

**S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING**  
**SCDMH Administration**  
**2414 Bull Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201**  
**November 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, November 5, 2021, at 10:30 a.m. 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 10:30 a.m. Chaplain James D. Stokes provided the invocation.

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

Chairman Pearce welcomed everyone. Visitors present virtually via Zoom were: Gail Cordial, Director, Policy & Government Relations, Alkermes, Inc.; Jill Gran, Associate Director, State Government Affairs & Advocacy, Princeton, NJ; Rupi Grewal, SC Department of Health & Human Services; Cassandra Harris, Director of Strategy & Engagement, DHEC; Wendy Arndt Holmquist and Susan von Schenk, Capital Information Affiliates (CIA); and Bill Lindsay, Executive Director, NAMI SC.

**INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES and MOMENT OF  
COMMEMORATING 200<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF DMH**

Chairman Pearce combined the bicentennial moment with the introduction of staff members from Community Mental Health Services (CMHS). He said the bicentennial year celebration will not only focus on the history of DMH but will also focus on future opportunities. He said CMHS is a diverse group and is moving progressively forward.

Ms. Deborah Blalock, Deputy Director, Community Mental Health Services (CMHS), introduced the following staff members: Denise Morgan, Assistant Deputy Director (effective Nov. 2)- Denise – with department 34 years; Margaret Meriwether, Program Manager, School Mental Health; Lamar Suber, Program Manager, Co-Occurring Programming; Michele Murff, Program Manager, Housing and Homeless Program; Mallory Miller, Program, Manager, TLC and Homeshare Programs; and Stacey Gardner, Program Manager, Performance Improvement. Each person talked briefly about their area of responsibility.

Other CMHS staff will be introduced at the December 3, 2021 Commission meeting.

Chairman Pearce reported that the Governor's office is considering the Department's request to participate in the 200<sup>th</sup> bicentennial kickoff celebration in December, which coincides with the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the legislation that authorized construction of the South Carolina Lunatic Asylum.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*Chairman Pearce entertained a motion to add at the end of the Agenda a brief executive session to receive legal advice.*

*On a motion by Dr. Alison Evans, seconded by Dr. Elliott Levy, the Commission approved the Agenda with the addition of a brief executive session.*

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

S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING  
NOVEMBER 5, 2021

***APPROVAL OF MINUTES***

***By motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the minutes from the Center presentation and Commission Business Meeting of October 1, 2021.***

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

***ANNOUNCEMENTS***

Dr. Kenneth Rogers reported the following:

- Listening sessions were held on October 20, 2021 at Bryan Psychiatric Hospital (BPH) and on November 3, 2021 at Greater Greenville Mental Health Center. Dr. Rogers said the Department is dealing with a very stressed system as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Senior Management continues to explore ways to decrease the level of stress.
- Mr. Stewart Cooner, Deputy Director of Administrative Services, resigned from the Department effective October 20, 2021. Mr. Paul Morris, CFO, assumed the additional responsibilities of Deputy Director of Administrative Services effective November 2, 2021.
- Dr. Rogers said the Department is in a precarious position when it comes to wages and benefits compared to other agencies that provide treatment services. Senior Management is having conversations about how to mitigate the issue. He said Commission and local boards' advocacy to enlighten communities and state lawmakers concerning the Department's staffing challenges would be beneficial.
- On Thursday, November 4, 2021, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued the *Biden-Harris Administration Emergency Regulation Requiring COVID-19 Vaccination for Health Care Workers*. A DMH Town Hall is scheduled on Monday, November 8, for leadership to provide updates and answer questions from staff.

***MONTHLY/QUARTERLY INFORMATION REPORTS***

Ms. Elizabeth Hutto, General Counsel, 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 October a total of six pending cases for the Office of Public Safety.

Ms. Hutto reported a total of 23 pending SLED investigations as of November 4, 2021. Five cases were assigned to SLED, of which the oldest is from August 2021; 15 cases were assigned to Long-term Care Ombudsman Office, of which the oldest is from March 2021; and two cases were assigned to local law enforcement, of which the oldest is from April 2020. There is one case with the Sexually Violent Predator Treatment Center (SVPTC) advocate from October 5 2021.

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

- 65 calls to patient advocacy in September; a total of 489 year to date.
- 66 complaints were resolved in September; a total of 636 complaints have been resolved year to date.
- The number of complaints by category resolved in September is 86 (*complaints are broken out by category, a single patient complaint may have more than one category*).

Ms. Hutto shared eight requests that originated from Bryan Adult Civil for information or assistance that did not involve a complaint.



S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING  
NOVEMBER 5, 2021

***ISSUE ACTION PAPER***

Approval of Easement to the Town of Summerville

Ms. Hutto presented an IAP requesting Commission approval for an Easement to the Town of Summerville for the purpose of a drainage and retention pond project affecting the Dorchester Clinic property.

***By motion duly made and seconded, the Commission granted the requested easement to the Town of Summerville for drainage improvement project on the Dorchester Clinic property.***

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

Approval of Easement to Dominion Energy SC, Inc.

Ms. Hutto presented an IAP requesting Commission approval for an Easement to Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc., for the purpose of installing and maintaining the primary electrical lines to the McLendon building on the Crafts Farrow State Hospital Campus.

***Following discussion, by motion duly made and seconded, the Commission granted the requested easement to Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc., for the purpose of installing and maintaining the primary electrical lines to the McLendon building on the Crafts Farrow State Hospital Campus.***

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

***DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW AND UPDATE***

Financial Status Update / Administrative Services

Mr. Morris presented the monthly financial report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. Below are highlights from the report:

- As of September 30, 2021, the Department is projected to end FY22 with a balance of approximately \$4 million.
- Mr. Morris expects to receive a report from the revenue cycle management review at the end of November or early December.
- Mr. Morris reported that the Department presented the FY23 budget request to the Executive Budget Office staff and the Governor's Office staff on October 27, 2021.
- The Department is required and is preparing to report the expenditures from the first round of CARES Act funds of \$6.2 million by November 30, 2021.
- Medicare and Medicaid cost reports are due by the end of the year.
- Mr. Morris will provide a report on Administrative Services next month.

Dr. Rogers commended Mr. Morris on his outstanding work in preparing the FY23 budget presentation.

HR Report

Ms. Zina Hampton, Chief Human Resources Officer, presented the HR report. Below are highlights from the report.

- Ms. Hampton provided the Commissioners an amended report, a copy of which is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected the DMH workforce. Ms. Hampton presented a graph comparison of filled FTE positions. There were a total of 4,224 filled FTE positions in January 2020 compared to a total of 3,713 filled FTE positions in August 2021.
- Ms. Hampton reviewed statistics on terminations by type and terminations by location from January 2020 through August 2021, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING  
NOVEMBER 5, 2021

- Ms. Hampton reported DMH has approximately 460 posted vacancies.
- There was discussion on recruitment marketing strategies.

Community Mental Health Services

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

- Ms. Blalock, Dr. Eve Fields, DMH Psychiatrist, Ms. Jennifer Butler, Director of Suicide Prevention, and Ms. Janet Bell, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer held a virtual lunch and learn for DHEC staff on October 26. They provided mental health resources and coping strategies to reduce the stress associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately 155 DHEC staff joined the session.
- DMH Board Training 2021 was held on October 15 via Zoom. Approximately 150 board members from across the state were in attendance.
- Ms. Blalock presented the CMHS Trends and Transparency Monthly Indicators (TMI) spreadsheets, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. Ms. Blalock noted that ten mental health centers exceeded their patient care hours in September 2021.
- 83% of all services were delivered face to face, 15% were delivered through telehealth platform, and 2% were delivered telephonically.
- Ms. Blalock presented the 2021 Community Mental Health Services Patient Satisfaction Survey, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. In May 2021 CMHS contracted with its call reminder system vendor to conduct a text-based version survey. During May 17, 2021 through September 1, 2021, there were 143,053 survey solicitations and 8,072 completed surveys resulting in a 5.6% participation rate. A total of 47,201 potential patient respondents were given the opportunity to complete a survey, resulting in a patient participation rate of 12.6%. The lowest positive response rate was 92.7%. All the responses were over 92.7% agree or strongly agree. The mental health centers receive all comments and are asked to follow up on the negative comments.
- Staffing/recruiting continues to be the biggest challenge and has created a very unstable environment at the mental health centers. Ms. Blalock reported that one of the mental health centers does not have enough staff to operate one of the remote clinics five days a week and has requested to be open only two days a week. There have been discussions about limitation of mental health services. This is happening as requests for mental health services are increasing.

Division of Inpatient Services (DIS)

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 COVID-19 Task Force chaired by Dr. Robert Breen continues to meet weekly. Vaccinations of immunocompromised staff and patients are in accordance with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines. The booster vaccine is being administered in accordance with the CDC guidelines.
- The September 2021 overall average daily census (ADC) represents a numerical decrease of 320 or 25% as compared to the overall ADC for February 2020. Dr Bellamy said the workforce challenges create a detriment to the ADC and census capacity.
- Dr. Bellamy noted that the September 2021 ADC represents a 31% decrease at Patrick Harris Psychiatric Hospital and at Bryan Civil Hospital as compared to February 2020.
- Dr. Bellamy reported a total of 39 patients at Bryan Psychiatric Hospital, Bryan Forensics, and Patrick Harris Psychiatric Hospital with 20 years length of stay. Bryan Forensics has two patients with over 20 years length of stay.
- Dr. Bellamy reported waitlists as of October 6, 2021 as follows: Bryan Adult – 104; Forensics – 82; Hall – 0; Harris – 10; Morris Village – 221; Victory House – 12; Stone – 9; Campbell – 13; and Roddey – 37.



S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING  
NOVEMBER 5, 2021

- On behalf of the DIS staff, Dr. Bellamy expressed appreciation for the recent staff salary initiatives. Focus continues on ways to address the retention and recruitment of BHAs and CNAs working in inpatient and long-term care facilities.
- The Joint Commission conducted a follow up triennial survey at Patrick B. Harris Psychiatric Hospital (PBH) this morning. PBH was cleared of all findings and is awaiting the official accreditation letter. Dr. Bellamy anticipates the Joint Commission will conduct a triennial survey at G. Berber Bryan Psychiatric Hospital any day.
- On August 2, 2021 Mr. Troy Chisolm joined DIS in a temporary position as a consultant to look at the structure and function within DIS as well as the environment of care and long-term projects. Mr. Chisolm completed his work in October. Mr. Chisolm made recommendations in three areas: staffing, safety and training.
- Dr. Bellamy announced Patrick B. Harris Psychiatric Hospital and G. Werber Bryan Psychiatric Hospital were recently awarded the *2021 Drive to Zero Suicide Award*. The South Carolina Hospital Association in partnership with DMH recognizes facilities that are embracing Zero Harm through the adoption of specific Zero Suicide strategies, including specific training, policy enhancements, safety planning, screening, changes related to EMR, and formal coordination with local community mental health center. Twenty hospitals throughout the state were awarded the 2021 Drive to Zero Suicide Award.
- Planning continues towards finalizing the implementation plans for the jail-based restoration pilot project at the Alvin S. Glenn Detention Center.

***OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENTS***

Chairman Pearce recognized Mr. Bill Lindsay, Executive Director, NAMI SC. Mr. Lindsay commented that Ms. Mallory Miller was his trainer over twenty years ago in the Family to Family training sponsored by NAMI. He wanted to acknowledge that he would probably not be in the position he is in at NAMI had he not gone through that training. Mr. Lindsay also expressed appreciation to Chairman Pearce for joining NAMI's annual business meeting remotely yesterday and for providing an update on the planning of DMH's 200<sup>th</sup> Bicentennial Celebration.

Chairman Pearce announced Dr. Rogers celebrated a birthday on October 27, and on behalf of the Commission and everyone present, wished him a happy birthday. He also congratulated Dr. Maxwell on her recent wedding anniversary.

The Task Force to Strengthen the Health and Promote the Environment of SC (SHaPE) Draft Report

Chairman Pearce reported that the Commission members each received a copy of the Final Report of the SHaPE SC Task Force, Subcommittee on Behavioral Health for review prior to today's meeting.

*Following discussion, by motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the Final Report of the SHaPE SC Task Force as distributed.*

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

***ADJOURNMENT***

*At 12:05 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Mann, and seconded by Dr. Levy, the Commission adjourned the Business Meeting and entered into Executive Session to receive legal advice concerning potential litigation. Upon convening in open session at 12:45 p.m., Chairman Pearce noted that only information was received; no votes or actions were taken.*

S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING  
NOVEMBER 5, 2021

**ATTENDANCE**

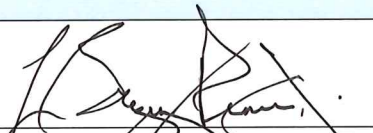
**Commission Members**

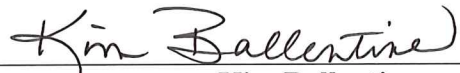
L. Gregory Pearce, Jr., Chair	Mr. Bob Hiott
Dr. Elliott Levy, Vice Chair	Mr. Bobby Mann
Dr. Alison Evans	Dr. Crystal Maxwell

**Visitors/Staff**

	<u>present virtually via Zoom</u>	<u>present virtually via Zoom</u>	<u>present virtually via Zoom</u>
Deborah Blalock	Dr. Robert Bank	Jill Gran	Sarah Main
Pete Creighton	Janet Bell	Rupi Grewal	Eleanor Odom-Martin
Stacey Gardner	Pat Bresnan	Jeffery Ham	Valarie Perkins
Zina Hampton	Mirtha Brown	Cassandra Harris	Lynelle Reavis
Margaret Meriwether	Jacqueline Brown	Darla Helms	Vicki Redding
Mallory Miller	Peter Camelo	Maryjane Hicks	Tracy Richardson
Denis Morgan	Rochelle Caton	Wendy Holmquist	Dr. Kimberly Urdd
Paul Morris	Leigh Ann Chmura	Louise Johnson	Stuart Shields
Michele Murff	Gail Cordial	Charice Jones	Eric Turner
Dr. Kenneth Rogers	Matthew Dorman	Tracy LaPointe	Susan von Schenk
Chaplain James Stokes	Dr. Eve Fields	Bill Lindsay	Lindsay Walker
Lamar Suber	Dr. Kelly Gothard	Patrice Lloyd	
Brett Williams			

**APPROVALS**

  
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**L. Gregory Pearce, Jr.**  
**Chair**

  
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**Kim Ballentine**  
**Recording Secretary**