

**GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH  
AND RECOVERY SERVICES**

**October 25, 2022  
Planning and Policies Committee  
4:00 – 5:00 P.M.**

**Present: Leila Vidmar, Amie Martin-D'Arienzo, Jim Mausser, Teresa Slater, Walter Claypool, Alberta Chokshi, Ann Bagley, Kathy Johnson, Jimmy Lee Holden**

**I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Claypool called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM and the Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

**II. Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2022**

Ms. Chokshi moved to approve the Minutes. Ms. Bagley seconded the motion. Voice Vote: All Ayes.

**III. Committee Goals and Timeline**

Mr. Claypool said there are several things he would like to review and do. One of the committee's charges is to meet regularly with the Commissioners as required in Ohio Revised Code Section 340. There is no stated requirement about meeting with the state on a regular basis, but he feels the committee should. He complimented Director Criss on her presentation at the Board meeting and felt it was a great educational opportunity.

Mr. Claypool asked for comments on the agenda items he sent to the committee: 1. 2022-2023 timeline and planning requirements; 2. Policy Manual overview and potential changes; 3. Open discussion for policy committee opportunities; 4. What do we do when we know that existing policies may be contributing to mental illness.

Ms. Chokshi said the committee should first decide what issues they would like to work on and then prioritize those issues. Ms. Bagley commented that the items talked about at the March 16, 2022 would be a good starting point regarding the committee's priorities.

Mr. Claypool asked for feedback from staff. Ms. Martin-D'Arienzo reported that OhioMHAS said the Board is in 100% compliance. She then reported that crisis services in the county have improved. She talked about the probate court resource card that is updated on an ongoing basis. Today she received information about the sealing of records across three different criminal categories to help individuals get better opportunities in life. The list of offense records that can be sealed does not include sex offenses, violent crimes, felonies, crimes against children or seniors, or operating a vehicle under the influence. Ms. Martin-D'Arienzo will forward this information to Judges Stupica and Paschke.

Need to Set Priorities:

Mr. Claypool said a lot of the Board's Policy Manual has to do with personnel policies. It does not address relationships with agencies and other entities. Ms. Johnson asked if the personnel policies are as defined by the Ohio Revised Code or as defined by the Board. Mr. Claypool replied it is probably a combination of both.

Ms. Bagley said it has been a while since the whole manual was reviewed. Some of the policies are out of date as they pertain to the Director and others may need some revisions to bring them up to date. She then asked if Mr. Claypool would like the committee to review them and then discuss changes or recommendations at their next meeting. She also talked about looking at more long-range plans – such as with housing – and look at what we could provide for those being sent out of county for services. Ms. Chokshi said Housing doesn't have a focus yet. They need to come up with their priorities and then present that to the Board and Planning and Policies.

Mr. Claypool commented that Housing is an ad hoc committee and he has an issue with the current approach to housing. He said this is very broad and encompasses many complicated issues – jail, homeless, mental health, youth, drug/alcohol – that have not yet been categorized. Ms. Chokshi talked about finding out what the various housing needs and priorities are and then deciding what the Board can actually do.

Mr. Claypool then talked about the county home and the problems the public did not get to see. The facility was not certified and they did not have qualified staff taking care of individuals in the home. Appropriate placement was found for everyone when it closed. Housing is not the only answer. Sometimes there are other options. There are experts in the county that can help us focus on specific individuals and come up with the best answers.

Mr. Claypool feels the ad hoc housing committee should be a subset of Planning and Policies. Housing should do the investigatory work, the findings brought to this committee, and then plan for what needs to be done. Planning and Policies should be given the facts and then establish the right approach with the agencies. Ms. Johnson doesn't feel this committee has the authority to do that. Mr. Claypool said this committee is to establish plans and policies. The information should be presented to this committee to discuss the findings and make recommendations. Ms. Johnson feels the better idea is to have Housing become a standing committee.

Ms. Chokshi said the charge of committee for Planning and Policies should be reviewed as it pertains to whether or not Housing should be a standing committee, and in light of the long-term strategic goals of the Board. Mr. Claypool would like the Board to hand off the ad hoc housing committee to Planning and Policies first. Ms. Chokshi feels the first issue is whether they should be a standing committee and they can then decide how to proceed and then Planning and Policies can help come up with the charge of committee. Mr. Claypool read the charge of committee for Planning and Policies and how it interacts with the Board's mission and philosophy. Part of the discussion should include the difference between an ad hoc committee and a permanent committee. An hoc committee is established to address a temporary need. Once any housing issues are determined, there may not be an ongoing need for the committee.

Ms. Bagley said her understanding is that Next Step is for kids who are aging out of the system and asked what the next step would be after that. Mr. Claypool asked how much government do we want to build and when does it all end. Ms. Bagley responded when a person is healed enough to function. Mr. Claypool said the Board can't fix everything. There are basic needs that should be met. Part of the Board's obligation is also to the taxpayers. The Board needs to keep that in mind when talking about creating things that don't necessarily have good results. Ms. Chokshi said the Board can't plan without knowing what the housing issues are. Homelessness is one issue. Not everyone who is homeless has a mental illness.

Mr. Claypool read Planning and Policies charge of committee and its responsibilities, which include: oversee staff, ensure that the policy manual is up to date, assist the Board in development and the training of new board members. Ms. Johnson said she had a meeting with

Linda Miller after being appointed, who gave her a nice overview of the Board. The education of new Board members is a good thing and she suggested continuing to utilize Ms. Miller's expertise in this. Mr. Claypool feels it would be great to have more training and informational sessions and suggested doing something 15 before/after scheduled meetings. Trainings can also be done during the Board meeting.

Assessment of long-range plans and goals of the Board and the development of plans to meet those objectives: Mr. Claypool said this committee is charged with developing long range goals, plans, and objectives - including housing - which can then be presented to the Board as a whole. He suggested having the ad hoc Housing committee develop plans, objectives, goals for Planning and Policies to review. Ms. Johnson suggested starting with Housing and then having all the other committees participate. Mr. Claypool feels it should start with Housing and then go to Planning and Policies and then the Board. We can't start with Finance or Agency Relations until the goals, objectives, and plans have been determined. Ms. Chokshi would like to start with the Housing committee, then collaborate with the other committees, and then jointly bring the information to the Board. She feels the Board needs something concrete from Housing first in order to proceed.

Mr. Claypool said the nuance is whether Housing is a standalone committee. It is the charge of Planning and Policies to make recommendations, etc. The purpose of any discussion should be: 1. What we want to do with housing goals, plans, objectives; 2. Keep Housing ad hoc to gather information; 3. Planning and Policies review the information; 4. Findings, recommendations, etc. would then be presented to the Board. Ms. Chokshi would like to make Housing a standing committee who would then work together with the other committees. Ms. Johnson said whether Housing is ad hoc or standing should be discussed by the full Board.

Mr. Claypool said one of the charges is to ensure the optimal use of Board member talents. There has been some discussion among Board members that they all bring something different to the table with varied life experiences. He thinks it would be valuable to better understand each other and share more about themselves at a Board meeting. Ms. Chokshi responded that it puts people on the spot having a "story time". She suggested having a trained professional run some type of retreat to ascertain the uniqueness and qualifications that each Board member brings.

Mr. Claypool referenced the last meeting minutes as a starting point for discussions. He would like to talk about relationships relative to funding of agencies – if what is being done is effective or if the Board should consider changes to existing funding. He would like an actual policy that relates to our agencies. He used the example of any agency that has anything to do with SOGI should not be funded as a policy the Board should consider.

#### **IV. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned 5:05 PM.