

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

Dr. Steven Oluic
Chairman of the Board

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Board Minutes

JULY 17, 2024

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Alberta Chokshi, Reba Dykes, James Lee Holden, Kathy Johnson, Carolee Lesyk, Douglas Lundblad, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, Mary Ruth Shumway, Patricia Varanese

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Christine Lakomiak, Jim Mausser, Michelle Maneage, Teresa Slater

GUESTS: Sarah McGlone (Geauga League of Women Voters), Charles Tong, Melanie Blasko (Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers), Vicki Clark (Ravenwood Health), ND Howard (GCTP), Tia Lawrence (Torchlight Youth Mentoring Alliance), Mary Wynne-Peaspanen (Signature Health), Michelle Bertman (Catholic Charities), Kristine Frankenberry (NAMI Geauga)

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

Dr. Oluic called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM. Mr. Holden called the roll for attendance purposes and the following Board members were present: Alberta Chokshi, Reba Dykes, James Lee Holden, Kathy Johnson, Carolee Lesyk, Doug Lundblad, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello and Patricia Varanese. Mary Ruth Shumway arrived at 6:06 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

II. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES FROM JUNE 26, 2024

Mr. Holden moved to waive the reading of and approve the Minutes. Dr. Lesyk seconded the motion.
Voice Vote: Ayes-9; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Dr. Oluic welcomed everyone. He reported that the Commissioners reduced the size of the Board from 14 members to 9, although the Board had recommended 12. There are currently 10 members. Attrition will bring that number down to 9. There will now be two years with the same Board members. If this is not workable, the Commissioners can change the number back to what it was. Dr. Oluic is planning to revise the committee structure. Some issues will be addressed at Board meetings. Ms. Dykes and Ms. Johnson attended and felt that the Commissioners were very thoughtful in making this decision. The Commissioners felt it would be better to have an odd number of members, which is why they chose 9 instead of 12. The Commissioners will need to change their application to help screen individuals that meet the state criteria and discuss what slots need to be filled with staff.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Lakomiak said the presenters at last month's Board meeting reached out to her about how grateful they were to have the opportunity to speak about their programs. They did a great job and

Board members enjoyed the presentations. This would be a good way to highlight other agency programs throughout the year.

Overdose Awareness Day is August 31, 2024. Staff wrote a grant and the Board was awarded \$14,000.00 for Overdose Awareness Day. Some of the funds will be used for resource navigation, allowable expenses to attend and host events on and surrounding August 31, 2024. There was also the opportunity to request additional funding. Staff has not yet received notice about the extra funds. Funding from OhioMHAS will allow us to participate and or host in 4 events spanning 9 days. This year's slogan is "Together We Can" highlighting that no one should walk this journey alone. The Board will have information at the Bell Building during the Great Geauga County Fair and attendance exceeds 200,000.

Rocking With Resources is an event that will take place on July 24th from 4-7 after the five New Leaf Drug Court program graduates have been acknowledged. Judge Paschke has extended an invitation to Board members who would like to attend the graduation. Director Lakomiak will forward the details. The Board will have a table at this community resource fair. Overdose awareness, 988, suicide prevention and many other resources will be highlighted.

The Journey to Hope Remembrance Event is August 8th from 5:00-7:00 on Chardon Square and will include a butterfly release and resources available to the community.

Educational Event – Promoting Family Engagement in Treatment, Date to be determined in September, 2024 and will be hosted virtually for those who can't attend in person at the Geauga Board of Mental Health and Recovery Services.

The Board voted last month to accept the Bipartisan Safer Communities Grant in the amount of \$55,000 to address behavioral health system preparedness and community emergency preparedness and response as it pertains to traumatic events, whether natural or manmade. Director Lakomiak met with Chief Deputy Rowan at the Sheriff's Office regarding the scope of the grant and collaborating with local systems. This will include coordinating all crisis teams and will involve creating policies and procedures for the community and outline the roles of each team.

Director Lakomiak has reached out to several agencies to meet with their boards and thank them for their service to the community. She recently met with Torchlight's board. It was a wonderful experience. They asked her to come twice a year to make sure they are working on the same goals and to stay engaged with the Board. Tia Lawrence said her board was very appreciative and was glad to be recognized.

On July 10th, Director Lakomiak was the keynote speaker at the Geauga Township Trustees Association meeting. She focused on what the Board does and what it is charged with and felt it was received well. She will be invited back to talk about some of the programs the Board funds.

As a result of House Bill 33, we are now a nine-member board. This won't actually happen for two years when some terms will expire. The committee structure will need to be changed. Currently there are six committees which could be reduced to two or three. There are many options – combining capital and finances, operations and budget, addiction and mental health. The Bylaws need to be updated and a draft will be submitted at the September meeting. The Board also has the ability to convene ad hoc committees.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Agency Relations

There was no report.

b. Finance

There was no report.

c. Planning and Policies

There was no report.

d. Capital Planning

The Transitional Living Center Expansion committee met today with the architect team. They reviewed drawings, the bidding process and current timelines. The bidding documents will be available for review electronically at a digital forum and a notice about their availability will be posted in the Maple Leaf and News Herald.

The Homeless Subcommittee of the Housing Coalition met today and elected a Chair and Vice Chair. Several local providers participated. Director Lakomiak said this was one of the priorities identified during the sequential mapping workshop. She will provide a full update once the completed report and mapping priorities are received. Currently, HUD mandates that a point in time homeless count is done in January. Homelessness in a rural area is more hidden than in urban communities. The subcommittee will be doing a point in time homeless count in the summer using service providers, park district, etc. There are four shelters that are always full. The subcommittee will focus on what resources are available in Geauga to support those who are homeless. Shelters are limited in what they can do. There are many sub populations in the homeless community. The Board will focus on homeless individuals with mental health and addiction challenges. The Housing Coalition is not a Board committee, but was originally established as a requirement of the Shelter Plus Care program.

VI. BOARD REVIEW AND ACTION ITEMS

a. Acknowledgment of Reduction in Board Size by Geauga County Commissioners

The Board acknowledged receipt of Geauga County Commissioners Resolution #24-137 dated July 9, 2024, reducing the size of the Board from 14 to 9 members.

b. Resolution 24-07-1 Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health Linkages Grant Allocation for SFY2025

Mr. Petruziello moved to approve the Resolution. Ms. Shumway seconded the motion. Discussion: The Board has been receiving this funding from OhioMHAS for several years. It is allocated to Ravenwood Health for the therapist housed at the Geauga Safety Center who keeps the inmates engaged with services while incarcerated and when they are released. The Board provides additional

local funding to augment this program. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-10; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

c. Resolution 24-07-2 Mobile Crisis and Crisis Response Funding Allocation

Mr. Holden moved to approve the Resolution. Dr. Lesyk seconded the motion. Discussion: This allocation must be used to help communities fund mobile crisis and crisis response services and supports. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-10; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

d. Resolution 24-07-3 Access to Wellness Funding

Mr. Holden moved to approve the Resolution. Dr. Lesyk seconded the motion. Discussion: Unspent funds must be returned to OhioMHAS. This funding is very flexible and can be used for recovery supports that agencies don't have funding for – clothing, identification cards, housing and transportation. There is a committee of local agencies who review requests for this funding. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-10; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

e. Resolution 24-07-4 Specialized Docket Allocation to Geauga County Court of Common Pleas

Ms. Johnson moved to approve the Resolution. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion. Discussion: The Board receives a yearly allocation from OhioMHAS that is stipulated for use by the Geauga County Drug Court. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-10; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

f. Resolution 24-07-5 OACBHA Week of Appreciation Mini-Grant 2024

Mr. Holden moved to approve the Resolution. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. Discussion: The Board Association has received funds from OhioMHAS so boards can participate in a Week of Appreciation that will take place September 15-21, 2024. This year's focus is on those who work directly with individuals that have addiction and/or mental illness. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-10; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

g. Financial Reports

Mr. Mausser reported on the following for June 2024:

- 94.0% of the Board's administrative budget has been expended.
- County Calendar Year Expenditures were slightly over \$3.41 million.
- The Auditor's Fund Balance was just over \$2.53 million.
- Voucher Recap #696 in the amount of \$385,388.05.

The Transitional Living Center expansion funds are held in a separate account. The Budget Commission had no problem with this approach at their last hearing. The Board will spend about \$700,000 of its own money. This account will then need to be replenished at some point for the FY26-27 housing project.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Petruziello encouraged everyone to be actively involved in government at all levels.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

NAMI Geauga is collaborating with NAMI Cleveland on their walk in September. You can go to Namiwalks.org/Geauga to be a sponsor, participate or contribute. 100% of these funds will stay local.

Torchlight Youth Mentoring Alliance is holding a cornhole tournament on July 27th at Grand River Cellars Winery. You can visit their website for additional information.

Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers is holding a community appreciation event to thank stakeholders, donors and volunteers on September 11th from 11:00 to 1:00 at Jordan Creek Park in Concord Township. The event will include lunch, guest speakers and volunteer awards. Invitations will be sent to Geauga Board members.

Signature Health, in conjunction with Lifeline, is holding their annual Dancing under the Stars event on August 2nd at LaMalfa in Mentor. Community leaders are paired with professional dancers to compete against each other. Ms. Wynne-Peaspanen will send information about this event.

Michelle Bertman said Catholic Charities will host an open house on September 26th from 4-7 at their Geauga office. She will send information about this event.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Holden moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion. The meeting was then adjourned at 6:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Teresa Slater
Administrative/Office Manager

Dr. Steven Oluic
Chairman of the Board

James Lee Holden
Secretary of the Board