

S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING
SCDMH Administration
2414 Bull Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201
March 4, 2022

A Business Meeting of the S.C. Mental Health Commission was held virtually via Zoom in Room 320 at the S.C. Department of Mental Health Administration Building on Friday, March 4, 2022, at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Greg Pearce, Chairman, was present in person. Other Commission members were present virtually via Zoom. Vice Chairman Dr. Elliott Levy was absent, excused. 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 10:35 a.m. Chaplain Daniel Loffredo provided the invocation.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Chairman Pearce welcomed everyone. Visitors present virtually were: Gail Cordial, Director, Policy & Government Relations, Alkermes, Inc.; Beth Franco, Executive Director, Disability Rights South Carolina; Elizabeth Harmon, SC Behavioral Health Coalition; Bill Lindsay, Executive Director, NAMI SC; Jocelyn Piccone, Director, Liberty Healthcare Corporation; and Susan von Schenk, Capital Information Affiliates (CIA).

Chairman Pearce introduced Dr. Carl Jones, Commissioner-elect, Congressional District 6. Dr. Jones is a resident of Orangeburg and a native of Conway, S.C. He worked at the Department of Mental Health several years ago. Most of his work has been in higher education as Vice President of Student Affairs. Dr. Jones said he looks forward to the tasks ahead and working together in a cooperative fashion. Dr. Jones' term on the Commission begins March 14, 2022.

Chairman Pearce announced Mr. Bob Hiott has tendered his resignation from the Commission to be effective after the April 2022 Commission meeting.

MOMENT OF COMMEMORATING 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF DMH

Chairman Pearce announced the Bicentennial Committee is collecting artifacts from the Department's history to have on display in the Administration Building as part of commemorating the Department's 200th anniversary. He presented a personal artifact, a dinner bell, which he is donating for the display. The dinner bell is over 100 years old and was given to him 50 years ago by the late Ms. Inez Nolan Fripp when she was the archivist at the South Carolina State Hospital. The dinner bell was used to call the patients to dinner.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Pearce requested to amend the agenda by moving the Legislative Update before Dr. Rogers' announcements. The Commissioners all agreed. By motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the Agenda as amended for today's Business Meeting.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

By motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the minutes from the Commission Business Meeting of February 4, 2022.

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

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Ms. Rochelle Caton, Director of Patient Advocacy and Legislative Liaison for DMH, presented the February 23, 2022 publication of the *Legislative News*, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. Following are highlights from her report:

- H 3773 – Restoration Treatment: This bill would extend the length of time certain individuals unfit to stand trial may be hospitalized from 60 to 180 days. It would also allow DMH to provide restoration treatment in detention centers and on an outpatient basis, where appropriate. The bill was recalled from Medical Affairs Committee and referred to Judiciary Committee on February 2, 2022. The bill will be before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Thursday, March 10, 2022.
- S 659 – Sexually Violent Predator Program: This bill would make several procedural and substantive changes to the “Sexually Violent Predator Act”, including, among other things, defining who are qualified evaluators, changing timeframes for completing evaluations, and modifying procedural rules for requesting and participating in periodic evaluations and annual review hearings. This bill will be before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Thursday, March 10, 2022.
- H 3126 – Vaccine Mandates: This bill would prevent the state of South Carolina or any South Carolina government component from accepting federal funds as the result of enforcing a federally issued mask or vaccine mandate. The language in the present bill gives DMH the ability to continue to comply with the conditions of participation under Medicare and Medicaid, which requires the vaccine mandate, without insurmountable barriers. The bill is currently on the floor of the full Senate for debate.
- H 4997 – State Veterans Nursing Homes: This bill would transfer the authority and responsibility for establishing state veterans nursing homes from the Department of Mental Health to the Department of Veterans Affairs. There are provisions in the bill that the employees who are in the veterans nursing homes will maintain their positions, their classifications, and salaries; however would switch agencies in the process. The bill is presently on the House floor for debate.
- S 2 – Behavioral and Public Health: This bill would split the Department of Health and Environmental Control into separate departments of Environmental Services and Behavioral and Public Health. The bill would abolish DMH and DMH Commission, as well as the Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services, and establish a Division of Mental Health and a Division of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services within the Department of Behavioral and Public Health. The bill has been through the Senate Medical Affairs Subcommittee, the full Senate Medical Affairs Committee, and is currently on the floor of the full Senate.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Kenneth Rogers said that one of his favorite songs has a line in it that says, “You ain’t seen your best days yet!” He said, “The Department is celebrating its 200th anniversary and I feel the Department will be here another 200 years. We have survived the pandemic really well. Our mental health centers have done a remarkable job with less than .1% of people that have gotten lost in the process – that is an incredible measure. Despite COVID, our hospitals have done relatively well and I am grateful for the work they have done. Now we are kind of on the back side of the pandemic, is what I am going to tell myself, in the endemic phase. What does all this mean? I think it means that we now gear up for the next phase of where we are headed as an Agency.”

Dr. Rogers reported the following:

- A regularly scheduled quarterly DMH Town Hall will be held on Monday, March 7, 2022. Dr. Rogers and members of leadership will provide updates, answer questions from staff, and listen to concerns.
- The Department will present its FY23 budget request to the Senate Finance Committee on March 16, 2022.
- DMH leadership continues to work with the S.C. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) leadership to look at ways to improve school mental health services and the development of a residential treatment facility for justice-involved youth.
- Effective March 1, 2022, face mask requirement was changed to optional for Central Administration, community mental health centers, and out-stationed central administration divisions (Public Safety, Physical Plant, ONIT).

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When physical distancing is not possible, face masks must be worn. Employees in inpatient locations are still required to wear face masks.

- The Department is working with DJJ to provide mental health services to subclass juveniles currently at DJJ who have serious persistent mental health illness. Dr. Rogers thanked Dr. Bellamy and her team for their work with expediting the admission of juveniles from DJJ. The Department continues to look at ways to admit additional juveniles safely. Part of that process is working with Physical Plant Services to look at renovating Lodges C & D at Hall to ensure they are better equipped to handle the influx of admissions. Dr. Rogers said that one of DMH's areas of expertise is working with the child population, kids that are age 12 and under. For many in that population, there are few options in the state for them to go for inpatient mental health services. DMH may receive funding to build and open a Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) that will not only serve the subclass juveniles at DJJ but also expand the work in child mental health.
- Dr. Rogers spoke at the 44th Annual Cross-Cultural Conference February 24-27, 2022 at Myrtle Beach. DMH partners with the Action Council for Cross-Cultural Mental Health and Human Services to sponsor the conference. Dr. Rogers announced the Commission's newest Commissioner Dr. Carl Jones was honored at the conference with the President's Award for his great work in mental health through the years; and Chairman Pearce received the Otis A. Corbitt Award for his many years of dedication to mental health and to cultural issues throughout the years.

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 February 2022 two pending investigations for the Office of Public Safety.

Ms. Hutto reported that as of today there are 18 pending SLED investigations. Three cases were assigned to SLED, of which the oldest is from August 2021; 12 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 and one case was assigned to the patient advocate.

Ms. Hutto highlighted the following for the month of January from the Patient Advocacy Report:

- 83 calls to patient advocacy.
- 66 complaints were resolved.
- The number of complaints by category resolved is 78 (*complaints are broken out by category, a single patient complaint may have more than one category*).

Ms. Hutto reminded Commissioners that the Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) reports are due by noon on March 30, 2022.

DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW AND UPDATE

Financial Status Update

Mr. Paul Morris, Deputy Director, Administrative Services, and CFO presented the monthly financial report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission, and the Administrative Services report.

Financial Status Update

- The January 31, 2022 financial report projects a balance of \$13.3 million for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022. Mr. Morris noted that the prior month fiscal year ending projection was \$5.5 million. He reported revenue over expenses increased \$7.8 million from December 2021; the revenue forecast increased \$900,000 from December 2021; and from December 2021 the expense forecast decreased \$6.9 million of which \$4.7 million was in DIS salaries and wages.

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- Mr. Morris reviewed the total recurring budget request for FY23. DMH requested \$72.6 million in total recurring. Included in the request was \$1.4 million for the Sexually Violent Predator Treatment Program and \$4.3 million for State Veterans Nursing Homes. The House Ways & Means recommended \$6 million in total recurring funds. Included in the House Ways & Means recommendation is \$456,418 for Law Enforcement Recruitment and Retention. The Governor's recommendation was \$11.6 million in total recurring funds. Additionally, the House Ways & Means recommended \$30.6 million for State Nursing Home Construction (Orangeburg); the Governor and the House Ways & Means recommended \$12 million in federal authorization expenditures.

Administrative Services

Mr. Morris gave an update on the Electronic Health Record (EHR) Exploration Project. The initial draft of the Request for Proposal (RFP) was returned with edits and suggestions from the S.C. Materials Management Office (SCMMO). DMH has made the suggested edits and returned the RFP to SCMMO for review. SCMMO will process the final RFP document, publish it on the open market and host a pre-bid conference for all pre-qualified EHR vendors. Once the process is complete, negotiations will begin and a contractor will be selected by early summer.

Issue Action Paper (IAP) – Easement for Electrical Lines to a New State Veterans Nursing Home in Sumter, S.C.

Mr. Binkley, Director, Governmental and Legislative Affairs, presented an IAP requesting Commission approval for an Easement to Black River Electric Cooperative, Inc., for constructing and maintaining the primary electrical lines to the new State Veterans Nursing Home which will be built in Sumter, S.C.

By motion duly made and seconded, the Commission granted the requested easement to Black River Electric Cooperative, Inc., for constructing and maintaining the primary electrical lines to the new State Veterans Nursing Home which will be built in Sumter, S.C.

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

Issue Action Paper (IAP) – Transfer of Historical Items to the S.C. Department of Archives and History

Mr. Binkley presented an IAP requesting Commission approval to transfer historical portraits from the Department of Mental Health to the permanent custody of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. He gave a powerpoint presentation of the portraits. The Department has been using Building 16 on the campus of the former Crafts-Farrow State Hospital as a location in which to store a number of historically significant items, including some oil painted portraits. The portraits stored in Building 16 have mold or other damage, and are at risk of further deterioration. The Department of Archives and History has expressed its willingness to remove, clean and store the portraits and include them in its SCDMH collection at no cost to the Department.

Description of items:

Portrait of Cleve Odom, MD (photograph)	Portrait of Peter Beckman, MD (photograph)
Portrait of Coyt Ham, MD (photograph)	Portrait of Peter Griffin, MD (photograph)
Portrait of Jaime Condom, MD (photograph)	Portrait of Sarah Allan, MD (painting)
Portrait of James Babcock, MD (photograph)	Sketch of Robert Mills
Portrait of Joshua Ensor, MD (photograph)	Portrait of James F. Byrnes (photograph)
Portrait of Karl Duskocil, MD (photograph)	

Following discussion, by motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the request as presented.

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

Chairman Pearce talked about the assessability of archived portraits. Mr. Binkley said the mission of the Department of Archives and History is to display historical items or make them assessable. Dr. Rogers noted that the Department of Archives and History will provide a digitized image of the portraits to DMH upon completion of cleaning, storage and preservation of the items.

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HR Report

Ms. Zina Hampton, Chief Human Resources Officer, presented the HR report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. Ms. Hampton reported the following:

- At the end of February 2020, the Department had a total of 4,247 filled full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. That number has continued to decrease to 3,542 as of the end of February 2022.
- From July 1, 2021 through February 21, 2022, the Department had 516 FTE hires and 745 FTE departures.
- At the end of February 2022, the Department had a 94% overall vaccine rate. HR received a total of 299 requests for exemptions from the vaccine requirement: 42 requests were for medical exemptions; 233 requests were for religious exemptions; and 24 requests were for both medical and religious exemptions. HR has approved 266 of those requests. The rest are currently being reviewed by HR.

Community Mental Health Services

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

- Currently there are 63 bachelors prepared clinician positions either posted or in the process of being posted.
- Ms. Blalock recently participated in hiring fair and practicum/internship fairs at the University of South Carolina and at Clemson University where she talked about the virtues of working with DMH. After speaking with both groups, several individuals reached out to the mental health centers for the practicum and internship positions.
- The S.C. Department of Education is transferring \$3.5 million to DMH to use over the next three years. The funds will be used to support school mental health and will also be used to offer recruitment and retention bonuses to school mental health staff.
- Ms. Blalock participated in a celebration of Trident Medical Center's new 60-bed freestanding behavioral health hospital in North Charleston that is scheduled to be completed in 2023. The new facility will offer inpatient and outpatient services for pediatric, adult and geriatric patients. She said this project and the Department's relationship with Trident Medical Center is a good example of private/public partnerships.
- The 2022 Southeastern School Behavioral Health Conference will be held on April 28-29 at Myrtle Beach. The conference is hosted by the Southeastern School Behavioral Health Community and the University of South Carolina School Behavioral Health Team in partnership with DMH and the S.C. Department of Education.
- Ms. Blalock presented pictures of the Waccamaw Mental Health Center's newly wrapped Highway to Hope (H2H) mobile response RV.
- Ms. Blalock presented the CMHS Trends and Transparency Monthly Indicators (TMI) spreadsheets, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

Housing Development Update – Bull Street Proceeds

Ms. Michele Murff, Director of Housing and Homeless Programs, presented an update on Housing Development. Below are highlights from the presentation:

- To date, \$3,450,000 has been committed in Bull Street proceeds for the development of 138 new housing units. Of the total committed, \$1,550,000 has been spent to date for 62 units.
- Recently Completed Projects:
 - NHE Housing Developer – Parkside at Drayton, Spartanburg – two units
 - Parkside at Main, Simpsonville – six units
 - Greenville Housing Authority – Preserve Park – 20 units
 - Mental Illness Recovery Center, Inc. (MIRCI) Youth Home, Columbia – 10 units/beds
 - Spartanburg Housing Authority/NHE – Northside Station, Spartanburg – 8 units
 - Spartanburg Housing Authority – Victoria Gardens, Spartanburg – 8 units
 - Mental Health America of SC Kiva Cottages Phase 1, Blythewood – 4 units
- In planning/pre-development phase:
 - One80 Place Meeting Street Apartments, Charleston – 17 units
 - United Housing Connections – Church Street Place at Poe Mill, Greenville – 9 units
 - Homes of Hope, Berea in Greenville County – 4 units

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- MHASC Kiva Cottages – Phase 2, Blythewood – 2-4 units
- Prestwick Development – The Park at Hanahan – 4 units
- Resource Housing Group – The Peaks at Lexington – 4 units
- Columbia Housing – Oaks at St. Anna’s Park – 20 units; Haven at Palmer Pointe – 10 units
- Connelly Development – Midtown at Bull, Columbia – 4 units
- MIRCI – Youth Home, Columbia – 10 beds for young women

A copy of the powerpoint presentation is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director. Chairman Pearce thanked Ms. Murff for the comprehensive report.

Division of Inpatient Services (DIS)

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

- Patrick B. Harris Psychiatric Hospital received notification of full accreditation.
- Dr. Bellamy anticipates the follow up Joint Commission Survey at Bryan Psychiatric Hospital any day now.
- Work continues on finalizing the Department of Veteran Affairs State Veterans Homes Recognition Survey for Veteran Village in Florence.
- Anticipate beginning admissions to Palmetto Patriots Home in Gaffney by April 2022.
- The Department of Veteran Affairs will conduct a first fully virtual survey at Stone Veterans Nursing Home beginning on Monday, March 7, 2022. Dr. Bellamy said this will require expansive and expensive collaboration among DMH departments throughout the Agency as well as local VA representatives located in Columbia.
- The COVID-19 Task Force, chaired by Dr. Robert Breen, continues to meet weekly staying well-informed of COVID guidelines and adjusting with new regulatory requirements as changes occur.
- As of today there are two sites where there is known COVID positive, representing one patient at each site, and two known COVID positive DMH staff. The current vaccine rate of staff in inpatient services is about 90%. The staff have learned about, gotten more comfortable and made the decision to receive the vaccine.
- The January 2022 overall average daily census (ADC) represents a numerical decrease of 403 or 32% as compared to the overall ADC for February 2020.
- As of February 18, 2022, the Forensic Ready for Admission Waitlist is 106. As of today, the waitlist is at 119. Forensics has continued to be impacted by higher numbers of readmissions of NGRI patients in the community, which impacts the ability to admit from the waitlist. There has been an increase in the numbers of monthly orders received for admission. The number of orders for admission received during December 2021 was 27 and a total of 33 orders for admission received during January 2022.
- Dr. Bellamy called attention to the Length of Stay (LOS) information in the monthly systems dashboards.
 - Two patients at Bryan Forensics with LOS over 20 years
 - 37 patients with LOS from 11-20 years
 - 18 at PBH
 - 10 at Bryan Civil
 - 9 at Bryan Forensics
 - 41 patients with LOS from 6-10 years
 - 15 at Bryan Civil
 - 16 at PBH
 - 10 at Bryan Forensics
- Upon permission by the courts, Forensics has begun work on the discharge of one patient who has been hospitalized at Bryan Forensics Hospital for 24 years. Forensics is currently awaiting the receipt of the written order.

OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

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ADJOURNMENT

At 12:13 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 2022 Louise R. Hassenplug Outstanding Clinician Award. Upon convening in open session at 12:33 p.m., Chairman Pearce announced the Commission selected the recipient of the 2022 Louise R. Hassenplug Outstanding Clinician Award. A motion was made and duly seconded to approve as discussed in Executive Session the selected recipient of the 2022 Louise R. Hassenplug Outstanding Clinician Award. All voted in favor of the motion. The Commission will recognize the recipient and present the award at the May 6, 2022 Commission business meeting. There was no other action taken. The meeting was adjourned.

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members

L. Gregory Pearce, Jr., Chair
Dr. Elliott Levy, Vice Chair, was absent, excused

present virtually via Zoom
Dr. Alison Evans
Mr. Bob Hiott
Mr. Bobby Mann
Dr. Crystal Maxwell

Visitors/Staff

present virtually via Zoom

Dr. Robert Bank
Janet Bell
Dr. Versie Bellamy
Mark Binkley
Deborah Blalock
Dr. Robert Breen
Pat Bresnan
Jacqueline Brown
Aria Bozorgi
Rochelle Caton
Gail Cordial

present virtually via Zoom

Teresa Curry
Matt Dorman
Allison Farrell
Beth Franco
Melanie Gambrell
Dr. Kelly Gothard
Jeffery Ham
Zina Hampton
Dr. Patricia Handley
Elizabeth Harmon
Dr. Maryjane Hicks
Elizabeth Hutto

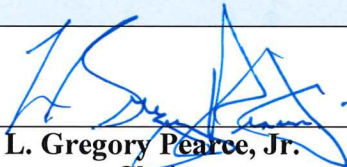
present virtually via Zoom

Charice Jones
Chaplain Daniel Loffredo
Tracy LaPointe
Bill Lindsey
Patrice Lloyd
Sarah Main
Eleanor Odom-Martin
Dr. Allen McEniry
Mallory Miller
Denise Morgan
Paul Morris
Michele Murff

present virtually via Zoom

Valarie Perkins
Jocelyn Piccone
Crystal Pressley
Vicki Redding
Dr. Kimberly Rudd
Angie Salley
Tamara Smith
Susan Von Schenk
Lindsay Walker
Roger Williams
Kevin Woods

APPROVALS


L. Gregory Pearce, Jr.
Chair


Kim Ballentine
Recording Secretary

