

Minutes for Mental Health Planning Council

Region 10 CSB

Location: Chesterfield CSB, Chesterfield, Virginia

March 11, 2009

Next Proposed Meeting Date: TBD

Attendees

Becky Sterling (President), James Johnson (Secretary), Michael Pendrak (Membership), Vicki Hardy-Murrell (Children's Services), Bonnie Neighbour, Donna Wenzel, Jim Martinez (DMHMRSAS), Brian Parrish, Donna Sue Harmon (At-Large Member), Paula Price, Lisa Moore, Kenneth Moore, Ann Cutshall, MaryKayeJohnston (DRS), Betty Etzler, Byron Stith, Irene Walker Bolton (DOE/Special Ed. Dept), Jack Brandt (VOPA), Catherine Hancock (DMAS), Susan Williams (DOC),

DMHMRSAS Staff

Jo-Amrah McElroy, George Banks, Katharine Hunter, Janet Lung, Michael Shank, Kathleen Sadler

Guests

Mary Ann Beall, Sherry Rose

Minutes - Lynne R. Mohn

Meeting called to order 10:10 am.

Introductions and Announcements

Becky Sterling, the new Council President, provided an introduction as first time chairing the group, thanked the group for coming, to please feel free to approach her at any time with questions. She also affirmed her desire is that the meeting be as open as possible and include as many people sharing/providing input as possible without bogging things down. Furthermore, Becky confirmed that email is utilized quite a bit as a communication medium, and that decisions are made by the group.

James Johnson, Presiding Secretary, reviewed minutes from the last meeting. Hard copies were not available. Copies are available on the website, within one week of every MHPC meeting. If copies were not received via email attachments, members should contact **Jo-Amrah McElroy** immediately; furthermore, she will bring hard copies for subsequent meetings. Jo-Amrah also assured the Council that she is diligent about following up with emails that bounce back to her as undeliverable. Result: Last set of meeting minutes will be sent out again via email and attachment. Please advise Jo-Amrah if not received.

MOTION: Motion made and seconded that the approval of the minutes be deferred to the next meeting.

Voice VOTE: Carried.

Jo-Amrah McElroy advised the group that MHPC meeting space is difficult to find, and that the Chesterfield CSB has been very helpful and accommodating to the group. She further confirmed location of lunchroom, etc. appreciation was expressed for Chesterfield CSB's hospitality.

MHPC Membership Committee report by Michael Pendrak: Members are needed to fulfill mandated and necessary constituency groups. Family members of consumers and parents of SED children are needed. Contact Michael with suggested participants. MHPC Grant requires participation by more than 50% consumers or family members. There is a challenge related to identifying and reporting accurate constituency groups for number purposes since the application form has two places to enter information. Another challenge is that some members represent more than one constituency group. An example is that some are mental health consumers, family members of children or adults utilizing services, and may also be state employees or members of other organizations. The Council was asked to speak with Michael after the break if you fit one of these situations for clarification of designation.

Michael Pendrak introduced guest and potential member: **Mary Ann Beall**, from the Fairfax/Falls Church CSB, as someone who has been of great help to him and others.

Mary Ann Beall introduced herself and provided the group with a history of the MHPC from her perspective as a longtime member, consumer and family member of a consumer. She affirmed that the Council has a long history of working hard to ensure that block grants were 'run" by consumers, and that Virginia has been one of the first trailblazers in this area, working hard to allow us to select our own members, have independence, bring in community members, and work together on our own to make positive changes. She shared that she sees the MHPC group as doing well through a huge amount of changes, now tight economic times, and that block grant money is the key to moving forward with enhancing services. Her biggest concern is that the Council retains its independent roots and valuable roles, continue looking at training for members, real support for those who work with this to help understand system. Historically, the roles between CSBs and state agencies have been interwoven. Mary Ann stated that she would like to see this Council remain very strong, a continuing resource

Adult Services Committee report: The subcommittee has not met yet .

Children's Services Committee report: The subcommittee has not met yet

Agenda Format Proposal:

Becky Sterling presented the agenda that was sent out in advance to the membership. Becky clarified that it is a proposal only and that nothing happens without all on the Council approving. Her goal is to contribute to having a well organized meeting that flows, such that the end result is that people feel time spent was productive, and valuable. This is why the Standing Agenda and Public Comment form was developed. (Handout provided). If approved, the

forms would be posted on website. The written completed forms would be in the public domain. When final reports must be written to block grant to justify, the documented forms would be part of what would be reviewed.

Discussion followed regarding concepts that the public comment process should be as open as possible. Forms may intimidate some people. Forms may block participation. It was suggested that the information could be on the form but orating to the group could be optional. It is possible that this format could stimulate participation that has been absent in the past.

Brian Parrish volunteered to help Becky Sterling fine tune the standing agenda and the forms to meet the objectives of reducing barriers and encouraging participation

MOTION: Motion made and seconded that the proposed standing agenda be tried at the next meeting.

Voice VOTE: Carried

Meeting Frequency

After discussion, consensus was obtained to add April 8, 2009 meeting at yet to be determined location in Charlottesville.

Group discussion held regarding a yearly MHPC retreat, addressing issues of cost, low participation, budget concerns.

MOTION: MHPC yearly retreat should be cancelled because ocosts and low participation outweigh benefits.

AMENDED MOTION on Retreat made and seconded: proposed that we take further time to discuss if the Retreat is viable and look at criteria for going forward with a plan for making the Retreat more effective since concerns were brought up that costs outweighed benefits.

Vocal VOTE on Amended Motion, Retreat: To continue discussion on Retreat, as opposed to decision to drop MHPC Retreat entirely as of now. Aye- 2 Nay Majority

Voice VOTE on Original motion: Aye- majority Nay- strong numbers

Counted show of hands VOTE: President requested official count of votes:

In Favor of Having No Retreat –11 Opposed – 6; Abstained from Voting: - 3

Budget Review

Paula Price (MHAV) clarified MHAV's role as fiscal agent for MHPC group and \$25,000 budget, indicating that approximately \$10,000 was carried over unused from last fiscal year. She reported to the Council what funds are currently available. Money is NOT received in a chunk of \$25,000; instead, in smaller amounts and must be requested prior to receipt. Discussion followed.

MOTION: Motion made and seconded to revitalize former Budget Committee with Brian Parrish as Chair and MHAV Paula Price as standing member.

Vocal VOTE : Carried

Members to assist Paula Price, Jo-Amrah McElroy, Michael Pendrak. Call for other interested members.

Discussion regarding the need to coordinate budget with strategic planning.,

MOTION: Motion made and seconded that a voluntary attendance Retreat to be planned which will focus on strategic plan for MHPC. MHAV will hire Administrative staff to handle meetings and retreat for rest of the fiscal year. To hold MHPC Retreat this year by September 30 if viable/possible, specifying its purpose specifically as Strategic Planning Retreat, to be facilitated by outside group, with coordination logistics being made by individual hired by MHPC Council for up to \$2000 as “one time” position running through June 30,, 2009 timeframe with Paula Price’s guidance and under her oversight.

Jim Martinez DBHDS indicated there are no resources available for assisting the council in administrative services and retreat planning this time due to budget cuts Reason the \$25,000.00 was set aside to support council in first place is because DBHDS staff used to do it but position was eliminated many years ago. It was constant council concern at that time that having the DMHMRSAS be the council’s administrator could be an impediment to council’s independence. So resolution of that ultimately was that creation of a portion of these dollars for fiscal agent. This is how MHAV assumed role as fiscal agent.

Voice VOTE: Carried

*NOTE: Discussion of how to use funds and resources with greater efficacy was raised and group decided that Strategic Planning and Budget Committee establishments are key to this process, as well as clarification of MHPC vision moving forward in this difficult time of budget and resource constraints.

→TOPICS AND ISSUES RAISED: DISCUSSED, OFFERED FOR POSSIBLE VOTE BY COUNCIL IN FUTURE (and meriting further discussion at a later meeting, per group approval of future agendas)

- 1) Standing Agenda – Proposed by Becky Sterling, new MHPC President
- 2) Meeting Format – Use of Time Blocks, Draft Public Comment Form Draft, Membership Information Statement, Subcommittee Meeting Frequency and Reports, etc.
- 3) Number of Council Meetings Per Year – Alteration or keep the same
- 4) Meeting Format – Consideration of Altering Start/Stop Time from 10 am – 3 pm TO 11 am – 4 pm.
- 5) Meeting Location: (Member reminded Council that this was already voted upon/decided at last meeting so not necessary for re-review and new vote today (voted to alternate locations between Charlottesville and Richmond, schedule and locations already scheduled/posted in public domain for quite some time now).

*NOTE: Jo-Amrah McElroy stated strongly that Council needs to know that meeting space is at a premium and often being booked in Richmond 12 – 18 months IN ADVANCE so is easier to cancel meetings (if additional approved by group) rather than add meetings later.

Lunch Break

Public Comment: SHERRY ROSE – Trauma survivor, domestic violence survivor, parent and person and someone w/psychiatric disability.” What ails me does not define me so please hear that. I am a person.” Shared need for collaboration and communication for public to better understand what is needed.

This has been ongoing issue. She states she represents people with opinions but people that are living on streets in woods. These people who aren't heard. Need to work together. Do believe we can do that.

Jim Martinez (DMHMRSAS) spoke on Dept. reorganization and name change. Changes may continue and will be as balanced as possible to ensure efficient use of further limited resources. Goal is to be able to function in way that moves recovery forward, building a stronger and more integrated central office and partner groups.

Other topics shared on by Jim included the following:

1) **Results of NAMI State Report**

Jim reported VA's current grade was assessed as "C," up from a "D" ("roughly average when compared to other states" (no state was assessed at "A" level, 6 got "B," 18 got "C.")

2) **Update - Southwest Virginia Child/Adolescent facility** slated for closing was restored. NAMI website contains more details.

3) **Legislation Updates** - Supported heavily. Thanks to Bonnie Neighbor (VOCAL), for her involvement. Among the major legislation of interest to the Council.....

- ***Advance Directive legislation*** proposed by Commission on Mental Health Law Reform was passed. Though not focused on mental health per se, the new statutes will allow an "instructional" advance directive for persons not in "end of life" situations, which would allow a psychiatric advance directive.
- ***Legislation passed allowing others besides police/sheriffs to transport persons in the involuntary admission process.***
- ***Mandatory Outpatient Treatment*** procedures for juveniles were enacted.
- ***Department name change bill passed*** (to be Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services)

4) Web Site CSB and State Facility Accountability Measures To Be Posted:

Jim summarized (see draft 2-27-09 handout) and stated that this information to be posted online in public domain includes data already currently collected but now need to be posted. Jim stated that this is an important effort, a starting point, and invited all to review, send input either individually to help with this extremely big step for our system because it is a sensitive area for some good reasons and some not so good.

Jim stated, "I think the only way that we can hold ourselves accountable is if we willing to share how we are doing...and while these may not be the best or only means, the effort is certainly a starting point for dialogue - to sharpen our focus on what's important. Encouraged to take a close look at these and send feedback either individually or via your organization. Please disseminate this widely too so we can get a lot of input for all of our future well-being since a lot of people look at this."

2) DVD for PSA on Mental Health Wellness - GOOD NEWS:

Jim shared that the Dept. has designated \$50,000 to produce a DVD in cooperation with the VA Film Office that is especially key in light of staffing reductions and our desire to continuing moving forward with our work. Project is in beginning planning stages. Question of why just DVD instead of PSA Campaign? Funding considerations was the answer. Vicki, Becky, Irene, Anne, several other members suggested strongly using medium to include children/adolescents, not just adults, with group leaning toward idea of using "lifecycle" approach – kids/young adults in transition to adulthood – as valuable opportunity to raise public awareness, as opposed to just focusing on adults/VA Tech. situation.

George Banks, Evaluator in Office of Mental Health spoke on assessment/assimilation of data from yearly block grants, beginning by stating that it is important that we be guided by the fact that when we look at data/numbers:

**Statistics = Humans, their lives, their stories.* Data assessment helps us in many ways. Are we asking right questions? What does all of this mean? How can we be more effective?

George's handout represents a summary of report due to funding providers by December that is underway. Additional information is on the website, and there is an enormous amount of data (~21 large tables worth), that also goes into reports. The criteria points listed are state-selected, and reports are for the previous fiscal year (so handout is for previous year's grant work), and this is just a thumbnail sketch of a very complex process of collecting data, cleaning it up (often clean data not received until late September), and the purpose of the summary presentation today is about data and how it impacts what we do. What it comes

down to is this: To obtain support for our services, we have to show what happened, what was done with funding, key results.

George advised the Council that the reporting reflects HOW WE DID BASED UPON OUR PROJECTED GOALS, not results of raw data. George is available to be contacted for further information and details; he encouraged all to look at report and website information available, indicating he would be glad to answer questions.

Becky Sterling asked the group about closing the meeting, and all agreed. *Many thanked Becky for her hard work preparing for the meeting (e.g., the standing agenda and proposals), and for her positive work chairing a very news- and topic-rich meeting, as her first time.*