**GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH**

**AND RECOVERY SERVICES**

**Jennifer Malainy 13244 Ravenna Road**

**Chairman of the Board Chardon, Ohio 44024**

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**Board Minutes NOVEMBER 17, 2021**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ann Bagley, Alberta Chokshi, Walter Claypool, Martin Fay, James Lee Holden, Vanessa Jensen, Kathy Johnson, Carolee Lesyk, Jennifer Malainy, Linda Miller, Gregory O’Brien, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, Mary Ruth Shumway

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**GUESTS:** Mary Wynne-Peaspanen (Signature Health), Kim Carter (NAMI Geauga), Vicki Clark (Ravenwood Health), Kerri Luckner and Melanie Blasko (Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jim Adams, Amie Martin-D’Arienzo, Teresa Slater

1. **CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Ms. Malainy called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She then said that the meeting is being held in public for the purpose of conducting the Board’s business. Public comments will be allowed for a total of ten minutes at the end of the meeting.

Ms. Chokshi called the roll for attendance purposes and the following Board members were present: Ann Bagley, Alberta Chokshi, Walter Claypool, James Lee Holden, Vanessa Jensen, Kathy Johnson, Carolee Lesyk, Jennifer Malainy, Linda Miller, Gregory O’Brien, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, and Mary Ruth Shumway. Mr. Fay arrived at 6:10 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

1. **JUDGE TIMOTHY J. GRENDELL**

Judge Grendell thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak about the Geauga Youth Center. He then talked about the history of the Youth Center and how it came to be. Judge Grendell said Geauga has access to, and shares expenses with the Portage detention center based on the number of bed nights that are used. Juvenile/Probate Judge Frank Lavrich recognized that a lot of kids really didn’t need to be placed in a locked detention facility and wanted somewhere for youth who may be experiencing other issues (parental, mental health, drugs and alcohol) to go that could provide more structure and could be used for respite. The Frank Lavrich Geauga Youth Center was created and the facility was staffed and managed by the Geauga Juvenile Court.

Juvenile/Probate Judge Henry decided in 2004/2005 that there was a lot of cost involved in running this facility, but it didn’t include the services needed for those with mental health issues. He envisioned the facility being more respite oriented, than a holding and detention center for young people who may be having problems. The building is owned by the Commissioners but the facility was managed by Juvenile Court. Judge Henry approached the Commissioners about this arrangement. The Court was then pulled out of the program and a lease was given to Ravenwood Health so they could expand the services provided at the facility.

Judge Grendell said currently there is no lease between the Commissioners and Ravenwood. It expired three years ago. When Judge Grendell asked who is negotiating the lease on behalf of the Commissioners, he was informed that it is Glen Vernick, Director of the Maintenance Department. There was some concern expressed by Ravenwood that Geauga could not the keep the Youth Center occupied enough to cover expenses. A concession was made by the Commissioners that Ravenwood could contract with Lake County to house a certain number of juveniles in the facility.

Judge Grendell talked about several issues he would like to see addressed:

* The biggest problem is there is no respite facility in Geauga. He is sometimes required to take juveniles from their home and place them in respite. He has been asking for this type of facility for all ten years that he has been on the bench. If the Judge has a runaway that is unruly, but not delinquent, he has had to place that juvenile in the detention center. He is allowed to do that for only 24 hours, but he has had to make that placement for a longer period of time because Geauga does not have a respite facility. Most of the time the facility is full with youth from Lake and there is no room for Geauga placements. Judge Grendell reiterated that the Youth Center is not equipped to serve that purpose and is requesting that Ravenwood add a wing for respite.
* If Geauga money is being used to expand the facility, he would like Geauga County kids to have priority over Lake County kids. He has been turned down many times because the beds are occupied. There is an issue of availability for respite and access for Geauga residents. He feels the Youth Center serves a valid purpose as a place for kids that don’t need to be in a locked facility. He said the services provided by Ravenwood for the first 4/5 years were very good. The Judge feels that the quality of services has been declining and that there is a higher rate of recidivism. He is disappointed from a personal viewpoint because he wants the youth of Geauga to get the help they need.
* Judge Grendell said he gets a fair number of calls about the Youth Center. It has been a valuable asset for the community. It is not a locked facility, kids are close to their home environment, are able to go to school, and are getting the treatment they need. He asked for a respite wing if the Youth Center is going to be expanded. He would like the Commissioners to have a lease with Ravenwood to make sure that Geauga youth have priority access. He said youth can be placed there by parents, the Geauga Probate/Juvenile Court, and Lake Juvenile Court.

Dr. Jensen asked about the number of beds allocated between Geauga and Lake counties. Ms. Clark said in 2008, the Commissioners cut Ravenwood’s budget by 20% for the Youth Center and taking in kids from Lake was a way to cover that reduction. This funding was never restored to Ravenwood by the Commissioners, although costs continue to increase. Geauga Job and Family Services pays a per diem rate for their placements. Judge Grendell responded that his issue is when Geauga needs a bed and one is not available. He feels if the facility is going to be expanded, Geauga should have priority to the beds. He said Geauga is one of the few counties that does not have somewhere to place a child for up to 72 hours for respite care. There is no trauma based therapeutic foster facility in Geauga either. The law only allows for a 24-hour placement for an unruly child. He said it would be nice to have a respite wing of at least one or two beds.

Mr. Claypool responded as a former Commissioner, he has talked with the Judge many times about this issue. He said there are several residential housing facilities in Geauga, but there are rules associated with certain facilities that need to be complied with. Judge Grendell said he cannot put anyone in a facility that isn’t approved for this purpose. He said Geauga is woefully low in foster care because people don’t want to take someone else’s broken child. He does have some access to foster care in Cuyahoga and Mahoning, and have placed kids as far away as Toledo. Regarding respite, Judge Grendell has talked with some of the places in Cuyahoga and they want the Court to pay for an empty bed for 365 days a year. The Youth Center was originally created as a respite facility where a child could be sent anytime. Since the facility was given over to Ravenwood, he does not have the authority to place a child there. Judge Grendell said he can recommend placement and block placement, but he can’t order placement. Ms. Bagley said in the past, JFS provided a fair amount of respite care. Judge Grendell replied that there currently is no respite available through JFS. There is a need for short term respite. Bellefaire has offered a respite bed at a cost of $218,000 a year. He is suggesting that we figure out some way to add two bedrooms to the Youth Center for respite purposes.

Judge Grendell again talked about the short and long-term need for respite care at the Geauga Youth Center and that Geauga youth should have priority. He said a night in a detention facility can cost $550.00. He could place someone in a good treatment facility for that amount. There is no treatment provided at a detention center. Judge Grendell reiterated: 1. Short term respite need. 2. The need for adequate services. 3. Beds need to be available to Geauga. He said the Commissioners’ job is to control spending and watch the money. The Judge would love to not just spend the minimum, but to help these kids with trauma-based problems who need therapy and treatment. He said our kids are not being served if we don’t. The age range for kids placed in respite care is from 10 to 17. Judge Grendell said it is wonderful to see when this works and then gave some examples.

Mr. Petruziello asked if the need for respite care is more of a parenting issue. Judge Grendell responded that it absolutely is a huge parenting issue. A lot of people either don’t want to parent or don’t know how to parent and think that schools and the community should parent their children. Mr. Petruziello asked what the Board can do to change that. Dr. Jensen responded that it is not always the fault of the parents, although she does think that many don’t know how to parent. Sometimes even the best parenting doesn’t work. She talked about how to get resources to parents earlier in a child’s life instead of at puberty when a lot of big issues arise. Judge Grendell said some parents don’t know any better and there are also a lot of single parents. He said something needs to be done to help out. If not, society will ultimately pay a higher price. Ms. Shumway said Judge Grendell has put together multiple levels of parenting classes that are underutilized.

Judge Grendell has funded a resource center that is staffed where parents can go for free to address underlying issues and be proactive instead of reactive. He wants to get away from this being a judicial problem and work with other agencies, including Job and Family Services and this Board. Judge Grendell would ultimately like to have Juvenile Court involvement only for extreme cases. To do that, we need to have a different approach. The Judge feels that 80% of problems are mental health related. He suggested having a hotline at the Youth Center. He would eventually like to have the resource center located somewhere other than the courthouse and let people know there is help available.

Mr. Adams reported that he attended yesterday’s Commissioners meeting. Ms. Clark presented on some of their programs, including the development of the Youth Center. Commissioner Lennon talked about creating respite beds to meet the needs of the kids and the Court. Mr. Adams said there is a great opportunity to do that now and will be part of the discussion regarding the expansion of the Youth Center.

1. **APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 20, 2021 AND OCTOBER 27, 2021**

**Dr. Lesyk moved to approve the Minutes. Dr. Oluic seconded the motion.** Discussion: Ms. Johnson said the last paragraph on Page Three of the October 20, 2021 Minutes need to be changed in that an actual vote was taken, not just a straw poll. Mr. Claypool was also going to ask for clarification that there was an actual vote taken before he moved forward. Ms. Slater replied that she will make the requested change. Dr. Jensen suggested at the last meeting and in an email, that when motions are made, the motion, who made the motion, and who seconded it should be reiterated for clarification purposes before a vote is held. Dr. Jensen said that is not always clear when it is done during the discussion portion. That would help eliminate any confusion as to what is being voted on. Ms. Slater said she will also include that information in bold to make it easier to find in the Minutes. **Voice Vote: Ayes-14; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

1. **CEO REPORT – WRITTEN REPORT**

Mr. Adams did not have any information to add to his written report.

1. **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

Ms. Malainy reported that four new documents were added to the Board packet that were not sent with the original email: The SFY2020 Annual Report, an updated Board Roster, a Press Release from the Suicide Prevention Coalition, and information from Citizens Against Recreational Marijuana.

1. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**
   1. **Agency Relations**

Ms. Miller had nothing new to report.

* 1. **Finance**

Mr. Petruziello had nothing new to report.

* 1. **Planning and Policies**

Mr. Claypool said he will send an email to committee members tomorrow about scheduling a meeting to determine how they would like to proceed regarding Mr. Adams’ evaluation.

* 1. **Housing**

Mr. O’Brien asked staff to put together a list of housing facilities the Board operates, funds, or makes direct placements to, with a cost of $10,000.00 or more, adult or juvenile, no later than December 1st. He would like the list to include the name of the facility, the address of the facility, what agency manages the facility, along with a contact name and phone number. He would like to visit the facilities that the Board funds.

1. **BOARD REVIEW AND ACTION ITEMS**
   1. **Resolution 21-11-1 Allocation of SFY2022 State Opioid Response Funds**

Mr. Adams said he included information about this grant in his written report. The funds are for the current fiscal year and are the same distribution amounts as last year. Mr. Petruziello asked if the funds are used for school programs. Mr. Adams replied that the money can only be used for opioid services**. Ms. Miller moved to approve the Resolution. Dr. Lesyk seconded the motion.** There was no further discussion. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-14; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

* 1. **Resolution 21-11-2 Multisystem Adult Wellness Funding**

Mr. Adams explained the purpose of this Resolution in his written report. This will be a new program. The funds will be allocated in the same fashion as is done for multi-system youth. The letter from OhioMHAS outlines what the funds can be used for. The rules pertaining to this funding are very restrictive in that a person must be admitted to a psychiatric hospital four times in one year or three times in one month. Mr. Adams said since the Board doesn’t have access to Medicaid data or private inpatient placements of Geauga residents, we only have information about four clients who were placed in the state hospital, and not all eleven Geauga residents who were hospitalized as reported by the state. Ms. Miller commented that only $4,000.00 is allowed per person, per year. Mr. Adams said in a recent report from Family First Council, they spent approximately $137,500.00 for services to youth in one month. Ms. Bagley asked to put the issue of receiving Medicaid and private hospital data on a future agenda. **Dr. Oluic moved to approve the Resolution. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion.** There was no further discussion. **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-14; Nays-0; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.**

* 1. **Written Summary/Financial Reports**

Mr. Mausser submitted an October Board Fiscal Report Summary. Mr. Adams said the Board is included in the Geauga County Single Audit for the Year Ended December 21, 2020. There were no findings against the Board nor were they included in the Management Letter. The full audit can be viewed online. In his Summary, Mr. Mausser clarified that even though property values and taxes have gone up, those increases would not be realized at the Board level. The only time the Board would see additional levy funds is from new construction. Mr. Adams said the Board will hopefully see an increase in levy receipts from any new construction that takes place at the former Geauga Lake/Sea World property.

Ms. Shumway asked for an update about the search for a new employee. Mr. Adams said 45 applications were received and staff chose four individuals to interview. Two of the applicants were hired for other jobs and two did not respond, so the search and hiring process will continue.

1. **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Petruziello said he will have the student survey questions put together for the Board to review at its next meeting.

1. **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Shumway commented that there are five Board members whose terms will expire on June 30, 2022. Mr. Adams responded that he hopes all of those members will return for another term. Ms. Slater explained the process for getting reappointed. She said that can be started at any time prior to the expiration of the term.

Ms. Miller said for the good of the order, she keeps track of what is going on in the state regarding marijuana. She distributed an informational flyer that was sent to Ohio legislators and other public bodies asking them to vote against the legalization of recreational marijuana in Ohio. Mr. Claypool has received many phone calls as to whether Chesterland allows marijuana. He suggested that it may be a good idea for the Board to develop a position on this from a mental health perspective that could be distributed to public officials at the local and state level. Ms. Shumway will forward information about a medical marijuana training in December. CEU’s CLE’s will be available.

Mr. O’Brien said it is his understanding that the Board can go into Executive Session, but since it was not on the Agenda, no action can be taken as a result.

Ms. Malainy asked if there were any public comments at this time. Seeing none, the Board can now go into Executive Session.

**Ms. Malainy moved to go into Executive Session at 7:21 PM pursuant to ORC 121.22(G)(1) to consider the employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion or compensation of a public employee. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion.** **Voice Vote: Ayes-13; Nays-1; Abstentions-0. Motion approved.** The Board went into Executive Session at 7:24 PM. The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:55 PM and the meeting was then adjourned.

**Respectfully submitted by:**

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**Ms. Teresa Slater**

**Secretary/Receptionist**

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**Ms. Jennifer Malainy**

**Chairman of the Board**

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**Ms. Alberta Chokshi**

**Secretary of the Board**