

**S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING**  
**SCDMH Administration**  
**2414 Bull Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201**  
**March 5, 2021**

A Business Meeting of the S.C. Mental Health Commission was held in Room 320 at the S.C. Department of Mental Health Administration Building on Friday, March 5, 2021, at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Greg Pearce, Chair, was present in person. Other Commission members were present virtually via Zoom. The meeting notice and agenda were posted prior to the meeting and notice made to all individuals and news media who requested information in accordance with State law.

***CALL TO ORDER***

Chairman Pearce called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m. Mr. Stewart Cooner provided the invocation.

***INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS***

Chairman Pearce welcomed everyone. Visitors present virtually via Zoom were: Beth Franco, Executive Director, Disability Rights South Carolina; Heyward Hilliard, Vice President, HMR Veterans Services, Inc.; Bill Lindsay, Executive Director, NAMI SC; and Jocelyn Piccone, Executive Director, Liberty Healthcare Corporation.

***APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

***On a motion by Ms. Louise Haynes, seconded by Dr. Alison Evans, the Commission approved the Agenda for today's Business Meeting.***

***All voted in favor to the above motion; the motion carried.***

Chairman Pearce memorialized two individuals and their contributions to the Department of Mental Health (DMH) in honor of Black History Month as well as in commemorating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of DMH.

- Dr. Joseph Dennis Harris was born in 1833 in North Carolina as a free man, studied medicine up north, and after the Civil War, because of what he had heard about the care of African Americans at the SC State Hospital, decided to come to South Carolina. He secured an assistant physician position at the State Hospital, and was the first African American physician at the State Hospital. Because of racial prejudices at that time, after about a year Dr. Harris left South Carolina. However, he moved on to gain national prominence not only as a physician but also in helping to advance the rights of African Americans. Chairman Pearce stated that more about Dr. Harris will be shared at the Bicentennial Celebration later this year.
- Mr. Page Ellington was born a North Carolina slave in 1835 and later moved to Columbia. He was a self-taught brick mason and a self-taught architect. Mr. Ellington was known for his work on redesigning the steeple on the First Presbyterian Church, Columbia. Dr. James W. Babcock, the Superintendent of the State Mental Health Hospital, hired Mr. Ellington to design and build several buildings on the hospital campus. Mr. Ellington had a home on Blanding Street which is now a part of Historic Columbia's Tour of Historic Homes.

***PRESENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS***

Chairman Pearce presented a resolution from the Commission upon the retirement of Kevin W. Hoyle, MA, Executive Director, Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Mental Health Center. The resolution read as follows:

**Whereas:** The South Carolina Mental Health Commission and the State Director of the South Carolina Department of Mental Health recognize the retirement of Kevin W. Hoyle, MA; and

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- Whereas:** Mental health is critical to the well-being and vitality of all South Carolinians, and the service of Mr. Hoyle has improved the lives of individuals living with mental illness by creating a continuum of local housing options, from community residential settings to independent living arrangements; and
- Whereas:** Mr. Hoyle expanded an early School Mental Health program, placing counselors in all seven school districts in the Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Mental Health Center's catchment area, and began the Individual Placement and Support program at the Center to provide employment opportunities for patients; and
- Whereas:** Recognizing that many college students need additional mental health support when experiencing the changes and increased pressures that often accompany entrance into college life, Mr. Hoyle worked tirelessly to expand the Center's collaboration with the Clemson University Police Department, increasing access to life-changing mental health care for *all* Clemson University students; and
- Whereas:** Mr. Hoyle has been instrumental in developing the quarterly Probate Judges' Forum to address issues and concerns surrounding the emergency hospitalization process and participated in the establishment of the second Criminal Justice Coordinating Council in Anderson County, South Carolina; and
- Whereas:** The South Carolina Mental Health Commission and the State Director of the South Carolina Department of Mental Health recognize Mr. Hoyle not only for his distinguished 16 years of service as executive director of AOP Mental Health Center, but also for his 35-year career at the South Carolina Department of Mental Health.
- Now, therefore:** We express our profound appreciation to Mr. Hoyle for his dedicated service to the mentally ill and his invaluable service to the South Carolina Department of Mental Health; offer him our sincere gratitude and best wishes; and order that a copy of this Resolution be made a part of the Commission's permanent records.

*March 5, 2021*

Chairman Pearce presented a resolution from the Commission upon the retirement of Doug Glover, Administrator for the Division of Inpatient Services. The resolution read as follows:

- Whereas:** The South Carolina Mental Health Commission and the State Director of the South Carolina Department of Mental Health recognize the retirement of Doug Glover; and
- Whereas:** Mental health is critical to the well-being and vitality of all South Carolinians, and the service of Mr. Glover has improved the lives of individuals living with mental illness; and
- Whereas:** As administrator for the Division of Inpatient Services, Mr. Glover was a consummate professional in his leadership and management of a large mission of centralized ancillary services, including Nutritional Services, Materials Management, Health Information, Information Technology, Finance, Entitlements, and Volunteer/Community Services; and
- Whereas:** As incident commander for the SCDMH Division of Inpatient Services, Mr. Glover was responsible for the oversight and operation of the 24/7 response to all emergent needs associated with storms, power outages, and other events, most notably, managing the essential water and food needs of patients and staff throughout the Thousand Year Flood in 2015; and
- Whereas:** Mr. Glover's careful oversight and involvement with SCDMH's Physical Plant and Information Technology teams, as well as external contractors, was instrumental in the successful renovations and relocation of the William S. Hall Institute from the Bull Street campus to the Bryan Psychiatric Hospital; and



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**Whereas:** The South Carolina Mental Health Commission and the State Director of the South Carolina Department of Mental Health recognize Mr. Glover for his distinguished 14 years of service as Administrator and Emergency Management director at the Division of Inpatient Services of the South Carolina Department of Mental Health;

**Now, therefore:** We express our profound appreciation to Mr. Glover for his dedicated service to the mentally ill and his invaluable service to the South Carolina Department of Mental Health; offer him our sincere gratitude and best wishes; and order that a copy of this Resolution be made a part of the Commission's permanent records.

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Mr. Heyward Hilliard, Executive Vice President of Operations for HMR Veterans Services, Inc., announced that the chapel at Victory House Veterans Nursing home has been named in honor of Col Doug Glover. Mr. Hilliard presented a chapel dedication plaque with the following inscription: *"To honor and recognize COL Doug Glover, US Army, Ret for his dedication and commitment to our service men and women of the United States of America."* Mr. Hilliard announced the plaque along with Col Glover's flags and insignias will be proudly displayed at the chapel.

***APPROVAL OF MINUTES***

*By motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the minutes from the Center Presentation of February 5, 2021, and the minutes from the Business Meeting of February 5, 2021.*

*All voted in favor to the above motion; the motion carried.*

***ANNOUNCEMENTS***

Dr. Kenneth Rogers announced the following:

- The Department presented its FY22 budget request to the Health & Human Services Subcommittee of the Senate Finance Committee on Wednesday, March 3, 2021.
- Dr. Rogers and Ms. Deborah Blalock are scheduled to present during MUSC's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Grand Rounds Conference on March 19, 2021.
- Dr. Rogers extended congratulations to the nominees for the 2020 Carolyn M. Biles Outstanding Employee award: Ms. Tiffany Brown, Administrative Assistant, Office of Emergency Services (OES); Ms. Allison Farrell, OES Office Manager; Mr. Joseph Miller, Department of Human Resources (DHR) Training and Development Director; Ms. Claudette Martin, DHR Human Resources Specialist; and Ms. Tracy Turner, Controller, Division of Financial Services. He announced the winner of the 2020 Carolyn M. Biles Outstanding Employee of the Year award is Ms. Allison Farrell.
- On Saturday, March 6, Stewart Cooner will celebrate his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. Dr. Rogers wished him a happy birthday!

***MONTHLY/QUARTERLY INFORMATION REPORTS***

Ms. Elizabeth Hutto presented the items listed under Monthly/Quarterly Informational Reports, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

Ms. Hutto reported for the month of February 2021 a total of five pending cases.

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Ms. Hutto reported that as of Thursday, March 4, 2021, there were 14 pending SLED investigations. One case was assigned to SLED, of which the oldest is from January 2021; eight cases were assigned to Long-term Care Ombudsman Office, of which the oldest is from February 2020; two cases were assigned to the Attorney General's Office (AGO), of which the oldest is from March 2019; and three cases were assigned to local law enforcement, of which the oldest is from September 2020.

Ms. Hutto highlighted the following from the Patient Advocacy Report:

- 64 calls to patient advocacy in January.
- 72 complaints were resolved in January.
- The number of complaints by category resolved in January is 84 (*complaints are broken out by category, a single patient complaint may have more than one category*). Ms. Hutto explained that complaints also include requests for information and internal double checking.

***SIX-MONTH REPORT OF COLLECTIONS***

Ms. Hutto presented the items from the six-month report of medical care accounts collections for July 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. These funds are collected through involuntary means from self-pay clients. From July 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 a total of \$239,549.03 was collected.

***DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW AND UPDATE***

**Coronavirus Response**

**Community Mental Health Services**

Ms. Deborah Blalock presented the Community Mental Health Services (CMHS) report. Below are highlights from her report:

- Ms. Blalock presented the CMHS Trends and Transparency Monthly Indicators (TMI) spreadsheets, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.
- To date services have been delivered to 46 patients through the Highway to Hope (H2H) Grant, which began on February 1, 2021. Until RVs are purchased staff are driving out to nine counties that were heavily impacted by Hurricane Florence in the Pee Dee Region and delivering primary care and mental health care services to patients. Places of delivery include churches, federally qualified health centers, community centers, and the Latta Art Center.
- A notice will go out today or Monday announcing the candidate selected to fill the executive director position at Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Mental Health Center.
- Effective April 2, 2021, Natashia Smith, PhD, will assume the role of executive director of the Orangeburg Area Mental Health Center. She served as executive director of Coastal Empire Community Mental Health Center (CEMHC) since 2018. CEMHC Board will conduct interviews beginning next week to fill the executive director position.
- The Department was awarded a \$130,000 grant through Vibrant Emotional Health to prepare for the launch of the nationwide 988 crisis line.
- Allison Farrell, OES Manager, worked with Sheriff Leon Lott to set up a Mental Health Crisis Intervention Team. The service was publicized last week and has led to many requests for embedded clinicians in law enforcement agencies across the State, as well as requests for service from law enforcement officers within DMH.
- School mental health referrals and services provided are increasing as school districts are moving forward with increased in-person learning.

**S.C. Hopes Quaterly Data Analysis June through December 2020**

Lamar Suber, Program Manager, Co-Occurring Programs and Project Director for SC Hopes, and Allexis Cook-Graham, SC Hopes Program Manager, gave an update on the SC Hopes Support Line. A copy of the presentation is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director.



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Division of Inpatient Services (DIS)

Chairman Pearce announced that he and Ms. Haynes along with Dr. Bellamy had a very informative tour of Morris Village on Wednesday, March 3.

Dr. Bellamy presented the Division of Inpatient Services report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. Below are highlights from her report:

- The January 2021 overall Average Daily Census (ADC) shows a 25% decrease as compared to the ADC in February 2020, prior to the pandemic.
- The number of patients served at Bryan Psychiatric Hospital (BPH), Patrick B Harris Psychiatric Hospital (Harris), and Morris Village over the past 15 years has decreased significantly. Dr. Bellamy reviewed data on the number of patients served 2005-2020. She explained the root cause for the decrease is the detriment of the number of beds available for new admissions as a result of: facilities decreasing the number of operational beds as a means of absorbing budget cuts due to the recession; workforce related issues, capital improvement projects, units transitioning to child and adolescent hospital at BPH; and within the past year, the need to establish quarantine and isolation spaces due to the pandemic. There are no inpatient beds specifically designated for long-term psychiatric care. Patients have to occupy beds at Harris and BPH, which eliminates the availability of acute care beds. Over the last six to seven years, patients have presented with more serious mental illness symptoms, resulting in longer lengths of stay.
- Dr. Bellamy reviewed the percentage of patient population with a greater than 90 day stay at BPH and Harris from 2005-2020.
- George McConnell, Director, and his team at Morris Village conducted an in-depth review of the referrals on the Morris Village waitlist. The review resulted in a decrease in the number of referrals on the waitlist from 470 to 158. Dr. Bellamy reported approximately 137 of the decrease in referrals were voluntary referrals.

Dr. Bellamy introduced Dr. Robert Breen, Director Public Psychiatry Training Program and Chair of the COVID-19 Task Force. She referred to Dr. Breen as the expert consultant and advisor to the Department's leadership in regard to the CDC's and DHEC's COVID-19 guidelines concerning the safety of patients, residents, and staff.

Dr. Breen gave an update on COVID-19 in South Carolina. A copy of his presentation is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director. Below are highlights from his report:

- As of March 3, 2021, there were a total of 28,456,960 COVID cases and 513,122 deaths related to COVID in the United States. There were a total of 446,169 COVID cases and 7,626 deaths related to COVID in South Carolina.
- South Carolina forecasts show decreasing case and death counts for the next four weeks provided an unusual variant does not start spreading in South Carolina.
- The CDC and SC DHEC agree individuals wearing masks, maintaining spatial distance, washing hands often, and staying out of poorly ventilated public spaces will continue to mitigate risks from the pandemic.
- Herd immunity will be achieved once 70-90% of South Carolinians are immune through vaccination or from having the virus.

Forensic Waiting List Update

Dr. Kelly Gothard reported the following:

- During February 2021, the COVID status of the facility improved considerably; however two units remained on quarantine for part of the month.
- As COVID conditions improved, previously postponed admissions to the main facility were able to be rescheduled.
- A large cohort of admissions to the Alternate Care Site began during the week of February 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- New orders for admission have continued to come in and are generally keeping pace with the number of admissions.
- February will result in an almost 20% reduction in wait time for restoration services. Courts are reopening on March 17<sup>th</sup> and it is anticipated there will continue to be an increase in demand for services as court activity rises.

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Administrative Services

Mr. Cooner reported the following:

- For FY23 and FY24, each year the Department will receive \$1.2 million from South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA) to support the ED Telepsychiatry program.
- The Department is waiting to receive guidance from SAMHSA regarding the \$1.65 billion COVID-19 relief funding appropriated by Congress for the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant program. The funding comes with a crisis services 5% set-aside of the total mental health block grant allocation amount which must be used to fund mobile crisis care. This will provide an additional \$535,000 which brings the total grant amount to \$10.8 million.

Special Projects

Ms. Debbie Calcote reported that the Department received \$5 million from the Governor's COVID-19 Response Reserve Account on February 22, 2021. The funds will be used to help with costs related to serve the increase in indigent patients in need of psychiatric hospitalization.

Financial Status Update

Mr. Paul Morris, CFO, presented the monthly financial report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. As of January 31, 2021, the Department is projected to end FY21 with a balance of \$4.9 million.

***LEGISLATIVE UPDATE***

Ms. Caton referred to the Legislative News publication, copies of which had been provided to the Commission, for a list of bills introduced in the General Assembly that may affect the Agency, mental health, healthcare issues, or state employee issues. A copy of the publication is on file with the minutes in the Office of the State Director. Ms. Caton stated H.3773 (S.79) Restoration Treatment is legislation that would extend the length of time certain individuals unfit to stand trial may be hospitalized from 60 to 180 days and would also allow the DMH to provide restoration treatment in detention centers and on an outpatient basis, where appropriate. She is hopeful that the bill will be heard within the next two weeks.

***OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENTS***

The Commission is waiting to receive an update on when other members may be appointed to the Commission. It is not known at this time when the Governor's appointees will go before the Medical Affairs Committee.

Mr. Binkley said the Department presented its FY22 budget request to the Health & Human Services Subcommittee of the Senate Finance Committee on Wednesday, March 3, 2021. He reported that on Thursday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, the House Ways and Means Committee recommended no new recurring funding for DMH and a one-time funding of \$27 million for future State veterans nursing homes state match. However, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee indicated they will reconvene the Committee in May after more information about state tax revenues and the next round of federal stimulus is known, to revisit the recommendations.

There were no public comments.

At 12:55 p.m., following a brief five minute break, the Commission received the Internal Audit Report.

***ADJOURNMENT***

***At 1:45 p.m., by motion duly made and seconded, the Commission adjourned the Business Meeting and entered into Executive Session to select the recipient of the 2021 Louise R. Hassenplug Award and to receive legal advice***



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*concerning pending litigation. Upon convening in open session at 1:50 p.m., Chairman Pearce announced Commission members agreed to recess the Executive Session until Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.*

*On Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 9:00 a.m., the Commission reconvened in Executive Session. Mr. Greg Pearce, Chair, was present in person. Other Commission members were present virtually via Zoom. Upon convening in open session at 10:50 a.m., Chairman Pearce announced the Commission selected the recipient of the 2021 Louise R. Hassenplug Award. The Commission will recognize the recipient and present the award at the May 7, 2021 Commission business meeting. There was no other action taken.*

**ATTENDANCE**

**Commission Members**


L. Gregory Pearce, Jr., Chair (Commission members present virtually via Zoom)  
Ms. Louise Haynes, Vice Chair  
Dr. Alison Evans  
Mr. Bob Hiott

**Visitors/Staff**

Mark Binkley	Julia Hoyle	<u>present virtually via Zoom</u>	<u>present virtually via Zoom</u>	<u>present virtually via Zoom</u>
Deborah Blalock	Kevin Hoyle	Robert Bank	Kyle Herbert	<u>Zoom</u>
Janet Bell	Elizabeth Hutto	Jackie Brown	Maryjane Hicks	Michelle Ready
Dr. Versie Bellamy	Eleanor Odom-Martin	Richard Brown	Heyward Hilliard	Lynelle Reavis
Dr. Robert Breen	Mallory Miller	Pete Creighton	Rene Hughes	Jennifer Roberts
Debbie Calcote	Paul Morris	Matthew Dorman	Grace Lambert	Stuart Shields
Rochelle Caton	Valarie Perkins	Tamara Edrington	Bill Lindsey	Beverly Doris Smith
Alexxis Cook-Graham	Dr. Kenneth Rogers	Beth Franco	Sarah Main	Tamara Smith
Stewart Cooner	Dr. Kimberly Rudd	Melanie Gambrell	Robert Morgan	Jessica Suber
Doug Glover	Lamar Suber	Karen Graydon	Jocelyn Piccone	Irene Thornley
Judy Glover	Brett Williams	Jeffery Ham	Stephen Pullie	Bryant Williams
Kelly Gothard				
Dr. Patria Handley				

**APPROVALS**

  
L. Gregory Pearce, Jr.  
Chair

  
Kim Ballentine  
Recording Secretary

