

ERIE COUNTY MENTAL HYGIENE COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD MINUTES

October 3, 2024

COMMUNITY

SERVICES BOARD: Joan Baizer, Victoria Brooks, Kathryne Coric, Max Donatelli, Emma Fabian, Maya Hu Morabito, Pastor George Nicholas, Stephanie Orlando, Elizabeth Smith, Charles Syms, Erica Westphal

MENTAL HEALTH

DEPARTMENT: Mark O'Brien, John Grieco, Shannon Stocker

EXCUSED: Terry Alford, Daniel Antonius, Sharon Cavanaugh, BJ Stasio

Approval of Minutes:

- September CSB Minutes were approved.

MH Commissioner Updates:

- Mark will not be at November's meeting, there is no December meeting, and January will be Mark's last meeting before he retires on January 31st. His expectation is that his position will be posted early to mid-November. John will be interim Commissioner.
- Reminder that Jed Wolkenbreit will do a training for the CSB at the November meeting, which is scheduled for 1 ½ hours long. Jed is on the Council for the Conference of Local Mental Hygiene Directors and does trainings for the Directors of Community Services (DCSs). Please plan to attend since he is retiring, and this will be the last opportunity for this invaluable training.
- OMH has announced the formation of its Hospital Discharge Connection Team. This is something the Governor put out and is headed by the Regional Office's Amanda Rusch, who is a Compliance Specialist out of the Field Office. It is basically to assist in connections for people coming out of the hospital. This team will help make sure that certain people follow them into the community, conceivably up to a year, to help re-integrate them back in.
- BestSelf's intensive supportive facility at 430 Niagara St., Best Response, the 23-hour SUD and MH lounge, is scheduled to open in February. All approvals are in, now they can do their RFPs, and they are renovating the building.
- DePaul's 150 PanAm apartments near Delaware and Hertle is projected to open around the same time. There are some set aside for SUD, MH, and general population / low income. DePaul's McKinley Square SRO apartments on Main St. in Buffalo is going to be knocked down and they have been awarded by the state for up to 80 new beds.
- We're working with OMH, ECMC, and BPC about the violence that has been in some of the hospitals (a nurse got a broken nose, a doctor was assaulted, and doctors were assaulted at ECMC). You can't always write it off to the person being psychotic, because sometimes it is very deliberate. It is very upsetting not only to other patients, but to staff. The difficulty is there are times that a police response is indicated, even if you are in the hospital. One of the things we are involved with, along with the Field Office, is working with the DA's office. In this one case, it was a felony assault, the judge looked at it as a non-qualifying offense and released them right back to BPC. That shouldn't happen, but it has happened before.
- If you haven't heard, Karen Rybicki has been appointed as the new full-time permanent DSS Commissioner. She was the First Deputy Commissioner. That is a great appointment, and it

bodes very well for cooperation with the Mental Health Dept. There is a lot of interchange between MH and DSS. She is a long-time employee and very user-friendly.

- Mark shared a sneak peek at training information that is still in development. There is a bigger picture going on that the Patrick Lee Foundation is helping with funds, the County Executive is involved, the Sheriff's Office, etc. They are all looking at the crisis continuum and are basically taking the work we started and looking at the bigger picture. This is the work the core group has been working on for about a year and a half. Mark asked Latonya Diggs to take over for him as the Chair because it is hard to participate if you are facilitating. She does a magnificent job putting information together. The purpose of the Triage Tool is to give professional, peer, and the whole provider community options when people have various levels of crisis - everything from very low-level distress up to you really have to go see them. We will do some public awareness campaigning with the community-level information at a later point. We are looking for the systems to have the Triage Tool as an operational playbook. It is not prescriptive, but it gives them options. We are getting to the point where we are going to send it to our providers for any comments.

Chairperson Update:

- 1115 Waiver: WNY Integrated Care Collaborative (WNYICC) has received their contract as of September 6th. It is fully executed, and we've been working to establish the governance committee, which has about 31 seats of people that have already signed up and agreed to participate, including 2 seats for Medicaid members. We are also forming a Community Advisory Council that will have Medicaid members and family members on it. Applications are circulating now. The goal is to have 20 people representing diverse populations from all 4 counties. If anyone needs the application, reach out to Stephanie or look on the WNYICC website. They've been hiring staff and meeting with different MCO's in terms of getting ready to contract for billing for the social care network. We are waiting for the state to come out with a contract template for that. The state also put out a draft fee schedule. WNYICC also started to use Find Help, which is the same platform that Value Network uses and that the Finger Lakes Region will be using. We are looking at sizes of organizations and want to make sure that smaller non-profits of under \$5M budgets have a good opportunity to receive those capacity building funds.
- SANYS (Self-Advocacy Association of NYS) and the Center for Self-Advocacy are having their 3rd Annual Health Care Summit at the Jacob's School of Medicine on October 17th. Stephanie will be participating on a panel talking about dual diagnosis. If you have any information you would like her to share or if you would like to be involved in the Summit, there is a Resource Fair, and we can reach out to the Center for Self-Advocacy and SANYS who are putting it on.
- We have a discrepancy between our code for the CSB and our charter. In the code, we need to have a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and a Secretary. We don't currently have the proper executive committee we need, so we need to amend our bylaws. To do that, we need to call a special meeting because our annual meeting has already recently occurred. Our November meeting is already packed, and we don't have a meeting in December. There is no real rush, but we need to correct it. We could either schedule another meeting in November, we could schedule a brief meeting between our November and January meetings, or even do this at our January meeting and then hold an election for the position at the meeting after that.
 - o Max suggested a January meeting since there is no rush for it, people's schedules are busy, and everyone will have a chance to get information and understand what this means.
 - o Mark added that the County Charter has to be reviewed and reauthorized every 10 years. He said you could even have a 15-minute Special Meeting before or after the regular meeting.

- Stephanie said once we create this position, we have to fill it through elections. Max has expressed some interest.
- We have to make revisions to the bylaws, vote on those revisions at the Special Meeting to create the position, then hold an election to fill the position. So, we will do this in the January meeting (since no one objected) but get out the information far in advance.
- We are basically creating a 3rd officer position. In other counties, there is a Secretary and Shannon or somebody taking minutes. The Secretary becomes the first reviewer of the minutes. The Secretary becomes an officer for the executive committee if we had one, for whatever those functions are. Also, if the Chair and Vice Chair are not available for a meeting, the Secretary is the next person up.
- Are there any volunteers to be part of drafting this? Max volunteered. We will get out the draft before the January meeting.

Subcommittee Updates:

- MH Subcommittee (Erica):
 - Last meeting was September 9th. Minutes will be sent out.
 - We had Deanna Schaumloeffel, Crisis Response Diversion Coordinator from Crisis Services, give us a quick update on the Crisis Response Diversion.
 - They also had Christine Slocum, the Housing Coordinator for Erie County Single Point of Access, who talked about the spike in people experiencing homelessness.
 - They discussed their Priorities, their committee's diversity, and reducing overdose rates.
 - We are hoping to have Amy Rockwood, Director of Planning and Evaluation for Erie County, at their November meeting to review the dashboard.
 - Next meeting will be November 18th.
- PASS Subcommittee (Elizabeth):
 - Last meeting was September 26th. Minutes and presentation will be sent out.
 - They also discussed getting some data on overdoses. They are going to be inviting Jason Merlin from Erie County Department of Health to give them some actual data on current County overdoses.
 - They had a presentation from Kids Escaping Drugs on Face to Face.
 - Next meeting will be October 24th.
- IDD Subcommittee (Max):
 - Last meeting was September 19th. Minutes will be sent out.
 - They discussed the certified residential options, housing navigators and the need for them, the staffing crisis, and the Front Door training OPWDD has.
 - There will be an Open House at 1021 Broadway next Wednesday from 2-6pm for OPWDD's satellite office.
 - There is a whole person support, which is a provider-led concepts that they have for an alternative to managed care. The Guidehouse put out their report where they said managed care wasn't something they are really looking at or recommending at this point.
 - Next meeting will be November 21st.

Announcements:

- DDAWNY (Developmental Disabilities Alliance of WNY) will be putting on their Erie County Meet the Candidates Day for Western and Finger Lakes next Wednesday, October 16th from 2:00 – 5:00pm at 3108 Man Street. Max will send information out.
- Two weeks ago, Evergreen acquired Towne Restaurant at 186 Allen Street at the corner of Elmwood and Allen. Our goal is to extend pharmacy and dental services there.

Next Meeting:

- Thursday, November 7, 2024, from 9:00-10:30am (note: 1 ½ hours long, not 1 hour).
- January we will have both the Special Meeting for the bylaws change and have Amy come to discuss progress with the dashboard and next steps with the local services plan.
- If there are any topics that people want to see to help inform, especially about the development of the local services plan, please reach out and let Stephanie know.