

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

**September 18, 2023  
Agency Relations Committee  
11:00 – 12:00 P.M.**

**Present: Kathy Johnson, Patricia Varanese, Mary Ruth Shumway, Christine Lakomiak, Michelle Maneage, Teresa Slater, Charles Tong**

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

The meeting was called to order at 11:26 AM. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

**II. Approval of Minutes from March 15, 2023**

Ms. Johnson moved to approve the Minutes. The motion died for lack of a second since there was not another member of the committee present who also attended the March meeting.

**III. Review Charge of Committee**

The committee briefly discussed each enumerated item under Responsibilities. They will be reviewed the Charge of Committee more in depth and it may need to be updated. In the past, the committee has been most active during the request for proposal process when agencies make funding presentations for the upcoming fiscal year. The committee will be reviewing what outcomes are currently collected from the agencies and see if there are any other outcomes the Board would like to see.

Ms. Shumway suggested having agencies present about various programs during Board meetings so the Board and the public are more aware of what services agencies provide. The committee also discussed how to educate people that mental health and recovery treatment is an ongoing process. She also mentioned the need for the Board to be proactive instead of reactive when it comes to needs in the community and to embrace emerging practices such as EMDR and equine therapy. Director Lakomiak said she did meet with staff from the equine program about what is needed to become a certified provider. They also discussed other avenues of working within the system.

Staff will be reaching out to United Way 211 to see if there is a list of county resources that are available and to engage with them on a regular basis. Ms. Maneage will be meeting with CopeLine staff to determine if they help callers navigate the various support systems in Geauga.

**IV. Discussion: Updating the Board's Request for Proposal**

Director Lakomiak reported that she will be reviewing the current RFP process and staff will then write specifications for each program, including what the requirements are for each service and the outcomes the Board would like to see. Her plan is to present the new program specifications to Agency Relations as they are developed and then to the full Board.

## **V. Other**

Director Lakomiak listed several things that staff has been doing in the community – Overdose Awareness Day, First Responder Week of Appreciation, submitting articles, letters to the editor, press releases and editorials, building relationships with other entities in the county, fostering a positive relationship with the Commissioners and other county agencies.

The committee discussed changing the meeting time from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm on the scheduled dates. Ms. Johnson will reach out to Dr. Lesyk to see if that time works better for her.

## **VI. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 pm.