mr. Greg Pearce, seconded by Ms. Louise Haynes, the Commission approved the Proposed Revisions to the 2019 Commission Meeting Schedule, copies of which were provided to the Commission.***

***All voted in favor to the above motions; all motions carried.***

Per Mr. Binkley, the changes were made to give Greater Greenville Mental Health Center time to prepare and to allow the Commission to formally recognize the service of retiring Waccamaw MHC Director Ethel B. Bellamy and Lexington MHC Director Rick Acton.

***MONTHLY/QUARTERLY INFORMATION REPORTS***

Mr. Alan Powell presented the items listed under Monthly/Quarterly Informational Reports, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

Of the sixteen (16) outstanding SLED investigations; four (4) were assigned to SLED, eight (8) were assigned to the Long-term Care Ombudsman Office, three (3) were assigned to the Attorney General's office, and one (1) was assigned to local law enforcement.

Mr. Hiott inquired as to whether forty (40) calls to the toll-free SCDMH patient advocacy phone number was inordinate. Mr. Binkley responded it was not an unusually high number for February.

***DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW AND UPDATE***

**Community Update/Dashboards**

Ms. Deborah Blalock presented the Community Dashboard spreadsheets, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

Ms. Blalock recognized the outstanding work of Center Director Pat Bresnan and his staff and stated the Center is a jewel in the DMH system of care.

Ms. Blalock thanked Ms. Eleanor Odom and Ms. Ernestine Middleton for their work on recruiting two more new Center directors. She hopes to have some overlap of time to allow retiring Center directors to orient their replacements. DMH will soon have eleven (11) new Center Directors out of sixteen (16) in a span of approximately 2 years. Impressively, all have been internal hires, attesting to the quality of the Department's staff, as well as to the success of the Department's mentoring efforts in identifying and nurturing future leaders.

To hire a Center Director, the HR department recruits candidates and ranks them based on qualifications. A Screening Committee is established by the Center's Board chair, which interviews the highest ranked candidates, and makes its recommendations. The top two or three top candidate names are sent from the Center Board to the State Director and the Deputy Director of Community Services to interview and make the final selection.

On April 4, Ms. Blalock and staff from the Central Administration Departments of Billing, Finance, Human Resources (HR), and Information Technology (IT), met with current Greenville MHC and Piedmont MHC staff to explain the process and answer questions to alleviate any anxiety which may arise from merging into Greater Greenville Mental Health Center. The meeting was successful.

While in Greenville, Ms. Blalock met with Prisma System staff to discuss Shared Solutions, the proposed Crisis Stabilization Unit for the Greenville area. They are searching for an appropriate location. Planning for an Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Crisis Stabilization Unit is moving quickly and has identified a location. Spartanburg and Charleston both have operational Crisis Stabilization Units, though there are significant differences in each. Ms. Blalock will meet next week with the Orangeburg Area Mental Health Center Director and the Regional Medical Center to discuss establishing a regional crisis stabilization unit in that area.

The Aiken school district is now a contributing financial partner in the school mental health services (SMHS) program. This is a good step toward the goal of obtaining financial support from all school districts that receive SMHS. This support will help the program expand and reach the goal of having SMHS in all SC schools by 2022.

Mr. Pearce expressed he is incredibly impressed by the diversity of therapies offered and the amount of care being delivered by Community Mental Health Centers.

**Report of the Inpatient Facilities Governing Body Meeting of January 30, 2019 and Approval of the Minutes**

Dr. Versie Bellamy presented the Inpatient Facilities Governing Body Meeting minutes from the January 30, 2019 meeting, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

***On a motion by Ms. Louise Haynes, seconded by Mr. Bob Hiott, the Commission approved the Governing Body Meeting minutes from the January 30, 2019 meeting.***

***All voted in favor to the above motions; all motions carried.***

Of note, Bryan Hospital and Harris Hospital have been granted re-accreditation from the Joint Commission. Roddey Pavilion at Tucker Nursing Care Center completed its CMS certification survey. Morris Village will be surveyed by CARF early this summer.

Pertaining to recruitment and retention, Dr. Bellamy thanked Human Resources, and Tucker, and DIS staff for their efforts on the Career Expo held in October, which resulted in hiring nineteen (19) staff.

Dr. Bellamy was happy to report DIS nursing care facilities fall well below the national average in the number of pressure ulcers, urinary tract infections and DIS hospitals fall well below the national average in their use of seclusions and restraints.

Mr. Pearce congratulated Dr. Bellamy and stated the low number of pressure ulcers and urinary tract infections at C.M. Tucker Nursing Care Center (Tucker) is incredible. Dr. Bellamy explained the nursing home industry is highly regulated. Tucker meets State nursing home licensing regulations, federal nursing home Medicaid/Medicare regulations and the accreditation standards of the Joint Commission. The Department's Tucker nursing homes – Roddey and Stone Pavilions -- are also two of only four in the State to be Joint Commission accredited, and the Stone Veterans Nursing Home is one of the very few nursing homes in SC to receive a five (5) star rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Nursing care residents are DMH's fastest growing population.

Ms. Haynes requested clarification on why Tucker is Joint Commission accredited. Mr. Binkley explained that while it is not mandatory for DMH inpatient facilities to be Joint Commission accredited, DMH's continued participation historically goes back to former State Director William S. Hall's initiative to have all DMH facilities accredited as a method to use nationally recognized standards in the management and operation of the Department's inpatient facilities, to ultimately ensure good quality care was provided to the Department's patients.

**Forensic Waiting List Update**

Per Dr. Bellamy, there are currently nineteen (19) patients on the Forensic Waiting List, down from last month's twenty-seven (27). The forensic waiting list continues to be a focus and priority. DIS leadership continues to assess and remove barriers to patient flow through the system of care. Mr. Binkley noted the forensic waiting list has been a top priority for a few years and stated it's gratifying to see such progress made through the efforts of management, staff, and administrative services.

**Financial Status Update**

Ms. Debbie Calcote highlighted certain information on the monthly financial report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

DMH is projected to end the fiscal year with a positive balance of approximately 5 million dollars, in part due to unfilled staff vacancies. Dr. Evans stated that a surplus is good but not when it results from the Agency's inability to offer competitive salaries for positions that are sorely needed in all service areas.

Mr. Pearce inquired how the Veterans Homes are financed. Per Mr. Binkley, the VA covers up to 50% of the allowable costs of providing VA nursing home care, a modest co-pay from the resident/family covers approximately 9% of the cost, and the remainder is funded by State appropriations.

**Issue Action Paper**

Ms. Calcote presented an Issue Action Paper requesting Commission approval to the annexation of the Cherokee County site of the future Veteran Nursing Home by the City of Gaffney.

Mr. Pearce inquired if the City would waive their rights to collect certain fees, such as storm water and franchise fees, in perpetuity. Per Mr. Binkley, the city will have to commit to such a waiver in writing before the annexation would be approved by the State's Fiscal Accountability Authority (SFAA).

***On a motion by Ms. Haynes, seconded by Mr. Hiott, the Commission approved the Issue Action Paper regarding the annexation of the Cherokee County site of the future State Veterans Nursing home by the city of Gaffney.***

***All voted in favor to the above motions; all motions carried.***

**Veteran Nursing Home Update**

Per Ms. Calcote, DMH has submitted all required documents and secured the initial State funding for the construction of two new Veteran Nursing Homes. Contracts were signed last week with two construction companies. The nursing homes will be built in Cherokee County and Florence County.

Mr. Binkley predicted that next year DMH will again apply for a Veteran's Administration (VA) grant to build one or two more Veteran Nursing Homes.

**Bull Street Update**

This week R.E.I. announced it will open a retail store in the Bull Street district. Extensive work is being done to finish the large City park on the property, expected to open this Summer. A senior living center, known as Merrill Gardens, is also getting close to completion. The Fireflies season opener will happen this week. DMH continues to provide enhanced security to the Babcock building. Work to repair the fire damage done to the Babcock building roof is ongoing.

**Legislative News**

The Commissioners were given a Legislative News Handout.

Mr. Binkley stated the proposal to reorganize the Agency and to classify it as a Cabinet agency never moved out of committee and is dead for the year.

The Physician Assistants act does appear to be moving forward. Per Dr. Robert Bank, this would help DMH to begin utilizing Physician Assistants in a similar way that it is currently using nurse practitioners as mid-level service providers once patients become more stable. Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants are helpful, less expensive, and a little easier to find and recruit than doctors. DMH is working with Medicaid to have physician's assistant services included in its Medicaid contract.

Senator Kimpson's proposed legislation related to the transport of psychiatric patients undergoing an emergency hospital admission (S. 303) would suspend the statutory time-frame during hazardous weather and allow patients to shelter in place. It would also clarify the circumstances in which a family member or friend may transport patients rather than law enforcement. The bill is currently out of the Senate's Medical Affairs Committee, in the full Senate, and may be taken up next week, possibly meeting the April 10 cross-over deadline.

**House Legislative Oversight Committee**

SCDMH is one of five (5) State Agencies under review by the House Legislative Oversight Committee in 2019. Per Mr. Binkley, DMH has had five (5) hearings in front of the Healthcare and Regulatory Subcommittee and will probably have at least five (5) more. So far, DMH has presented an Agency overview, Inpatient Services history and current status, and this past week began a series of presentations about the agency's Community Mental Health Services. The meetings have been time-limited to around an hour and fifteen minutes. The meetings are open to the public, televised via the legislative website, and archived for later viewing. It's an excellent experience for senior and mid-level managers to be able to present information to members of the legislature.

**Settlement Implementation Update**

The P & A lawsuit was settled March 1, 2019. Per Alan Powell, an implementation plan has been developed for each of the settlement requirements and DMH has assigned a person to each of the specific areas. Mr. Powell is currently the implementation monitor. To date, DMH is complying with the requirement deadlines and is prepared to meet the deadlines set out for the next two (2) years. The Commission will receive quarterly reports on this issue.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Per Mr. Binkley, the Senate Finance Committee wrapped up their budget recommendations last night. Recommendations included additional recurring funds of \$800,000 for Crisis Stabilization Units and an

additional \$1.75 million for community supportive housing. This will bring the recommended DMH additional recurring funding up to 8.1 million dollars.

This week, former DMH State Director John H. Magill was recognized at the Telehealth Alliance Annual Conference for his contributions to the Telepsychiatry program. Governor Henry McMaster presented the award.

**NOTICE/AGENDA**

A notice and agenda of the meeting were sent out to all individuals and news media who requested information, in accordance with State law.

**ADJOURNMENT**

*11:35 a.m., on a motion by Ms. Louise Haynes, seconded by Mr. Bob Hiott, the Commission adjourned the Business Meeting and entered into Executive Session to receive legal advice concerning pending and threatened litigation, to discuss the recruitment efforts for a permanent State Director, and to select the recipient of the 2019 Louise R. Hassenplug Award. Upon convening in open session at 12:30 p.m., it was noted that only information was received; no votes or actions were taken.*

**ATTENDANCE**

**Commission Members**

Dr. Allison Evans, Chair  
Louise Haynes

Bob Hiott  
Greg Pearce

Sharon Wilson, Vice Chair  
(Ms. Wilson attended via teleconference, but experienced technical difficulties early in the meeting.)

**Visitors/Staff**

Mark Binkley, JD  
Dr. Versie Bellamy  
Debbie Blalock  
Debbie Calcote  
Alan Powell  
Eleanor Odom  
Ernestine Middleton  
Dr. Kimberly Rudd  
Patrick Bresnan

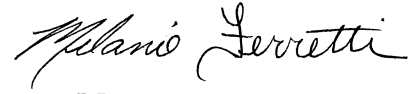
Rudy Guajardo  
Sharon Ackerman  
Teresa Wilson  
Gladys Gilbert  
Sheila Jacobs  
Angela Moses  
Christie Nowlin  
Pressly Cooser  
Gloria Rendon

Elsie McFadden  
Caroline McDaniel  
Sandra Barnes  
J. McAlisteo  
Norma Reardon  
Gloria Davis McClary  
Jackie Brown  
Alethia King  
Frances Feagin

**APPROVALS**



**Alison Y. Evans**  
PsyD, Chair



**Melanie Ferretti**  
Recording Secretary

