**GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH**

**AND RECOVERY SERVICES**

**Jennifer Malainy 13244 Ravenna Road**

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

**James C. Adams Phone: (440) 285-2282**

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**Board Minutes SEPTEMBER 15, 2021**

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

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Walter Claypool, Carolee Lesyk

**GUESTS:** Mary Wynne-Peaspanen (Signature Health), Kim Carter (NAMI Geauga), Vicki Clark (Ravenwood Health), Melanie Blasko (Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers), Tim Kehres (Torchlight), Michelle Bertman (Catholic Charities)

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Ms. Malainy called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and said that public comments will be allowed at the end of the meeting.

Mr. Petruziello called the roll for attendance purposes. The following Board members were present: Ann Bagley, Alberta Chokshi, Martin Fay, James Lee Holden, Kathy Johnson, Jennifer Malainy, Linda Miller, Gregory O’Brien, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, Mary Ruth Shumway.

1. **APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES FROM AUGUST 18 AND AUGUST 23, 2021**

Ms. Miller moved to approve the Minutes as written. Mr. Holden seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **VOICE VOTE: AYES-10; NAYS-0; ABSTENTIONS-1. MOTION APPROVED.**

1. **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

Ms. Malainy reported that Ms. Vidmar has moved to Lake County and is no longer a Board member. Ms. Vidmar was chair of the Planning and Policies committee and Ms. Malainy appointed Mr. Claypool as the new chair of that committee. She told Board members to reach out to her if there is something they would like to have on the agenda. The next Board meetings were scheduled for October 20th and November 17th. There will be no meeting in December.

1. **CEO REPORT – WRITTEN REPORT**

Mr. Adams will forward some upcoming training events to the Board.

Ms. Miller asked if OhioRise will impact Family First Council funding. Mr. Adams responded that it will but he is not sure how. Ohio already went through behavioral health managed care for adults. This new Medicaid program will affect high risk youth who are involved with more than one local system and have multiple needs. A lot of these kids are going to therapeutic treatment centers, such as the Geauga Youth Center, and other non-profit facilities throughout the state. OhioRise is based on the model used for adults. It is designed to get kids into residential treatment facilities in the home community and provide wraparound services. The state has awarded contracts with managed care companies to do that and the roll out has just begun. Board directors are meeting to discuss how this will affect services. Managed care companies think in terms of medical care, but it doesn’t work that way on the behavioral health side. Geauga has the capacity to provide an array of different services to kids.

Ms. Chokshi asked if there will be specific managed care companies assigned to different areas or if they can bid for whatever and wherever they like. Mr. Adams said the adults were separated by region. He is not sure if it will be implemented that way for children, but it does have the potential to substantially change how things are done in Geauga. Mr. Adams said Nancy Seelbach used to present the Geauga model throughout the state. It is still one of the biggest pooled funding collaborations in the state for services provided to children. Ms. Chokshi asked if services would be initiated by the primary healthcare provider and then subcontracted out. Mr. Adams said the provider will need to have specific licensure to provide the service and bill for it. This will affect agencies because a lot of the billing can only be done by a licensed independent social worker and Ohio does not have that specific criteria in place.

Mr. Petruziello asked if this Medicaid change is being done through legislation. Mr. Adams responded that is correct, but the OhioRise program was not done quite as openly as the piece with adults, which included a lot of conversation with managed care before the legislation was introduced. The language that created OhioRise is very broad and allows Medicaid to set the rules and put out bids. Mr. Petruziello said this is a serious issue and asked what Mr. Adams needs from the Board in order to be a part of decisions like this. Mr. Adams said as issues come to light, he could draft a letter from the Board outlining its stance on various matters and deliver it to legislators. Mr. Petruziello asked Mr. Adams to draft a letter that includes his concerns about OhioRise so that there is input from the people who are doing the actual work. Mr. Adams said everyone votes as a block politically in the House and Senate. Mr. Petruziello said if boards were more vocal about issues, they could still inform the process.

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

Ms. Miller had nothing new to report.

* 1. **Finance**

Mr. Petruziello had nothing new to report. He would like to meet with Mr. Mausser to review some financial information.

* 1. **Planning and Policies**

Ms. Malainy asked if anyone would like to report on the 360 evaluation. Ms. Chokshi said the last decision was that the matter should go back to the committee for clarification on a few points and then to the full Board again for review.

* 1. **Housing**

Mr. Adams provided the following updates:

Geauga Youth Group Home: The first meeting with Ravenwood, Job and Family Services, and OhioMHAS recently took place regarding the $500,000 grant received to renovate the youth group home. The project can now move forward, although some of the rules have changed. The agency running the facility and the program will be responsible for the funds and the management of the project. The property is owned by the Commissioners. Mr. Adams hopes they will give JFS Director Swenson the authority to represent them on this project. The facility currently houses between 6/9 kids and the goal is to be able to have up to 16 beds available and still be eligible for federal and/or state funding. The youth group home is not a locked facility. It is located next to the Board’s apartment building. Mr. O’Brien said Mr. Adams has secured funding for the project and has received a commitment from Job and Family Services for the match funds. Ms. Shumway asked if emergency respite care will be included. Mr. Adams said that will have to be discussed and the licensure requirements reviewed. Ms. Shumway said the facility currently has two beds available for emergency placement. Mr. O’Brien said the hope and goal is that once the facility is renovated, JFS would save money by keeping kids in the county instead of having to go elsewhere.

Mr. Adams said part of the process will be to look at the unique needs of each kid and provide wraparound services in the facility instead of sending them somewhere else. Ms. Shumway said when you are trying to reunite a child with the family, it is much more successful if everyone is in the same county. Mr. O’Brien said he and Mr. Adams recently discussed that, along with what the ongoing commitment of the Board would be. Mr. Adams said Director Swenson has some amazing numbers of what he is spending in gas alone to drive all over the state, along with the staff time it takes. Placements out of county can cost $500 or more a day. Tuition for those at the facility is an additional cost.

Mr. Petruziello asked if CASA will be involved and why aren’t all of the agencies working together to accommodate those extra needs. Ms. Bagley replied that is what Family First Council does. Mr. Adams said agencies give input regarding individual cases presented to FFC to decide what would be most beneficial for that child. Mr. Petruziello suggested setting up a meeting with JFS, Ravenwood, and CASA to determine what we really need. Mr. Adams said this will be an evolutionary process. The Commissioners and maintenance department have met. The next step is the design phase. The architect’s job will be to look at all the needs and then create a design to meet those needs. The design and development phase is when all the parties will come together. The difficult task will be building the space for the programming that is needed. The school will also have to be completely renovated. Mr. Adams said only Boards could apply for up to $500,000 and that the grant was time sensitive. There might be an opportunity to apply for up to an additional $250,000. Director Swenson has committed to provide all of the match. Initially, the Board will not have any funding commitment, but the Board could help with whatever professional training is needed and also help retain staff.

2. Residential Treatment Facility: Ravenwood Health is looking to open a 3.7 residential treatment facility for drug and alcohol services in Geauga County. The initial worksheet for that project has been submitted, with a limit of $500,000. This was the first project included on OhioMHAS’ 5 to 10 year long-range capital request. The funds for the youth group home are from a different pool of money. The housing committee has discussed what is needed in the county and what funding is available. Mr. Adams has heard from OhioMHAS that boards can apply for second and third priority capital plan projects. He said 75% of capital requests to the state fall apart for various reasons. He proposed submitting worksheets for two other projects as placeholders. One of the projects would be for a stepdown unit for the Transitional Living Center crisis center. Clients often still need 24 hour care even when they are no longer in crisis. If there is no place for them to go, it ties up a crisis bed, and someone may then need to be placed at the state hospital. It takes a lot of effort to make sure people are stabilized, but he doesn’t want to use the hospital as a holding place for people who don’t need it. The state hospital is the only place we have admitting authority.

Ms. Shumway asked if people from out of county are taking up beds at the Transitional Living Center and the Geauga Youth Center. Mr. Adams said they pay for a substantial portion of the program costs. Out of county residents also pay more than Geauga residents.

Mr. Adams said he would then like to focus on general mental health/behavioral health housing. The Board could build or renovate a facility. Metzenbaum houses could qualify as independent living.

Mr. Adams said the Board has the opportunity to make a difference in housing for the next 25/30 years by creating these facilities. It is his recommendation that the Board move forward with these projects. Mr. Adams said the application includes a 5 to 10-year projection on expenses, replacement costs, budgets, and long-term maintenance. The application process is very detailed. He will send the worksheets to the Board members.

Mr. Adams said thinking about doing 3 or 4 projects at once is a lot, but it is doable, and we have great agencies who are committed to these projects.

1. **BOARD REVIEW AND ACTION ITEMS**
   1. **Resolution 21-09-1 Strong Families/Safe Communities Allocation for SFY2022**

Mr. Adams said this is the continuation of a grant received in conjunction with Lake County that will be used to fund part of the Board’s Family First Council obligation and the In-Home Based Treatment Program. Ms. Miller moved to approve the Resolution. Mr. Holden seconded the motion. **ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES-11; NAYS-0; ABSTENTIONS-0. MOTION APPROVED.**

* 1. **Resolution 21-09-2 Reimbursement to Geauga Safety Center**

Mr. Adams said these are funds received from the state and are used to reimburse the Geauga Safety Center for psychotropic drugs. Dr. Oluic moved to approve the Resolution. Ms. Shumway seconded the motion. **ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES-11; NAYS-0; ABSTENTIONS-0. MOTION APPROVED.**

* 1. **Financial Reports and Voucher Recap**

Mr. Mausser reported that 16.3% of the Board’s administrative budget was expended through August 31, 2021. There were no expenses from the Community Education Budget. The calendar year expenditures through August were $3,986,693.95. The Auditor’s Fund Unencumbered Balance through August was $3,631,444.79. The Cash Balances by Source of Funds are in order.

1. **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Malainy said the Board needs to nominate a new Secretary. As the Nominating Committee Chair, Ms. Chokshi said it can be done two ways – have the nominating committee meet to make a recommendation or someone can be nominated from the floor and the Board then vote on it. Ms. Miller nominated Ms. Chokshi to fill the position. Dr. Oluic seconded the motion. Ms. Malainy then nominated Ms. Johnson and Mr. Fay seconded the motion. Ms. Chokshi received six votes. Ms. Johnson received five votes. Ms. Chokshi will serve as the Board Secretary.

Ms. Miller reminded the Board about the Ohio Revised Code requirement to have a local HUB coalition. Geauga’s group has four subcommittees – prevention, treatment, training, and community/business. Two of the committees have been working diligently to show appreciation to local first responders. They have commissioned canvases with their individual logos for each fire and police department. They also put together goody bags for over 600 first responders. Signs expressing our appreciation will also be posted throughout the county.

Ms. Shumway said CASA is experiencing challenges with kids who are aging out of care and who are at risk of being abused. She has a client who has been at an out of county facility for the last two years. Ms. Shumway feels that the client’s IQ information is wrong. If the client could get back in the county for a few months, another assessment could be done and he may then qualify to receive services from Metzenbaum. The parents are not able to have him back in the home.

Mr. O’Brien asked if this is something the Board can authorize. Ms. Shumway said the Board has housing funds that go to Ravenwood, who can then find a landlord to take the client. Ms. Chokshi responded that if Ravenwood takes this client, it sounds like he would need to have 24/7 wraparound services, and they would probably not find a landlord willing to take this person. Ms. Shumway said he is a registered sex offender. He can’t be placed at the Transitional Living Center because there are women at the facility, nor can he go to Next Steps because he is a threat to others. Mr. Adams said it can make a difference in the IQ score based on who does the evaluation. If he falls into the developmental disabilities’ category, he would qualify for many more services. Mr. O’Brien asked if Ms. Shumway is using this case as an example of housing needs or if she is asking the Board for help.

Ms. Shumway said part of the qualification for developmental disabilities services is that the client must be able to take care of himself. Mr. Adams said he would not be eligible for a mental health facility using that criteria. Ms. Clark responded it was her impression that Ms. Shumway was talking to someone at Metzenbaum about this case. Mr. Adams said Metzenbaum has housing all over the county. Ms. Shumway reiterated that he doesn’t qualify because of his IQ score. Mr. Petruziello asked if someone can be sent to the client to do another evaluation. Ms. Shumway said she wishes it was that easy. The facility he is at now is talking about releasing him in downtown Cleveland. One of the biggest challenges for kids that that fall between 71 and 76 on the IQ scale is that they are perfect victims and can easily be sex trafficked.

Mr. O’Brien asked Mr. Adams about having a meeting with all of the stakeholders. Mr. Adams said that it would not be cost effective to design a program for an individual case. There are facilities across the state specific to sex offenders. Ms. Shumway said the client can come up with the money for housing. Mr. Adams said he could never recommend putting someone like that into the facilities the Board is talking about. Ms. Bagley asked if there is a counterpart to FFC in the adult system. Mr. Adams replied not yet, but it is coming over the next year or so and will be locally driven.

1. **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Petruziello made a motion to say the Pledge of Allegiance at Board meetings after Roll Call. Mr. Holden seconded the motion. **VOICE VOTE: AYES-11; NAYS-0; ABSTENTIONS-0. MOTION APPROVED.**

Dr. Oluic said he sent an email a while ago to Board members about holding some type of annual gala or fundraising event but no one ever responded. He feels this would help get the word about the services that are available and give the agencies a platform. He said the Board could use Leadership Geauga’s event as a model. Ms. Bagley asked if fundraising is appropriate for the Board to do. Mr. Adams said we would struggle to raise funds. In the past, the Board has held an annual dinner and recognition ceremony and people were charged a fee to attend. Ms. Shumway said a group from the courts is doing art in the park and other events in the school systems for kids who are at risk. Dr. Oluic said the Board should think about holding a gala event in May. Housing has come up as a need and the Board could be a proponent and an advocate. Mr. Petruziello talked about creating a 501(C)(3) for fundraising purposes. Ms. Malainy asked Mr. Adams to put together a proposal that can be reviewed at the next meeting.

Ms. Malainy asked if guests had any public comments they would like to make. Those in the audience introduced themselves. Mr. Petruziello asked if Ravenwood Health is seeing an uptick in services for young children that is Covid related. Ms. Clark said they ask that question of every client when they come in and most deny that is the cause. She doesn’t see masking as the issue necessarily, but it is more about being isolated and not being able to get on with regular life. In the past, they were seeing about 20 new intakes weekly and that has increased to 35.

1. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Petruziello moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Oluic seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 PM.

**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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**Mr. Michael Petruziello**

**Acting Secretary of the Board**