

S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING
SCDMH Administration
2414 Bull Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201
December 2, 2022

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, December 2, 2022, 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 Stokes provided the invocation.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Chairman Pearce welcomed everyone. Visitors present virtually were: Gail Cordial, Director, Policy & Government Relations, Alkermes; Beth Franco, Executive Director, Disability Rights South Carolina; and Susan von Schenk, Capital Information Affiliates (CIA), Wanda McMichael, Program Manager, Liberty Healthcare Corporation, was also present.

Mr. Brandon Gaffney, Assistant Deputy Director, Administrative Services, introduced Ms. Leigh Ann Chmura. Ms. Chmura was selected as the Director of the Office of Network and Information Technology (ONIT) effective November 2, 2022.

MOMENT OF COMMEMORATING 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF DMH

Chairman Pearce expressed appreciation to the members of the Bicentennial Committee. He said it has been an interesting year with the pandemic and legislative issues that took interest and time away in planning additional activities to commemorate the 200th anniversary of DMH. He thanked Mr. Mark Binkley for his efforts serving alongside him as cochair. Mr. Binkley said the mental health centers and inpatient facilities held activities in recognition of the bicentennial that were meaningful. Mental health partners also recognized and celebrated the occasion.

Chairman Pearce said, "On behalf of Colonel Samuel Farrow and Major William Crafts, and all those who served in between, we thank you for your continued service to the Department."

Dr. Evans said this past year is an example of how the Department prioritizes its focus. There was work to be done and the Department responded to the need. "Good job!"

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the Agenda 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 Meeting of November 4, 2022.

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

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MONTHLY/QUARTERLY INFORMATION REPORTS

On behalf of Ms. Elizabeth Hutto, General Counsel, Ms. Robin Crawford, Legislative Liaison, presented the items listed under Monthly/Quarterly Informational Reports, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

Ms. Crawford reported for the month of November 2022 a total of five pending investigations for the Office of Public Safety. As of today, three of those investigations are complete and two cases remain pending. There were no closures of note.

Ms. Crawford reported a total of 31 pending SLED investigations for the month of November 2022.

Ms. Crawford highlighted the following for the month of October 2022 from the Patient Advocacy Report:

- 74 calls to patient advocacy in October; a total of 785 year to date.
- 63 complaints were resolved in October; a total of 769 complaints have been resolved year to date.
- The number of complaints by category resolved is 72 (*complaints are broken out by category, a single patient complaint may have more than one category*).

PROPOSED REGULATION CHANGE S.C. CODE REG 87-2 – PARKING REGS

Ms. Crawford proposed an amendment to Chapter 87, Article 2, in the South Carolina Code of Laws, regarding parking regulations, to update the violations and bonds by tying them to similar offenses in the counties where Department facilities are located. Upon approval the Office of General Counsel will initiate the promulgation process by publication of Notice of Drafting in the State Register.

By motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the Office of General Counsel initiate the promulgation process to amend Chapter 87, Article 2 as presented.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Bank announced the following:

- The Department is in the latter phase of the agreement with the South Carolina Department of Administration (SCDOA). SCDOA will provide a report of its findings and recommendations regarding DMH's human resources and finance & budget functions at the conclusion of their review.
- SCDOA recommended the salaries of MHPs increase by 40%. MHPs will received up to 15% effective December 16, 2022. This increase raises the minimum salary for MHPs from \$37,000 to \$43,000. A request is included in the FY24 budget request for the remaining difference. Many positive comments have been received from employees concerning the increase.
- The Department presented the FY24 budget request to the Executive Budget Office and Governor's Office staff on November 22, 2022. Dr. Bank noted there was discussion concerning the 988 Call Center. He said it is the Department's desire to have a collaborative agreement with Mental Health America (MHA) to ensure the state of South Carolina can successfully answer 100% of the calls.
- Dr. Bank along with Ms. Crawford and other staff members are meeting with legislators to talk about mental health services in South Carolina.
- Dr. Bank met with Ms. Eden Hendrick, Executive Director, Department of Juvenile Justice, and Ms. Melanie Hendricks, Deputy Director, Division of Community Treatment Services, on November 30, 2022 to continue discussions on collaborative efforts to provide mental health services to subclass juveniles.
- The South Carolina Telehealth Alliance (SCTA) Advisory Council met on November 17, 2022. Dr. Bank reported the following: DMH continues to provide mental health care through its Emergency Department telepsychiatry

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program covering 26 ERs and seeing over 700 patients a month; the physicians and nurse practitioners throughout the mental health centers average 5,000 visits/month via telehealth; counselors are seeing 7,000 patients a month. This represents over 13,000 visits a month in telehealth services. South Carolina is the greatest provider of telehealth services.

- There was discussion on the urgency to help legislators become more knowledgeable about mental health related issues and the importance of supporting mental health.

DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW AND UPDATE

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:

- Continuing to look at maximizing capacity to achieve average daily census goals and decrease the patient waiting list. Dr. Bellamy reported DIS is on course with maintaining beds and decreasing the waitlist.
- Improving patient access. Allowing access to facilities by family, students, and other interested parties as recommended and advised by DHEC and CDC.
- Challenges continue with recruiting and retaining workforce, which impacts the availability of beds. Looking at ways to increase bed turnover rate and freeing up beds to increase admission volume. DIS is working with ONIT to develop a “turnover and track” report to capture bed turnover rate. Dr. Bellamy anticipates the report will be included in the monthly report to the Commission beginning next year.
- Reducing the average length of stay with an emphasis on placement of chronic and difficult to place patients.
- Looking at providing supplemental training to BHAs to enhance that skillset.
- Viral Disease Taskforce, chaired by Dr. Robert Breen, continues to assess and implement processes. DIS operations have almost returned to normal in the facilities with over 2 years of experiencing and managing risks associated with the pandemic. Continuing to monitor for influenza especially in the nursing homes.
- The overall Average daily Census (ADC) is steadily increasing. The October combined ADC for the psychiatric hospitals and Morris Village represents a numerical decrease of 122 or 21% compared to February 2020. The October ADC represents a 5% gain from September.
- As of November 17, 2022, there were 65 individuals on the forensic ready for admission waitlist. Dr. Bellamy noted this is the lowest it has been since the pandemic began.
- Since initiating the jail-based competency restoration treatment program, the forensic waitlist has decreased by 57%.
- Dr. Levy commended Dr. Bellamy and her staff for successfully decreasing the waitlist and increasing the average daily census, despite all the challenges with the workforce.
- Dr. Jones said he looks forward to visiting the inpatient facilities. He said the collaborative efforts that take place in the patient’s transition from inpatient to outpatient is a model of continuum of care that the Department needs to accentuate. He said as the leading mental health authority in the state, DMH needs to really tell the story about what we are doing as a Department and how that collaboration works and how clients are better served.

HR Report

Ms. Eleanor Odom, Chief Human Resources Director, presented the HR report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. Below are highlights from the report:

- The Department continues to have a large number of departures. From July 2021 through November 2022, the Department had a total of 1,189 FTE hires and 1,403 departures.
- In an effort to ensure DMH staff are informed about agency priorities, developments, and activities, an electronic newsletter will be launched after the first of the new year. The newsletter will be entitled, “SCDMH: In the Know.” The newsletter will be published six times a year, every other month.
- Patrick B. Harris Psychiatric Hospital (PBH) hosted a career fair in November. Approximately 15 job seekers attended the event. Ten individuals were offered and accepted positions on the spot and are now employed at PBH.

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- DMH will participate in a large agency career fair with DHEC, DSS, and DOC on March 30, 2023.
- As Dr. Bank mentioned earlier, MHPs will receive up to 15% salary increase effective December 16, 2022. MHP I, MHP II, and MHP III positions will be mapped based on degree and years of experience. Ms. Karen Wingo, State HR Director, will speak at the Center Directors Meeting on December 14th to further explain the MHP initiative.
- Beginning in the new year, Central Office HR will begin working more closely with Center Directors and their HR departments and providing assistance with recruitment efforts.
- Ms. Odom-Martin reported that she is working on collecting data that will demonstrate how HR saves dollars for the Agency.
- Dr. Levy noted that the e-newsletter might be helpful information to share with senators and representatives in the state. Ms. Odom-Martin said plans are to distribute it to legislators and anyone else approved by Dr. Bank.

Community Mental Health Services

On behalf of Ms. Deborah Blalock, Deputy Director, Community Mental Health Services, Ms. Denise Morgan, Assistant Deputy Director, Community Mental Health Services, presented the Community Mental Health Services (CMHS) report. Following are highlights from the report:

- Feedback from local mental health center staff in reference to the 15% increase for MHPs has been overwhelmingly positive, reassuring, emotional, and personal:
 - “This is the best news I have heard in a long time.”
 - “I have been with mental health for 16 years – when I heard the news I became emotional. This will improve my life and my family’s life dramatically.”
 - “Thankful and is now willing to remain with the Agency.”
 - “Thanks for seeing my value.”
 - “I can now quit my second job and spend more time with my family.”
- November reflects a total of 596 schools in the state with DMH School Mental Health Services (SMH) staffing; a total of 326 SMH positions filled; and 137 vacant SMH positions.
- Since the beginning of the fiscal year, community mental health centers have served 23,171 children in school mental health and provided 258,948 services.
- Mobile Crisis Call Center has answered 23,820 calls thus far in FY23. Of those calls 7,380 were crisis oriented. A total of 3,357 required a mobile crisis response in the community. There were 1,835 diversions from ERs, jails, and psychiatric hospitals.
- Board Training was held virtually on November 18, 2022. Eighty-two board members attended. Survey results indicate the majority felt it was very informative and helpful, and enjoyed the virtual option, but would like a break during the session. Most responses referenced Representative Gilda Cobb-Hunter’s presentation was most helpful and provided good information on how to communicate with representatives and the importance of sharing data. Chairman Pearce commended Ms. Jessica Barnes for her presentation on 988 and suicide prevention, and Mr. Logan Royals for his presentation on expectations and legal guidelines to follow as a board member.
- On behalf of the center directors at Charleston-Dorchester Mental Health Center, Waccamaw Center for Mental Health, and Greater Greenville Mental Health Center, Ms. Morgan expressed appreciation to Dr. Jones for his recent visits. The visits were very much appreciated, helpful, and encouraging. Dr. Jones said the visits brought back home for him the greatness of the Department’s staff and the tremendous work that is being done in the communities. He said we must continue to work on salary equity because that will decrease departures and help with recruitment.
- There was discussion on services provided at Crisis Stabilization Units and Crisis Receiving Units.

Administrative Services & Financial Status Update

Ms. Debbie Calcote, Acting Deputy Director, Administrative Services, presented the monthly financial report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission, and the Administrative Services report.

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- As of October 31, 2022, the Department is projected to end FY23 with a balance of \$12.5 million. Ms. Calcote noted the Department has spent 33% of budget for the fiscal year. Mid-year budget meetings will be held with all elements of the organization in January for information and updates to any changes in the organizational structure.
- Initial interviews for the Procurement Director position will begin next week.
- The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) position is being updated to Financial Services Director and will report to the Deputy Director of Administrative Services. The Financial Services Director will be responsible for financial operations to include budgets, procurement, bill and accounts payable. The position will be posted soon.
- Ms. Calcote commended Ms. Tracy LaPointe, Director, Office of Public Affairs, and Ms. Lindsay Walker, Administrative Assistant, for their great work on the Bicentennial Committee. They put together an exhibit of artifacts from DMH's past. The exhibit is located on the 2nd floor of the Administration Building. They also organized the time capsule burial event and reception and were instrumental in executing the work of the Committee.

OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

At 12:00 p.m. by motion duly made and seconded, the Commission adjourned the business meeting.

ATTENDANCE

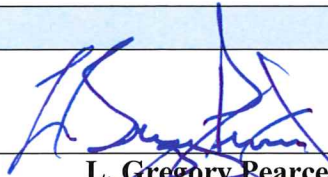
Commission Members

L. Gregory Pearce, Jr., Chair	Dr. Carl Jones
Dr. Elliott Levy, Vice Chair, <i>virtually</i>	Mr. Bobby Mann
Dr. Alison Evans	Dr. Crystal Maxwell


Visitors/Staff

	Wanda McMichael	<i>present virtually via Zoom</i>	<i>present virtually via Zoom</i>	<i>present virtually via Zoom</i>
Dr. Robert Bank	Denise Morgan	Jennifer Alleyne	Dr. Kelly Gothard	Shawnta Reeder-Locks
Dr. Versie Bellamy	Eleanor Odom Martin	Janet Bell	Jeffery Ham	Angie Salley
Mark Binkley	Dr. Kimberly Rudd	Erin Bramlitt	Keith Jackson	Eric Turner
Deborah Blalock	Chaplain James Stokes	Mirtha Brown	Charice Jones	Susan von Schenk
Debbie Calcote	Brett Williams	Pete Camelo	Tracy LaPointe	Lindsay Walker
Leigh Ann Chmura		Gail Cordial	Sarah Main	Dr. Sheena Willis
Robin Crawford		Pete Creighton	Margaret Meriwether	Kevin Woods
Brandon Gaffney		Allison Farrell	Linda Palmer	
Dr. Patricia Handley		Beth Franco	Dr. Lynelle Reavis	
		Melanie Gambrell	Vicki Redding	

APPROVALS



L. Gregory Pearce, Jr.
 Chair



Kim Ballentine
 Recording Secretary

