

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

Dr. Steven Oluic
Chairman of the Board

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Board Minutes

September 4, 2024

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: James Lee Holden, Carolee Lesyk

STAFF PRESENT: Christine Lakomiak, Jim Mausser, Michelle Maneage

GUESTS: Gail Roussey (Geauga League of Women Voters), Charles Tong, Melanie Blasko (Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers), Vicki Clark (Ravenwood Health), ND Howard (GCTP), Mary Wynne-Peaspanen (Signature Health), Kristine Frankenberry (NAMI Geauga), Kristy Mowry (Red Tulip Project), Linda Miller

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

Dr. Oluic called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Ms. Chokshi called the roll for attendance purposes and the following Board members were present: Alberta Chokshi, Reba Dykes, Kathy Johnson, Douglas Lundblad, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, Mary Ruth Shumway and Patricia Varanese. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

II. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES FROM JULY 17, 2024

Ms. Shumway moved to waive the reading of and approve the Minutes. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. **Voice Vote: Ayes-8; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Dr. Oluic reported that the second bid opening for the Transitional Living Center was today at 2:00 p.m. Only two bids were submitted. At the first bid opening, there were three submissions. He commended the staff on all the work that is going on behind the scenes, with the agencies, and in the community.

Dr. Oluic talked about the link between males and suicide, and the number of suicides in the county. He noted the work being done by the Geauga Veterans Center and that the Board is pursuing more involvement with veterans.

The Board received grant funds to purchase a tv/video/camera/microphone system for the conference room, which will allow for onsite/offsite video conferences, trainings, presentations, etc.

Committee Structure: There are currently ten Board members. This will be reduced to nine through attrition. Due to the reduction in Board size, it was decided to revamp the committee structure and make new committee assignments. There will now be two committees – Programs & Policies will be chaired by Kathy Johnson, and consist of Alberta Chokshi, Mary Ruth Shumway and Patricia Varanese. Fiscal & Capital will be chaired by Reba Dykes, and will consist of James Lee Holden, Kathy Johnson and Michael Petruziello. Some matters that may have been discussed at the committee level in the past will now be discussed by the whole Board.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Lakomiak thanked the Board and the agencies for the work that has been done to date for the Transitional Living Center expansion. She then provided updates on the following:

Overdose Awareness Day: The Geauga County Commissioners passed a resolution proclaiming August 31st as Overdose Awareness Day. Information about overdose awareness and other mental health resources was distributed at the Great Geauga County Fair.

Rockin' with Resources: She attended the New Leaf Drug Court graduation event on July 25th.

LOSS Team: Staff attended the Journey to Hope remembrance event on August 8th, which included a butterfly release and a picnic for attendees. The Board has also received a grant to assist the LOSS Team and their victim advocates that will be used to purchase "go bags" of clothing for victims.

Making Connections Training: This training will be held at the Board's administrative offices on September 25th both in person and virtually, to review clinical opportunities to engage families when providing client care. The Board received a grant to purchase audio/visual/microphone system so more trainings and educational programs can be held in the conference room.

BSCA Grant: A group of agencies and Board staff are meeting to develop policies and procedures for crisis situations; National Organization for Victim Advocacy (NOVA) – several team leaders will be attending a Crisis Response Team best practices training geared to first responders and other frontline personnel, who will then be able to train others; purchased items for "go bags"; purchased other supplies that can be distributed during crisis situations.

Agencies: Director Lakomiak has been meeting with contract agency boards. This month, she attended meetings at NAMI Geauga, Family Pride and Ravenwood Health.

Regional Crisis Response Center: Last year, the Board entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Lake and Ashtabula. The three counties involved recently convened a focus group which was very well attended. Board members Kathy Johnson and Jimmy Lee Holden attended with Director Lakomiak. State Senator Cirino garnered a \$500,000 grant to assist with this endeavor. Lake Board will act as the Fiscal Agent. The total project cost is \$9.2 Million. A

viable piece of property has been found. The price is \$800,000 and each board is being asked to contribute to purchase this property. More discussion will follow during committee meetings. The Sequential Intercept Mapping (SIM) identified not having a crisis center as a service gap.

Week of Appreciation: The Board received a grant to be used to honor local behavioral health service providers. Throughout the week of September 15-20, two wellness events were held each day at the Board offices – drum circle, sound bath meditation, chair yoga, and workplace wellness.

NAMI Geauga: Their annual NAMI Walks event is being held in conjunction with the NAMI affiliate in Cuyahoga and will take place at Edgewater Park. The Board is a sponsor of this event.

Mr. Lundblad reported that the local Veterans Service Commission has been working with Ravenwood Health on programs for veterans. A Veterans Fair was held on September 7, 2024 in Middlefield.

V. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

This topic was discussed during the Chairman's Report.

VI. BOARD REVIEW AND ACTION ITEMS

a. Resolution 24-09-1 Evidence-Based Prevention Funding for SFY2025

Ms. Johnson moved to approve the Resolution. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion. Discussion: These funds were awarded by OhioMHAS and have been used in the past for evidence-based prevention programs in the community and schools. The Resolution lists each program, the amount of funding and the agency who will receive the funds. Additionally, the Board allocates local money for these programs. Mr. Petruziello asked if any agencies are including a faith-based component as part of these programs. Director Lakomiak said these funds are for specific programs as listed. Issues of faith are discussed with clients at intake and can be included in a client's individualized service plan. Dr. Oluic said there are often constraints on government entities in regard to matters of religion. He said the religious community in Geauga is very active in mental health and recovery issues. Ms. Varanese said the Board can look into this further and see if there are any programs or grants available for faith-based programs. Ms. Shumway asked if any agency is doing its own version of "Miss Kendra's List", which is a faith-based prevention program. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-8; Nay-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

b. Resolution 24-09-2 Approval of Transitional Living Center Expansion and Renovation Contract

Mr. Petruziello moved to approve the Resolution. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. Discussion: The contract for the expansion and renovation of the Transitional Living Center will be awarded to Millstone Management Group in the amount of \$2,635,522, the lowest bid received. This exceeds the original estimate by approximately \$500,000. The hope is to break ground in October. Several Board members asked how cost overruns will be handled. Dr. Oluic

said the staff and architects will be monitoring expenses/costs closely. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-8; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

c. Resolution 24-09-3 Northeast Ohio Collaborative Grant Funding Allocation

Ms. Shumway moved to approve the Resolution. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion. Discussion: This funding comes from the Northeast Ohio Collaborative of Boards and can be used for many different purposes as outlined in the Resolution. The funds are allocated to Ravenwood Health for a staff person at the jail who provides intensive mental health programs and which can assist inmates in being released early. This program is provided in partnership with Geauga County Common Pleas Judge Carolyn Paschke. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-8; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

d. Resolution 24-09-4 Funding Transfer for Capital Projects Reserve Fund

Mr. Petruziello moved to approve the Resolution. Ms. Chokshi seconded the motion. Discussion: This Resolution authorizes the transfer of funds to the Board's Capital Project Reserve Fund for the TLC Expansion Project. Grants funds will be exhausted first before local funds are used. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-8; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

e. Resolution 24-09-5 Reimbursement to Geauga Safety Center

Mr. Petruziello moved to approve the Resolution. Ms. Shumway seconded the motion. Discussion: This funding is received from OhioMHAS to reimburse the Geauga Safety Center for psychotropic medications provided to inmates. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-8; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

f. Financial Reports

Mr. Mausser reported on the following:

- 8.9% of the Board's administrative budget was expended in July 2024 for SFY2025.
- 2024 County Calendar Year Expenditures were slightly over \$4.23 Million.
- The Auditor's Fund Balance at the end of July was just over \$2.41 Million.
- Voucher Recap for July - \$820,139.45.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business discussed.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business discussed.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gail Roussey asked for clarification on the new committee structure. Dr. Oluic responded there were previously four committees which will be combined into two committees.

Mr. Lundblad asked if there are programs in the schools to help identify students who may have the intent to kill or harm others. Ms. Shumway said a risk assessment can be done and the school make a referral for alternative programs. The ALICE training was briefly discussed and that schools are trained on what to do in an emergency situation.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Chokshi moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Oluic seconded the motion. The meeting was then adjourned at 7:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Teresa Slater
Administrative/Office Manager

Dr. Steven Oluic
Chairman of the Board

Alberta Chokshi
Acting Secretary of the Board