**GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH**

**AND RECOVERY SERVICES**

**Jennifer Malainy 13244 Ravenna Road**

**Chairwoman of the Board Chardon, Ohio 44024**

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**Board Minutes April 20, 2022**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ann Bagley, Alberta Chokshi, Walter Claypool, Martin Fay, James Lee Holden, Vanessa Jensen, Kathy Johnson, Jennifer Malainy, Linda Miller, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, Mary Ruth Shumway

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Carolee Lesyk, Gregory O’Brien

**GUESTS INCLUDE:** Kim Carter, Susan Parker (NAMI Geauga), Vicki Clark (Ravenwood Health), Mary Wynne-Peaspanen (Signature Health), Melanie Blasko (Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers), Valerie Clause (Karlovec Media Group), Sheriff Scott Hildenbrand (Geauga Sheriff’s Office), Michelle Bertman (Catholic Charities), Tia Lawrence, Tina Ringenbach (Torchlight Youth Mentoring Alliance), Andrea Gutka (WomenSafe), Aimee Gilman (Geauga League of Women Voters), Chris Steigerwald (Geauga SOGI Support Network), Tim Snyder, Anastasia Nicholas, Mary Briggs

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jim Adams, Amie Martin-D’Arienzo, Jim Mausser, Teresa Slater

1. **CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Ms. Malainy called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She then stated that the meeting is being held in public for the purpose of conducting the Board’s business. Public comments will be allowed for a total of ten minutes at the end of the meeting.

Ms. Chokshi called the roll for attendance purposes and the following Board members were present: Ann Bagley, Alberta Chokshi, Walter Claypool, Martin Fay, James Lee Holden, Vanessa Jensen, Kathy Johnson, Jennifer Malainy, Linda Miller, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello and Mary Ruth Shumway.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

1. **GUEST SPEAKER – SCOTT HILDENBRAND, GEAUGA COUNTY SHERIFF**

Dr. Oluic introduced Sheriff Scott Hildenbrand, who is here to speak with the Board about mental health and addiction housing and treatment at the Geauga Safety Center. Sheriff Hildenbrand said he has talked to a number of Board members who didn’t realize what was going on at the jail. The Sheriff then provided the following information:

* In 2021, they processed 1887 inmates and Medical saw 77 inmates for psychiatric care.
* They provide AA and NA meetings, drug and alcohol counseling, life skills, parenting classes, church services.
* The jail has 182 beds, and nine cells are available for intake as a staging area and can hold more than one person.
* They currently have 65 male inmates and 13 female inmates, of which 16 are ICE and 5 are from out of county.
* Their biggest challenge is inmates with mental health issues. 80% of inmates have some type of mental health issue. 34% of inmates are on some kind of medication. They have spent $34,200 on medication this year. One inmate received a monthly shot at a cost of $1,000 each for nine months. Some psychotropic drug costs do get reimbursed.
* They have individuals who are intoxicated or high, going through withdrawal, have mental health issues, or committed a crime of violence. Inmates with mental health issues or who have committed violence crimes must be seen by Ravenwood Health before being put in general population.
* What has happened over the last year, is they are having more and more inmates with mental health issues, and when Ravenwood comes to see them, the Sheriff is told they must make 10-minute checks, there should also be a camera and a suicide vest/blanket available.
* In January those intake cells were filled and could not accept nonviolent criminals. They used to pay Dr. Rodio to come more often, but that has been changed to once a week. A nurse practitioner comes in but can only see the Common Pleas inmates due to specific funding.
* There used to be a jail treatment program at 40 hours a week. Ravenwood has been unable to staff the program. There is someone who comes in only about ten hours a week and many times it is a different person. It is better to have the same person all the time, but they can’t find someone to fill the position.
* Once a person is stabilized, they can then be moved into general population and the intake space is available.
* They need more cells for inmates with mental health and addiction issues. There are many people who have been put into general population who are Ravenwood Health clients before they became incarcerated but are not being treated.
* They have an architect coming in tomorrow to see about reconfiguring the intake area.
* The Sheriff read from an article by the American Psychological Association advocating for more mental health facilities in the correctional system. They struggle to treat the vast number of inmates with mental health/addiction issues. About 37% of people in prison have a history of mental health problems, including diagnoses of bipolar, post-traumatic stress, and major depressive disorder.
* The Sheriff said we are locking up people who should be treated in the community. He said prisons and jails have become defacto treatment centers. He is not sure what the answer is.
* The other disconnect is often when someone leaves the jail, they don’t have a place to go. He feels someone needs to be there to help them – they need special attention, including making sure they take their medication, supervision, and someone to check on them.

Dr. Jensen said she is a member of the American Psychological Association. When deinstitutionalization happened in the 1970s, jails did become defacto treatment centers. She would fully support some kind of alternative program. If Ravenwood Health can’t meet the need, maybe there are alternative programs around the country that could bring in other mental health teams and also some type of alternative after care program. She is not sure if that would be paid for by some type of grant from the Board or from somewhere else. Sheriff Hildenbrand said this is a problem across the state and across the country. They are looking at what is or is not working. He said Family Pride has a group they are looking at to help get inmates stabilized and back into society.

Ms. Shumway asked how many people charged with crimes are really mental health concerns. She asked if family court covers someone who is actually mentally ill because it is a never-ending cycle. She then asked what is being done in Geauga to address adults who are in the jail but who shouldn’t be there. She spoke with Mr. Adams just last week about such a person. Sheriff Hildenbrand said the county did start a drug court and there is discussion about starting a mental health court. The Court should look at the circumstances involved and whether a person is malicious or has mental health issues, and if so, the county needs to have an alternative place to send them.

Ms. Shumway asked if it would be beneficial to have an advocate for those people when going to court. Sheriff Hildenbrand responded it couldn’t hurt. Mr. Holden asked how many people in jail have mental health issues and are not taking their medication. Sheriff Hildenbrand said he doesn’t have that number, but they do know when someone is off their medication.

Ms. Johnson commented that law enforcement is not trained in mental health. She asked if there is a way to expand the current intake area of nine beds. She asked the Sheriff to send the statistics he quoted, the Board can look at what the needs are, and then brainstorm solutions. Sheriff Hildenbrand said all of the deputies and corrections officers go through crisis intervention training to recognize that there could possibly be a mental illness issue. That training is done every year for his staff and other officers in the county.

Mr. Petruziello thanked the Sheriff for sharing the data. He then asked what age group is the Sheriff talking about. Sheriff Hildenbrand said he could probably get those statistics, but the ages range from 18 to 80. Mr. Petruziello said he is asking for the average age and if there is an uptick in younger people. The Sheriff talked about a safety meeting at West Geauga Schools where they are training the teachers to recognize mental health issues because it is becoming such a problem. Mr. Petruziello responded issues of that nature need to come to the parents and that it starts at home not in school. Teachers need to teach, but also probably need to recognize when something isn’t right and educated on where to send those type of issues.

Mr. Claypool asked the professionals on the Board what the root cause as to why mental illness is increasing and knowing more about what the underlying problem is. He thanked the Sheriff for coming to speak with the Board. Mr. Claypool said he is old enough to remember when we did have another alternative, which were institutions. It was then decided that was not good and individuals were released back into the community and maybe now people should be put back into institutions. Sheriff Hildenbrand said there needs to be someplace other than jail, whether it is an institution, hospital, or whatever you want to call it. Those institutions closed and this became the jail’s problem. He thinks mental health is more recognized now, not necessarily that there are more people with mental illness, but it is being diagnosed more.

Dr. Oluic asked if the Sheriff is compelled to keep people in jail longer if they have nowhere to go. He suggested that what is needed may be the county creating a step-down unit for individuals who are released to act as a bridge between jail and the community. Sheriff Hildenbrand said the judges determine the length an inmate stays. He feels if there was an alternate place they would probably be out of the jail sooner. Once someone has served their entire sentence, the jail can’t keep them longer even if they may not have anywhere to go. He feels it would be helpful for the judges to have an alternate place.

Ms. Shumway asked if the Sheriff has a rough idea of how many inmates are released from jail who are homeless. Sheriff Hildenbrand responded that he can’t give a specific number, but he feels it is many. Ms. Shumway asked if five people a month would be a realistic number and he responded yes. The Sheriff said the biggest disconnect seems to be when someone gets out of jail. That is when the help is needed.

1. **APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES FROM MARCH 16 AND MARCH 24, 2022**

Ms. Malainy asked if there were any edits or questions regarding the Minutes. Ms. Chokshi she would like to add something to the March 24th Minutes. She said the protocol was not followed to end this meeting. The meeting went into Executive Session and then the Board needed to come out of Executive Session, go into the regular Board meeting and then call in the staff and whatever community members were still in the building. She said that did not happen. The reason she wants to log this in the Minutes is because they are a public record and if anyone asks for the Minutes of that meeting, they should be correct. She reiterated that the Board should have come back into Open Session, recalled everyone, and then the meeting could be adjourned. She again stated that the Board did not follow protocol.

Ms. Malainy said the people who were in the audience did speak up about that and a Board member connected with them and apologized. Ms. Malainy then asked where it states in the Ohio Revised Code or Roberts’ Rules of Order or the Board’s Bylaws what the protocol is. Ms. Chokshi said she is not sure where it is stated. Ms. Malainy asked Ms. Chokshi to review that first because she is not sure it was done wrong. A community member said what should be done is located in ORC 143 relating to the Sunshine Laws and that the Board must come out of Executive Session. Mr. Claypool said as a point of order, the Board did come out of Executive Session and made a motion to adjourn. The only thing they didn’t do was bring the audience back in. He said there is no requirement to bring the audience back in the Ohio Revised Code or Roberts’ Rules of Order. The people who were in the audience were identified and told what happened and that no action was taken. The Board just simply adjourned once they were out of Executive Session. Ms. Malainy said she didn’t apologize because they did something wrong but because it was not the most respectful thing to do. The audience should have been brought back into the room and then the meeting adjourned.

Dr. Jensen then asked, as a point of order in the Minutes, where it was moved to adjourn the meeting, it is not clear what “the meeting” is – Executive Session or the open meeting. She further said there is no motion or announcement that the meeting was called back into Open Session so it is not clear that the Board was out of Executive Session and in Open Session. Ms. Malainy said that was done. Mr. Holden said the Minutes state that the Board came out of Executive Session at 7:23 PM, that no action would be taken, and then Mr. O’Brien moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 PM. Dr. Jensen said she is trying to clarify that the meeting was called back into Open Session. The Minutes may just need a sentence stating that the Board was back in Regular Session.

**Mr. Holden moved to approve the March 16, 2022 Minutes. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion.** **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-11; Nays-0; Abstentions-1. Motion approved.**

**Dr. Oluic moved to approve the March 24, 2022 Minutes. Mr. Holden seconded the motion.** Ms. Chokshi started to call the roll. Dr. Jensen asked as a point of order, is the Board approving the Minutes as they stand or with the correction. Ms. Slater said the Minutes do state that the Board came out of Executive Session. In the past, it has not been specifically stated that the Board then went into Open Session because once you are out of Executive Session, you are back in Open Session. Ms. Malainy asked what Dr. Jensen or Ms. Chokshi would like to have added. It was decided as follows: The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:23 PM and back into Regular Session. The roll call vote was then completed. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-10; Nays-0; Abstentions-2. Motion approved.**

1. **CHAIRWOMAN’S REPORT**

Ms. Malainy said there was recently an issue with Gmail and she had asked the following question of Mr. Adams via email. Ms. Malainy would like to ask Mr. Adams the same question again to make sure she understands. In the email, she asked whether Mr. Adams or the Board have had any relationship with Geauga County SOGI either directly or indirectly and asked him to repeat his answer. Mr. Adams said he and Chris Steigerwald have talked a couple times and that is the only thing he is aware of. Dr. Jensen stated as a point of order, there is no group called SOGI – which is an acronym - and the organization’s name is Geauga SOGI Network. She wanted to clarify that for the Board. Ms. Malainy thanked Dr. Jensen and then asked Mr. Adams to answer the question again. Mr. Adams said he doesn’t have anything else to say. He and Ms. Steigerwald have talked a couple times. Ms. Malainy said since there was trouble with the emails, she just wanted to hear what Mr. Adams had to say.

1. **CEO REPORT – WRITTEN REPORT**

Mr. Adams referenced Sheriff Hildenbrand’s presentation about the need for somewhere that individuals with a mental illness can go instead of being placed in jail. He said those individuals would probably need some type of supported housing with staff on site 24/7, and would include people who are not consistent about taking their medication, who need prompts from staff about daily living skills, and who need treatment. Mr. Adams said he submitted a capital grant to OhioMHAS in 2021 for that kind of facility. Over the past weekend, he applied for a $950,000 grant through Senator Sherrod Brown’s office for supportive housing for six people which would include staff. Mr. Adams said they have been aware of the sheer numbers of people who need agency services for a long time. He said the Board and staff does what we can and when we can as we go.

Mr. Adams said site control is very important. He said the Board owns five acres on Aquilla where the Transitional Living Center and the Geauga Independent Apartments are located. The architects left enough space for another facility and said maybe the Board could create the type of unit the Sheriff is talking about using the $1.5 Million from both grants. Mr. Adams said the facility would have six separate bedrooms and would not be considered permanent housing, so that it could help accommodate the constant stream of individuals coming out of the jail and then move people to a more stable setting when they are ready.

Ms. Shumway asked if the TLC would fit that niche. Mr. Adams responded that it is full all the time. Ms. Shumway replied because it is full of Lake county residents. Mr. Adams said they do not have the funding available to pay for the full facility, so a bed was offered to the Northeast Ohio Collaborative of Boards to help pay for overhead cost. It is more an issue of finances because we will never have enough beds. Ms. Shumway said the Board owns the building and pays for insurance, and the provider bills the Board and gets funding, but the provider does not reimburse the Board for those expenses. Mr. Adams said that is included as part of the operating costs. He said the Geauga Youth Group Home is different, the TLC is different, and the independent housing facility is different.

Mr. Petruziello asked why Metzenbaum wouldn‘t work in the interim since they have six-bedroom units. He asked Mr. Adams if the Board could rent one of those facilities. Mr. Adams said he has spoken with Don Rice and was told those facilities still have residents and they can’t displace individuals to bring in other services. They are waiting to move those individuals into staffed houses and then the buildings will come open. Mr. Petruziello said it is his understanding that two of the houses are empty and he asked Mr. Adams to call Mr. Rice.

Dr. Jensen said Ms. Shumway’s concept of a guardian ad litem advocate for adults as they leave the system would be interesting to put into place.

Mr. Petruziello asked if Mr. Adams has contacted any churches about housing. Mr. Adams said he is not aware of anything like that, but he would consider going to churches for any type of resource at this point.

Ms. Miller asked if the Metzenbaum property is still owned by the Commissioners and Mr. Adams responded yes. Ms. Miller then asked if it is flexible and Dr. Oluic responded that it is. Ms. Shumway suggested looking at the county’s 470 Center Street property and Dr. Oluic responded that isn’t a bad idea. Mr. Adams said the site at 470 might be an interesting place to provide drug treatment as a time limited treatment facility. Dr. Oluic said most of the buildings will be vacated, they are wired, they have utility services, conference rooms for group meetings, kitchenettes, and male/female bathrooms. He said they are in a poor state but may be sufficient for the short term.

Mr. Claypool said he is concerned about spending $1.5 Million to house people after leaving the jail. Mr. Claypool went on to say there is not one kind of mental illness and there are multiple types of people. He has not heard about any study showing the need for this type of facility by the Geauga Sheriff’s Office. The Board must approach this issue with some sort of plan and figure out what the triage is going to be since not everyone will be suited for that program. Mr. Petruziello responded that is why the housing group is trying to figure out all of the housing needs. Mr. Adams said the TLC is limited in the number of beds for crisis, but helps keep people out of jail and out of the hospital with a high level of care.

Ms. Shumway said the Board has to address what level of criteria will need to be maintained, such as staffing 24/7 and/or case management during the day. Mr. Claypool said there is a lot of planning that goes into a program like this. Someone could say that equates to institutionalization and whether that is the proper thing to do. Ms. Shumway said the difference between a housing facility and institutional housing is the ability for residents to come and go. Mr. Petruziello said the housing committee is looking at what is needed long term and that it will not happen overnight.

Dr. Jensen said this is great brainstorming, but agencies don’t have the staffing to run these programs. She suggested the Board do some planning and policy review, and then make any proposals to the organizations to meet those needs. Mr. Adams said the Board members received a copy of the capital plan he submitted to the state last year. A lot of the questions Mr. Claypool is asking were addressed in that document. He has had conversations with agencies about who would be appropriate to meet a particular need and work with clients for the long term. Some may go off of their medication, end up in jail, and don’t get the stepdown care they need.

1. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**
   1. **Agency Relations**

Ms. Miller said Agency Relations and Finance have met twice and reviewed six organizations. There are two more meetings to review agency RFP’s on April 27th from 6:00 to 7:30 PM and May 4th from 6:00 to 7:45 PM. There will be no meeting on May 11th. The meeting to review funding recommendations will now be on May 24th from 6:00 to 7:30 PM, the night before the May Board meeting. The full Board will then meet on May 25th from 6:00 to 7:30 PM to review and vote on the funding recommendations from the RFP’s for SFY2023.

* 1. **Finance**

Mr. Petruziello had nothing to add to Ms. Miller’s report.

* 1. **Planning and Policies**

Mr. Claypool reported that the questions chosen by Mr. Fay, Mr. O’Brien, Ms. Miller and himself were sent to all Board members. Unless there is any objection, he will send those to SurveyConnect. **Ms. Miller moved to send the questions to SurveyConnect and Dr. Oluic seconded the motion.** Mr. Claypool said he will send those out tomorrow.

Ms. Chokshi said they will also need the list of stakeholders. She did offer to do that and will put together a list of the names and email addresses and get that to Mr. Claypool. She then asked how many respondents there can be. When including staff, Board members and community partners, there will be about 35 that she has. Mr. Claypool will look at what SurveyConnect’s proposal said. He thinks the Board pays per individual. He feels 30 to 35 respondents should be fine, but he will review the contract to make sure. Mr. Claypool asked Ms. Chokshi to get the list together and he will send it to SurveyConnect. Mr. Fay asked what the turnaround time is for when the questions will be sent out. Mr. Claypool responded that he will ask when he sends the questions and list, but he guessed about one week.

* 1. **Housing**

Dr. Oluic said the committee has been very active. They have had meetings with Ravenwood Health and visited several facilities. They have discussed current and future housing needs. They have not been able to meet with Craig Swenson, Director of Geauga Job and Family Services, to find out their perspective about housing needs in the community, but they are a big part of what the Board will be doing in the long run. They did discuss using the county property at 470 Center Street as an option. Dr. Oluic referenced the grant opportunities that Mr. Adams talked about earlier, including grants from Congressman Joyce and Brown’s offices. He feels this issue finally has some traction to move forward. He said the committee may have a draft plan within the next couple months. The Board will be able to advocate and work with some of the agencies here this evening. Ms. Miller asked if any notes ae being taken at the meetings. Dr. Oluic responded yes through emails and he can document what has been happening. Ms. Miller would like what he has to keep the whole Board updated. Dr. Oluic said he has spoken with other agencies and toured Lake Geauga Recovery Center’s facilities. He said the committee has a good idea of what is needed, but doesn’t have the expertise, including accreditation, staffing, etc.

1. **BOARD REVIEW AND ACTION ITEMS**
   1. **Resolution 22-04-1 Behavioral Health Care Levy**

Mr. Adams reported that this matter was discussed at a previous joint Finance and Agency Relations committee meeting. This fall is the first time the levy can go on the ballot. This levy has been collected at the same level of taxes for 15 years. These funds can be used as match for other funds and helps maintain a specific level of service. **Ms. Miller moved to approve the Resolution. Ms. Bagley seconded the motion.**

Discussion: Mr. Petruziello referenced the wording that 12,000 Geauga residents are receiving services, which is 12% of Geauga’s residents. He said that number is very high and asked if that is because all the school children are included, and if so, he would like the number of kids removed from that figure. Mr. Adams said the number includes all prevention programs provided throughout the county. The agencies provide a list of the number of people served for prevention and intervention programs. He mentioned that Catholic Charities talked about the number of kids they have in their Incredible Years program. Mr. Petruziello questioned that number and said these are not all patients of the mental health agencies and can’t be counted as a client since they are not getting direct service. All of the agencies combined don’t see 12,000 patients a year, unless all the school children are counted as patients, and they shouldn’t be since you can’t bill for them. Mr. Mausser pointed out that the language on the resolution does not say patients or clients. He said an agency could provide a prevention service and reach 120 people. Mr. Petruziello replied that we do not know that. Mr. Adams said the Board collects that data from the agencies.

Mr. Petruziello asked when the final filing date is to be on the November ballot. Mr. Mausser responded that the next step would be to go to the Commissioners after this. He is not sure whether or not the Board could meet the deadline if it was pushed off. Mr. Petruziello said he would like to table this to further investigate the financial end of it. Mr. Mausser asked what the financial end is he would like to investigate. He further said it would not increase taxes. Mr. Petruziello said it will increase the Board’s general fund in the end. Mr. Petruziello asked what the Board’s carryover is right now. Mr. Mausser replied that the unencumbered funds amount is just over $4.1 million. Mr. Petruziello then asked how much he anticipates that will grow. Mr. Mausser replied that he doesn’t have the forecast with him that was presented last week. Mr. Claypool asked what the millage represents. Mr. Mausser said this levy brings in about $1.5 million. Mr. Claypool asked where that is represented on the financial reports. Mr. Mausser responded it is shown as Mental Health Levy under Revenue Receivables FY2022. This levy can only be used for mental health services. The total of all funding sources is approximately $7.3 million.

Ms. Shumway asked if the Resolution can be reworded so that everyone is more comfortable with it, such as saying “…to continue quality behavioral health care and mental wellness…” Some of the programs are proactively working on mental wellness and is not all geared to mental illness, as another component of what the Board does. Dr. Jensen suggested using “to continue quality behavioral health care and mental wellness care for the residents of…” Dr. Jensen commented that this is a renewal levy to maintain services which allows the Board to decide how that money is spent, how we use it, and how much is kept in reserve. It would be much more difficult to allow that to drop and then try to get a levy passed five years later. She likes the wording change that we are maintaining funding to meet the needs of the residents of the county. Ms. Bagley then referenced the resolution that lists four clear priorities and prevention was probably part of that. Ms. Johnson asked if this is the Board’s only Geauga taxpayer levy or are there rotating levies. Mr. Mausser said the Board has two levies – this one for .5 and another one for .7. Ms. Johnson asked if it would be a problem to wait until next month. Mr. Mausser said he is not sure of the timing. The first step is to go to the Commissioners, then to the Auditor’s Office to certify how much will be collected, then back to the Commissioners to pass another resolution with the figures, and then the ballot language has to be approved by the Board of Elections.

Ms. Malainy asked Ms. Slater to read what the amended language would be. Ms. Slater then read the following: “Whereas, the need to maintain local funding to continue quality behavioral health care and wellness care for Geauga County residents…” Ms. Malainy then asked for a new motion and second since the language was amended.

**Dr. Oluic moved to use the amended language as stated above. Ms. Bagley seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ayes-12; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

* 1. **Finance Reports**

Mr. Mausser reported that 63.4% of the administrative budget has been expended through March 31, 2022. There was one expenditure in March from the Community Education Budget for Constant Contact, which is used to send out newsletters and information. The Calendar Year Budget for 2022 shows just over $1.3 million in expenditures through the end of March. The Unencumbered Fund Balance is just over $4.12 million through March. Mr. Mausser reported that the Cash Balances by Sources of Funds spreadsheet is in order. As we approach the end of the fiscal year, a lot of the funding sources will zero out, except for levy and apartment rents. Voucher No. 669 in the amount of $552,752.55 was sent to the Board for informational purposes.

1. **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Miller said the Board talked about getting updated appraisals on its properties and recommendations from the Prosecutor’s Office and asked for an update. Mr. Adams said he has not talked to the insurance agent about that yet, but the process will move forward.

Ms. Miller then said she would like to refresh everyone’s memory about the HUB committee and the package she sent out to report on the activities of HUB. She will keep talking about HUB more frequently since several Board members have asked about it.

1. **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no New Business discussed.

1. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**
   1. **Request for Additional Funding – Tia Lawrence and Tina Ringenbach, Torchlight Youth Mentoring Alliance**

Mr. Adams reported that Torchlight did not receive all of the funding they requested for SFY2022. The Board did say they could come back and request additional funding if needed.

Ms. Lawrence said the agency asked for $110,000, but received $60,000 in order to continue to fund the foster care program. They need an additional $25,000 to get through this fiscal year. Mr. Fay commented that when the agency presented last year, United Way had stopped their funding. He asked if there are any plans to get those funds some other way. Ms. Lawrence responded no. Mr. Claypool commented that Geauga United Way does not exist in the same form as before but now comes through Cuyahoga.

**Ms. Shumway moved to allocate an additional $25,000 to Torchlight Youth Mentoring Alliance for this fiscal year. Ms. Bagley seconded the motion.** Mr. Petruziello asked what amount the agency requested last year. Ms. Lawrence responded that the amount was $85,000. Mr. Petruziello asked if the agency has thought about faith-based programs and asked her to report back to the Board what she finds out about that type of therapy. Mr. Mausser clarified that the funding is for SFY2022. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-12; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

Mr. Claypool asked Mr. Adams what involvement he has with agencies to assist them with their funding requests. Mr. Adams said he talks about the bigger picture, what their priorities are for the next year, and any budget changes they are anticipating from the current year. Agencies have expressed concern about how Covid has affected them and how it has affected staffing. He doesn’t get into how to spread their costs throughout their budget. Mr. Claypool asked if Mr. Adams provides any coaching regarding grant dollars or other types of funding. Mr. Adams replied not really. He doesn’t have a lot of ability to know what’s coming down the pike when looking at long term funding. Mr. Adams said one of reasons the Board has its funding reserves is because of grants received that can fill in gaps without the loss of treatment.

Mr. Claypool said at some point in time the Board needs to balance levy dollars with what we are trying to accomplish. He asked if the Board is taking in too much money and may at some point in time give money back due to everything that is going on. He asked how much carryover is appropriate. Mr. Adams said this has been discussed quite a bit internally. He said the Budget Commission has asked some of those questions. Mr. Adams said there are times when the Board allocates more up front and less at the end because of receiving grant funds and then supplanting some expenses with those dollars. When the Transitional Living Center was built, the Board set aside $1 Million for that project. But in the course of building the facility, the Board got some grant funds and didn’t need to use the whole $1 Million. He further said the Board is like an insurance company and pays claims for clients and that agencies can bill for a year in arrears. The Board carries that risk by having a pool of funds and we make sure all those bills coming in meet Board and Resolution criteria. Mr. Adams said there is a certain pool of money that the Board does receive interest on. The current Strategic Plan sets aside $1 Million for new facilities and $250,000 for renovations to agency housing. Mr. Adams suggested that the Board could move those funds into the capital interest bearing account.

Mr. Claypool said he is looking for a dollar amount and asked at what point in time does the Board do that. Mr. Mausser feels that would be tough to do because of housing and what the ongoing costs will be. The annual cost for the Transitional Living Center is about $150,000 and the cost for the crisis beds is another $200,000. He said programs of that kind are very expensive and the service is ongoing.

Dr. Jensen said she is used to a board with a percentage idea of annual budget with a goal for reserves. She is still having a hard time reading some of the financial reports and guessing what they mean. She talked about having some type of financial tutorial or mini training. Dr. Jensen asked about moving a certain amount of money into the capital fund, and what is in the reserve account for what particular purpose. Mr. Claypool said that the Board doesn’t have to take more money. The Board can give the money back to the taxpayers and not take the collection. Dr. Jensen responded that it seems that there is a lot of need for services. Ms. Bagley said the Board has also heard a lot about agencies having trouble getting staff because of pay and they are not able to hire enough staff. She said the Board will need to plan for that as well.

Ms. Shumway asked when the .7 mil comes up for a vote. Mr. Mausser responded next year. Ms. Shumway then asked if the Board needs to worry about the Budget Commission. Mr. Adams said one of the ways this Board is different is that it acts as an insurance agent to pay claims. Additionally, when the state audits the Board, they look at cash balances and expenses, and we have been told that the balance of cash we are carrying is reasonable and should represent at least six to eight months of carryover for insurance. Ms. Miller said this levy can only be used for mental health services and the other levy can be used for mental health and addiction services.

* 1. **Creation of a Technology/Communication Committee**

This agenda item was tabled.

* 1. **Staff Calendars**

There was no discussion.

* 1. **Process and Performance Audit Overview and Discussion – Walter Claypool**

Mr. Claypool said he had nothing more to add at this meeting.

* 1. **Executive Session: Discussion of Succession Plan of Jim Adams and to Consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, or demotion of a public employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual pursuant to ORC Section 121.22(G)(1)**

Ms. Malainy moved to enter into Executive Session to discuss… Mr. Adams interjected that he would like to say something about Executive Session. Mr. Adams said Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22 lists the various reasons an entity can go into Executive Session - one of the reasons stated above - unless the public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual requests a public hearing. Mr. Adams said he is requesting that the Board not go into Executive Session and utilizes his ability to ask for a public session. Ms. Malainy asked to review the document Mr. Adams referred to. Mr. Claypool said that is assuming Mr. Adams knows what the Executive Session is about and the individual involved. Ms. Malainy read the document from Mr. Adams. She said that this Executive Session does not fit any of the verbiage shown. She is calling the Executive Session to discuss Mr. Adams’ succession plan. Mr. Adams responded that is not an allowable purpose. Ms. Malainy said it is in regard to employment, but it is not to dismiss, discipline, promote, demote or discuss compensation. Ms. Malainy again moved to go into Executive Session. Mr. Adams said technically, the Board can’t go into Executive Session for a succession plan, but must reference one of the reasons listed in ORC Section 121.22. Ms. Malainy asked where the part is about Mr. Adams being allowed to say no. Mr. Adams said he is the public employee. Ms. Malainy then read “unless the public employee requests a public hearing”. She then stated that this is not a hearing.

Ms. Malainy again moved to go into Executive Session. Mr. Fay said if the Board does go into Executive Session to discuss the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, or demotion of a public employee, and anyone on this Board would potentially like to take over the position of said employee, he or she should recuse themselves from the Executive Session. Ms. Malainy asked if anyone wants to take Mr. Adams’ position. Mr. Fay clarified that if anyone is going to post for this position, if the person being discussed is disciplined or demoted or excused, he feels that no one on the Board should post for the position of that employee. If someone is intending to take that position at some point, that person should recuse him/herself from the Executive Session if the Board actually goes into Executive Session.

Mr. Petruziello said there will be no action concerning Mr. Adams’ employment coming out of this Executive Session. Mr. Fay then asked what the point of going into Executive Session is. Ms. Malainy said it is to discuss Mr. Adams’ succession plan and then asked Mr. Fay to tell her again what he means. Mr. Fay restated that if the Board is going to go into Executive Session to discuss Mr. Adams’ succession plan and to consider the employment, dismissal, discipline, demotion or promotion of a public employee, which would be Mr. Adams, he asked if there is anyone on the Board who would potentially want to apply for that position if any action is taken. Ms. Malainy clarified that Mr. Fay was talking about applying for Mr. Adams’ position and he responded yes. Ms. Malainy then went back to what she stated earlier when she asked if anyone on this Board wants to apply for Mr. Adams’ position and asked what was wrong with that statement. Mr. Fay said no one answered. Ms. Malainy then asked again if anyone on the Board wants to apply. Ms. Shumway said the Board’s Bylaws state that if Mr. Adams leaves or is removed, the succession plan says that Ms. Martin-D’Arienzo would act as Executive Director until the position is posted, interviews are done, and the position is filled. Ms. Malainy said Mr. Adams is not being removed. Ms. Malainy said the Board would be discussing Mr. Adams’ succession plan and she feels this topic is a private matter. Ms. Bagley asked private from whom. Ms. Malainy responded from the public. Ms. Miller asked why and Ms. Malainy responded because it is a private matter and why should it be discussed in public. Ms. Miller asked why shouldn’t it be in public because this is a public entity.

Ms. Malainy asked if there were any questions, and she would then make her motion. Dr. Jensen said as a point of order, the agenda the Board received states Executive Session to discuss two things – the succession plan of Mr. Adams and to discuss or consider the above verbiage. Ms. Malainy said it is to discuss the succession plan as it relates to employment. Dr. Jensen responded along with the other pieces included above. Mr. Petruziello said it also talks about employment. Dr. Jensen asked Mr. Petruziello to allow her to finish unless he has a point of order. She then said it is her understanding that the Board can only go into Executive Session for the second part. She is not sure that Executive Session can be called to discuss a succession plan. Dr. Jensen said Ms. Malainy can make any motion she wants, but Dr. Jensen is just trying to clarify about Executive Session. Dr. Oluic said the Commissioners go into Executive Session for personnel matters. Dr. Jensen asked if the succession plan is considered a personnel matter. Ms. Malainy responded that the succession plan has to do with employment. Dr. Jensen said the wording in the Ohio Revised Code is very clear on what Executive Session can be called only for the last part to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion or demotion of a public employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual, which is only the second part, not to discuss a succession plan. Ms. Malainy stated that the succession plan is part of employment and what someone forecasts for their future. Dr. Jensen said that is not the same as the second part. Ms. Malainy said the second part does cite employment. Ms. Malainy started to restate her motion to enter into Executive Session and Mr. Holden seconded the motion.

Mr. Claypool said he believes the appropriate language in the Ohio Revised Code does not include succession plan, but that Executive Session can be called for any of the following: appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion or demotion of a public employee or official or the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual. He said the Board is not required to tell what specifically of those matters they are going into Executive Session for. He said if the Board is going to have a hearing, then Mr. Adams is within his rights to ask for a public hearing outside of Executive Session. Mr. Claypool said if the Board goes into Executive Session as a Board without Mr. Adams in the room, they can discuss whatever they need to discuss, and then pursuant to Mr. Adams’ request, if a hearing or any disciplinary action will be taken, then Mr. Adams has the right to have that done in Open Session. Mr. Claypool further clarified that the Board has the right to discuss many things in Executive Session, and the succession plan is not cause for Executive Session, but can be discussed as a part of employment. Ms. Malainy said the agenda initially had the succession plan as a separate topic outside of Executive Session and she didn’t want that in the public.

**Ms. Malainy then moved to enter into Executive Session to discuss and consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, or demotion of a public employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual pursuant to ORC Section 121.22(G)(1). Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion.**

Discussion: Ms. Bagley asked Mr. Adams to clarify that is why he would like to not go into Executive Session. Mr. Petruziello said this Executive Session has nothing to do with Mr. Adams, and that it doesn’t say Mr. Adams. Ms. Malainy said the languages states “unless the public employee, official, licensee or regulated individual requests a public hearing…” She said if the Board decides to move forward with any charges or trying to terminate Mr. Adams, then he would be entitled to a public hearing under Ohio Revised Code, but that is not the purpose Ms. Malainy is going into Executive Session for. Mr. Adams said he has heard several times from different people that they were concerned about him and that they didn’t want to have this conversation in public because they are trying to protect him. He is fine with this and doesn’t feel the need to be protected. If the Board really believes in transparency, he is fine with having the discussion in public. Ms. Malainy said the motion has been made and seconded, and asked Ms. Chokshi to call the roll. Dr. Jensen believes that calling for an Executive Session has to be posted in advance of the meeting, along with the purpose, and the purpose here is to talk about something different than what Ms. Malainy just read. The motion does not match what was posted to the public. Ms. Malainy and Ms. Slater explained their understanding of Executive Session and that they received other opinions, including from Mr. O’Brien, about going into Executive Session. Ms. Malainy asked if there were any more comments or discussion. Ms. Bagley asked about there not being any more discussion. Ms. Malainy the Board has been discussing this for about 20 minutes. Mr. Claypool responded that public notice can be modified in the course of doing business on any motion being made, according to Robert’s Rules of Order, such as catching that the succession plan is not a reason for Executive Session. The public was notified that there was going to be an Executive Session, and the language was modified to make it correct. It is appropriate and proper if the Board chooses to go into Executive Session. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-7; Nays-5; Abstentions-0. Motion Approved.**

Ms. Malainy asked the public to leave at 6:40 PM and said they will be brought back in when the Board is out of Executive Session. The Board came out of Executive Session and was back in Regular Session at 8:06 PM. The public was invited back into the meeting.

**Ms. Johnson moved that the Board seek outside legal counsel. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion. Dr. Jensen offered a friendly amendment that the Board contact the Prosecutor about the process to seek outside counsel. Ms. Johnson then moved that the Board seek the opinion of the Prosecutor in anticipation of seeking outside legal counsel for the Board. Roll Call Vote: Ayes-8; Nays-3; Abstentions-1. Motion approved.**

Dr. Oluic asked Ms. Slater to repeat the motion. Ms. Slater then said the following: Ms. Johnson moved that the Board seek the opinion of the Prosecutor to seek outside legal counsel for the Board. This wording was different from what Ms. Johnson originally stated.

Mr. Petruziello asked if the Board would like to make another motion to hire outside legal counsel. Ms. Malainy responded yes if someone would like to do that. Mr. Petruziello said if the Prosecutor’s Office says the Board can seek outside legal counsel, then he would like to hire one. Ms. Chokshi commented only if the Board is allowed to. Ms. Malainy feels they need to take it a step further so no one can say that wasn’t included in the motion.

**Mr. Petruziello then moved to hire outside legal counsel if approved by the Prosecutor’s office. Mr. Holden seconded the motion.** Mr. Mausser asked if the Board wants to set a spending limit for this. Ms. Malainy responded not at this time.

Dr. Jensen said she abstained from the first motion because the words read by Ms. Slater after the vote were not the same as what Ms. Johnson said. There were three variations. Ms. Malainy said she had Ms. Slater repeat the motion and asked if that was alright. Dr. Jensen again said it wasn’t the same and that is why she abstained, but the Board did pass the motion. She then asked a question about finances, timing, and who is going to make that choice. Ms. Malainy said the Board will make that decision later on. Dr. Oluic asked if the Board is putting the cart before the horse and would need to discuss the process first. Mr. Petruziello said the second motion is if the Prosecutor agrees that the Board can hire outside counsel, then this motion will allow the Board to take action to hire outside legal counsel. Dr. Oluic is concerned the Board won’t have that answer before the next meeting.

**Roll Call Vote: Ayes-7; Nays-5; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.** Ms. Malainy said she will keep the Board posted.

1. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Clark of Ravenwood Health said she can provide further clarification on funding for the Transitional Living Center if the Board would like her to. Ms. Shumway responded that information would be fabulous to have.

Dr. Oluic said in light of the Sheriff’s presentation and the challenges faced at the Geauga Safety Center, he asked Ms. Clark how those issues should be approached. Ms. Clark said the Sheriff made a great point about having a facility that is primarily mental health. That takes a lot of money, but so does running the jail. She feels any such facility should be operated 24/7 with highly trained staff. Ms. Clark feels that type of facility would be feasible. Mr. Claypool said right now the Sheriff is operating with a certain budget. If another facility is created, that would need a separate budget, so the amount of money needed to operate will increase for the same number of inmates. Ms. Clark responded that the treatment is not to be in jail and that we need to ultimately look at the bigger picture. She said people with severe mental illness cycle in and out, but can get to where they function in society most of the time, versus living in the jail or at the hospital. Ms. Shumway asked if the Transitional Living Center could be expanded. Ms. Clark said there is a limitation on the number of beds and it has already been expanded once. Ms. Carter encourage the Board to bring in Judge Paschke to speak about what a mental health court does.

Ms. Briggs said this is her first time at a Board meeting and said the Sheriff did an excellent job. She said at one time there was a county home which served a vulnerable population but has since been closed. That facility is currently not utilized and, in the past, was used to accommodate overflow from other programs. She thanked the Board and the Director for all of the good things they have done in the community for a very long time.

1. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Holden moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion. The meeting was then adjourned at 8:20 PM.

**Respectfully submitted by:**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Ms. Teresa Slater**

**Secretary/Receptionist**

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**Ms. Jennifer Malainy**

**Chairwoman of the Board**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Ms. Alberta Chokshi**

**Secretary of the Board**