

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

Steven Oluic
Chairman of the Board

13244 Ravenna Road
Chardon, Ohio 44024

Christine Lakomiak
Executive Director

Phone: (440) 285-2282
Fax: (440) 285-9617

Board Minutes

JULY 19, 2023

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Alberta Chokshi, Reba Dykes, Martin Fay, James Lee Holden, Kathy Johnson, Carolee Lesyk, Douglas Lundblad, Gregory O'Brien, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, Patricia Varanese

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ann Bagley, Mary Ruth Shumway

GUESTS: Kim Carter (NAMI Geauga), Katherine Franz (Gauga League of Women Voters), Vicki Clark (Ravenwood Health), Michelle Bertman (Catholic Charities), Melanie Blasko (Lake-Gauga Recovery Centers), Mary Wynne Peaspanen (Signature Health), Andrea Gutka (WomenSafe), Newell Howard (Observer)

STAFF PRESENT: Christine Lakomiak, Jim Mausser, Teresa Slater

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Dr. Oluic called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Mr. Holden called the roll for attendance purposes and the following Board members were present: Alberta Chokshi, Reba Dykes, Martin Fay, James Lee Holden, Kathy Johnson, Carolee Lesyk, Douglas Lundblad, Gregory O'Brien, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, and Patricia Varanese. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

II. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES FROM JUNE 21, 2023

Mr. Petruziello moved to approve the Minutes as written. Mr. Holden seconded the motion. **Voice Vote: Ayes-11; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

Ms. Varanese and Mr. Lundblad were appointed to the Board by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2027, and July 13, 2023 through June 30, 2027, respectively. Ms. Dykes was reappointed to the Board by the Geauga County Commissioners for a term beginning July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2027. All three were then sworn in as Board members by Notary Public Ms. Slater.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Dr. Oluic welcomed the new and returning Board members.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Lakomiak provided updates on the following:

- Michelle Maneage has been hired as the Board's Clinical and Compliance Manager. Her first day is August 7th. She is well known in the community. She was instrumental in starting Doors of Hope, Geauga's only family homeless shelter.
- The Commissioners have approved putting the Board's .7 mill, five-year levy on the ballot in November. The funds collected through this levy represent 30% of the Board's annual budget. All three Commissioners supported the Board's request. Ms. Lakomiak will set up a meeting to strategize about the levy.
- Behavioral Health was well-supported in the state budget. She thanked those who advocated to reinstate some of the line items that were removed. Director Criss provided an update on the budget: there was an increase of 10% for many Medicaid rates which have not been increased since the 1980's; a \$7 million allocation for direct care services was included; other Medicaid services may get an additional increase over and above the 10%.
- The Board has been discussing a one-time unit rate adjustment to agencies. Information was provided in the meeting packet showing what a 5/8/10% adjustment would look like for SFY2023.
- A One Ohio Region 13 meeting was held today. A request for proposal and application are being created by the region.
- Several agency staff have been trained and appointed as health officers. They help determine if an individual should be held for involuntary hospitalization.
- The Faith-Based Coalition will be meeting to discuss plans for a new coalition lead.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Dr. Oluic said the new committee list for SFY2024, along with a schedule of meeting dates, was included in the Board packet. The committees are vital in achieving the Board's mission and working with agencies.

a. Agency Relations

Ms. Johnson welcomed Ms. Varanese to the committee. There was no further report.

b. Finance

Mr. Petruziello asked committee members to let him know whether or not the proposed meeting dates work on everyone's schedules.

c. Planning and Policies

Ms. Chokshi said she will be reviewing minutes from the last two years to see if there are any outstanding issues for the committee to address.

d. Capital Planning/Housing

Ms. Dykes said the first order of business will be to craft a charge of committee. Ms. Chokshi offered the assistance of Planning and Policies.

e. Opiate HUB

There was no update.

VI. BOARD REVIEW AND ACTION ITEMS

a. Resolution 23-07-1 Specialized Docket Allocation to Geauga County Court of Common Pleas

Dr. Oluic said this Resolution allocates \$75,000 from OhioMHAS to the Geauga Drug Court which is administered by Judge Paschke. The program has been very successful by helping address some of the challenges people find themselves in court for. Mr. Petruziello moved to approve the Resolution. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES-11; NAYS-0; ABSTENTIONS-0. MOTION APPROVED.**

b. Resolution 23-07-2 Agency Unit Rate Adjustment for SFY2023

Dr. Oluic said the Board has heard about challenges agencies are experiencing to keep staff and provide services. The Board has discussed providing a one-time 5/8/10% unit rate adjustment for SFY2023 based on utilization. Ms. Lakomiak said boards are helping agencies in different ways – increases for staff retention, providing a lump sum, allocations tied to direct service. The amounts proposed for each agency are shown on the spreadsheets provided and based on SFY2023 billings through the Board's system.

This one-time allocation happens to coincide with the 10% Medicaid rate increase that will be effective January 1, 2024. The Board uses the same rates to reimburse agencies who are providing the service to clients without insurance. Mr. Petruziello asked if the Board will need to seek additional tax money down the road to cover the increased rates. Mr. Mausser responded that the Board may need to review SFY2024 agency allocations since agencies will probably draw down their contract amounts quicker. Mr. Petruziello asked how staff will verify and monitor that agencies are billing in a timely fashion. Ms. Lakomiak responded that staff will have quarterly meetings with agencies to discuss clinical outcomes, billings and utilization.

Mr. Mausser explained the spreadsheets distributed for each agency. The Board is the payer of last resort once other payment sources have been exhausted. Mr. Holden asked why the Board would give an agency additional funds if they have not drawn down their full contract allocation or is not in the red. Mr. Petruziello agreed with Mr. Holden. Mr. Mausser said an agency could be in the red overall. This resolution refers to Board funded services only. Ms. Lakomiak clarified that the unit rate adjustment is for SFY2023 only. Agencies can still use existing contract funds. Dr. Oluic commented that the Board should not wait until agencies are in the red and the damage is already done. All businesses have been negatively affected with hiring staff over the last few years. Dr. Oluic said the Board has talked at length about the needs and challenges agencies are having in order to meet the common good of Geauga county residents, including attracting and retaining professionals. It is time for the Board to decide what it would like to do.

Mr. Mausser said most agencies will probably have enough funds left in their contracts so the Board may not need to allocate additional unencumbered reserves for this purpose. Ms. Clark said one of the challenges agencies face is not knowing up front whether a client has Medicaid, Medicare, private insurance, or will need to use subsidy funding from the Board. The Medicaid reimbursement rate doesn't cover the actual cost of providing a service.

Mr. O'Brien moved to approve a one-time 10%-unit rate adjustment to contract agencies based on services billed through GOSH for SFY2023. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. Discussion: Mr. Petruziello said each agency should come to the Board and request what specific funding amount is needed to make them whole. Ms. Clark said she did request a very specific amount for Ravenwood Health that was never acted on. Ms. Blasko added that Ms. Clark gave an excellent presentation on the challenges faced by agencies. Dr. Oluic said the Board told agencies it would approach funding shortfalls through a unit rate adjustment. The Board allocated the same amount of funding in SFY2024 as was awarded in SFY2023, with the caveat that agency programs would be reviewed prior to the next fiscal year's allocations to determine the actual cost associated with providing each program.

Mr. Petruziello commented that agencies may need to start collaborating more and merging to come up with a better business model. Ms. Chokshi said every agency has a different mission and clientele which would make it difficult to combine agencies. Mr. Petruziello responded that there are some common overhead costs. He also suggested that agencies could change their mission statement.

Dr. Oluic asked Mr. Holden to call the roll for voting purposes. **ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES-9; NAYS-2; ABSTENTIONS-0. MOTION APPROVED.**

c. Financial Reports

Mr. Mausser provided a written summary of the financial reports for June 2023. Mr. Fay asked if unencumbered funds will be used for the agency unit rate adjustment. Mr. Mausser expects to use less than \$100,000 from the reserves balance for this purpose.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business discussed.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Oluic recently spoke with Sheriff Hildenbrand about the need for a full-time person at the Geauga Safety Center to provide mental health services to inmates.

Mr. Petruziello said Job and Family Services Director Craig Swenson is holding a meeting tomorrow at 2:00 PM with providers and other county entities to discuss homelessness in Geauga. Ms. Dykes said there has been an uptick in homeless individuals presenting to Job and Family Services. The purpose is to bring together resources and service providers to discuss how to address this population. Dr. Oluic said many people who are

homeless suffer from addiction and mental health disorders. Housing is an issue in this county and the Board is working to help that.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Franz asked for information about the Geauga Faith-Based Coalition. Ms. Johnson said it is a group of faith-based organizations who have various ministries that can provide help to the community. It is not a function of the Board but the Board is a member. There is no monetary relationship. It is open to all denominations.

WomenSafe Director Andrea Gutka said the agency is holding a fundraiser tonight at Zeppe's Pizza. It is a Christmas in July event and all proceeds will benefit WomenSafe. She thanked the Board for supporting their golf outing and for the funding to have additional therapists trained in EMDR.

An audience member spoke about a homeless assistance program of the Salvation Army that served about 200 clients and was very successful. The program addressed many issues, including drug addiction, mental health disorders, a men's shelter, food insecurity, job training, and even the ability to get a driver's license. He is proud to see what is going on now.

Ravenwood Health Director Vicki Clark thanked the Board for the unit rate adjustment and for allowing the agencies to be heard.

Mr. Lundblad reminded the agencies to ask clients if they are a veteran. Clients can then be referred to the Veterans Administration and the local Veterans Services Commission, where they can receive additional assistance and access available resources.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Lesyk moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The meeting was then adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Ms. Teresa Slater
Administrative/Office Manager

Dr. Steven Oluic
Chairman of the Board

Mr. James Lee Holden
Secretary of the Board