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MINUTES of April 13, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andy Bateman, Jacki Block, Carrie Brown, Karen Conrad, Carole Cottrill, Laura Esslinger, Dorothy Glancy, Erica Koe-Krompecher, Patty Lawrence, Geoff Schwerzeler, Greg Varner

MEMBERS EXCUSED: John Kelly, Kelley Costello

MEMBERS UNEXCUSED: Katie Shepherd

ASSOCIATE MEMBER: Richard Chaney

GUESTS PRESENT: Patty Hassel, Ed Humphrey

STAFF PRESENT: Erica Pursley, Karen Scherra, Lee Ann Watson

1. The meeting was conducted on video conference via Zoom due to the State of Ohio “Shelter at Home” order and the changes in the Open Meetings regulations due to the coronavirus. Chairperson Karen Conrad welcomed the Board members and the meeting proceeded.
2. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the Agenda for the April 13, 2020 Board meeting. (Motion-Dorothy Glancy, second-Patty Lawrence).
3. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2020 Board of Directors’ meeting. (Motion-Andy Batemen, second-Dorothy Glancy).
4. Financial Report: No Finance Committee meeting was held prior to the Board meeting. Erica Pursley, Board Fiscal Officer, provided an update on the Board’s current financial situation.

Board Finances

As of 4/10/2020: Total Income – \$6,949,747, (77.8%); Expenses – \$5,795,087, (64.4%)

The Board is currently waiting on 4th Quarter disbursements from OMHAS. Block Grant funding should be pushed out in the near future, but GRF dollars may be delayed depending on approved budget reductions requested by the Governor due to COVID-19. We don’t know yet if there will be a cut from OMHAS impacting the 4th Quarter funds. OMHAS has asked Boards to do all we can to address needs which are starting to increase and to provide funds to contract agencies as necessary, but without information on our funding.

Levy Dollars

Erica requested information from the Auditor’s Office on projections for the second half collections of property taxes and any impact on our levy funding. Other boards have been told

that their levy revenue will decrease for this year due to collections being down with so many people out of work. All our estimates have been done at a macro level; there are too many variables at the entity and levy level. Keeping in mind that roughly 48% of the second half bills will be paid through an escrow agreement and these accounts typically have already collected enough money to cover the second half bills; our real concern is with the other 52%. Due to the timing of the second half billing during the COVID-19 pandemic and thus the lack of cash flow for most of our citizens due to jobs lost or being furloughed, at this time we anticipate an increase in delinquencies similar to those during the previous recession periods. So, we are “guess-ta-mating” a delinquency rate of 4% to 5% for our tax year 2019 second half collections.

Collaborative Dollars

The Board has MH Crisis Stabilization dollars available in the amount of \$26,734.27 (FY19 Carryover & FY20) and will utilize the funds to help offset CFI Crisis Services costs.

The Board has SUD Crisis Stabilization/Withdrawal Management dollars available in the amount of \$340,047 and will utilize the funds for any of these services provided by Mercy Hospital Clermont and for CRC services.

Emergency Rules Expand Access to Behavioral Health Services Using Telehealth

OMHAS & the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM), in partnership with the Governor’s Office, have developed emergency rules to expand telehealth options for Ohioans and their providers. Medicaid at the federal level has also allowed these services to be paid with Medicaid funds. These rules will relax regulations so that more people can be served safely in their homes rather than needing to travel to addiction and mental health treatment centers. This is a regulatory change to help reduce risk of exposure to COVID-19 for patients, their families, and our behavioral health workforce.

The Board pays non-Medicaid services using the Medicaid service codes and rates. GOSH will be mirroring the Medicaid process in an effort to make billing the new telehealth services easier for the providers. This includes the same service codes approved for telehealth and use of the GT modifier. The date for when the new telehealth changes will go into effect is still unknown. This was mentioned in last Wednesday’s ODM webinar. Until we know the exact effective date, we recommend providers continued to follow the MITS-BITS guidance from 3/20. This document recommends holding the claims or billing the claim using the current BH Redesign documentation.

Bureau of Workman’s Compensation Refund

The Board will be receiving a refund from the Ohio BWC for CY2018 that will total approximately \$5,000.

5. Clinical Update: Lee Ann Watson, Board Associate Director, provided a clinical update. All the contract agencies, except Hope Community Center, are still open and providing services. The agencies are still taking new clients. If clients are coming to the agencies, they are required to have their temperature taken at the door before entering. Clients are also asked to remain in their cars in the parking lot until they are called in for their appointment time. The agencies are triaging the delivery of services, and based on need, some clients are still being seen in person. Mobile Crisis and Medication Assistance Treatment are still being provided face to face. Based on intensity of need, case management services at GCB are also being provided face to face. The Quick Response Teams (QRT) are still providing outreach, but not in person. The agencies

are providing the majority of services, when appropriate, via telehealth (phone or computer). Due to Coronavirus, no new admissions are being accepted into the GCB Recovery Houses. Until the end of last week, the agencies were reporting that there was no increase in need for services, except referrals for children coming to Child Focus, primarily through teachers. At the end of last week, we began to see an increase in Mobile Crisis runs, mental health hospitalizations and reported overdoses. Lee Ann mentioned that the Clermont County Suicide Prevention Coalition is working on suicide prevention messaging to combat the possible increase in suicide risk as a result of the Ohio “Stay at Home” order and the psychological and financial impact that might have on our residents.

Lee Ann Watson reported that access to personal protective equipment, or PPE (masks, gloves, gowns, cleaning supplies, and hand sanitizer), continues to be scarce. The Board has located small amounts of masks, gloves, cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer and has delivered those items to the agencies. The need for these items is still great. Unfortunately, behavioral health is not designated as “healthcare” which is the top priority for PPE and is therefore not able to access PPE from many sources.

6. Update on Local/State Impact of Coronavirus Pandemic: Karen Scherra provided an update on the local and state impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Karen, Lee Ann, and Erica are working from home, and Cindy is not working, using sick time since her position is mainly connected to in-office tasks. We will bring Cindy back when we need to re-open the office and for any specific work for which she can provide assistance.

Karen provided an explanation of activities in which Board staff are participating due to the coronavirus, such as daily EMA calls, OMHAS and OACBHA calls several times a week, listening to the Governor’s daily press conferences, and regular and newly needed meetings via Zoom and other platforms. The daily EMA calls involve about 50-60 people and serve as a clearinghouse for vital information; Karen can also provide information on how our agencies are dealing with the pandemic and how to access services. The calls with OMHAS and OACBHA provide opportunities to collectively discuss what is happening in the field and to get assistance with , and solutions for, issues arising and share how others are addressing the “new normal” of service delivery.

Board staff also discussed what Board and agency staff are doing to get information out about services being available and how to contact agencies and providing information on websites and social media on coping with the stresses connected to dealing with the coronavirus.

Our agencies have adapted to all the changes very well. We have heard that some agencies in the state are in financial crisis. Our agencies, as well as others, have reported that some clients do not want to meet for long periods of time on telehealth, often due to lack of access, which is impacting billing, as are the unsuccessful attempts to contact clients.

Board staff discussed the continued comments from OMHAS saying that boards should use their funds to cover all needs of the provider agencies. This has been frustrating because we have not been provided much flexibility with our funds, and also Medicaid/Managed Care which funds more services than the boards have not been asked to help or to participate with issues like acquiring/paying for PPE.

Karen Scherra thanked the Board for their willingness to approve at the March meeting her request for the ability to take actions related to the pandemic as needed. This action provided flexibility for Board staff to support our contract agencies as changes were imposed on our system due to the pandemic.

7. After general discussion about the impact of the Coronavirus on services and system operations, the Board considered the following Action Items, which are necessary to allow the funding of telehealth services which were previously not allowed and to provide flexibility with funds and stability to the contract agencies as they adapt services to meet needs under the coronavirus restrictions.

The first action item was the allowance of funding of services provided by phone and video conference in addition to face to face services for the FY2020 POS contracts with GCB/CRC and CFI.

A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the funding of services provided by phone and video conference in addition to face to face services for the FY2020 POS contracts with GCB/CRC and CFI. (Motion-Dorothy Glancy, second-Patty Lawrence).

The next action item was the payment of claims for services provided by phone and video conference for FY2020.

A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the payment of services from the current contract agencies (GCB/CRC and CFI) through GOSH for services provided by phone and video conference using the codes and rates as determined for Medicaid funded services. (Motion-Dorothy Glancy, second-Patty Lawrence).

The third action item was to approve billing of TBS services for CFI prevention staff.

Board staff explained that CFI school-based mental health staff normally bill prevention services not treatment services for the services they provide to schools. They are not providing those services now since the schools are closed. School-based staff have been providing one on one services via telehealth to students. All the staff are qualified to provide TBS.

A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve CFI staff working in school-based services to provide and bill the Board for TBS services. (Motion-Jacki Block, second-Carrie Brown).

The fourth action item was to approve the extension of the FY2020 POS contracts to give agencies assurance that funding will continue even if Board does not know its FY21 funding by July 1st. Patty Lawrence asked if the Board receives a cut, then what happen? Staff responded that the Board's free reserves would be used to cover additional expenses.

A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the extension of FY2020 POS contracts for three (3) months, with a new ending date of September 30, 2020, with the option to enter into FY2021 POS contracts sooner if resolution of the Coronavirus pandemic occurs before October 1st and there is sufficient information to permit a new contract to be developed and approved. (Motion-Dorothy Glancy, second-Jacki Block).

The fifth action item was to grant permission for the Executive Director to provide 1/12 payments to the contract agencies if needed.

OMHAS been stating Boards should push out funding to providers to cover unanticipated costs. Board staff is not comfortable doing this because accountability for how the funds are used is a necessity. But staff also recognize the need to help agencies that are not able to provide as much services due to pandemic and thus billings and payments could decrease significantly.

A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the Board's Executive Director to provide payment to the contract agencies on a 1/12 per month basis rather than paying through claims should there be a state requirement for such payment or issues with claims processing that cause an agency financial risk. (Motion- Laura Esslinger, second- Dorothy Glancy).

The sixth action item was to approve the use of Board funding to acquire personal protective equipment (PPE) and other supplies as needed.

Board staff have already been able to obtain some PPE, but more is needed. CFI had to get laptops for many staff. Agencies are keeping lists of what need is needed. Boards have been told by OMHAS that we can use our crisis flex dollars for PPE purchases. Another concern is whether we will need a large quantity of masks for clients and staff going forward after the stay at home order is lifted if PPE is still needed/mandated.

A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the Board's Executive Director's use of Board funding to pay for acquiring personal protective equipment (PPE) and other supplies needed by contract agencies to provide services during the pandemic. (Motion- Laura Esslinger, second- Patty Lawrence).

8. Discussion Items: The first discussion item was the Federal Linkage Grant. Lee Ann Watson explained that Board staff are working on a Department of Justice grant to expand the current Linkage project in the County jail. The Department of Justice grant will be similar to the grant previously submitted to, but not funded by, the FORE Foundation. Part of the requirements of the application to the Department of Justice is that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is in place between the grantee (Board) and the County jail. Karen Scherra explained that if the grant is awarded, the Board members will need to approve that MOU.

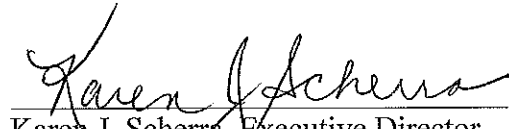
The second discussion item was Mental Health Needs During and After Pandemic. Board staff discussed several of the areas of concern moving forward, such as the lack of ongoing school-based services due to school closures, leading to an increase in needs when schools open, and the current and projected Suicide and OD increases and the impact on prevention and treatment services. Board staff explained to the Board members that Board staff was keeping in contact with agency staff and will be planning for current and future service needs while advocating to the state about fiscal needs to address those needs.

The third discussion item was the Levy. We have not received any response from the County Commissioners regarding our request, submitted in January, to place a .75 mil levy renewal on the ballot in November 2020. Karen Scherra talked to Tom Egle, the County Commissioner, about the levy. He stated that there was no problem with the request, but that the priority was obviously on other issues. He indicated that we should hear something about our request sometime in May.

The fourth discussion item was the Board 's May Meeting. After discussion, the Board members agreed that if a May meeting was needed to address essential business, we would meet via Zoom. The postponement of the Board Retreat was also discussed. Staff indicated that we may want to have a retreat later in the year later to discuss funding and budget issues and the impact on service delivery.

9. Comments from Public Attendees: Commissioner Ed Humphrey commented by stating "Keep up the Good Work".
10. Adjournment: There being no further business, a motion was made, and unanimously approved, to adjourn the April 13, 2020 Board of Directors meeting. (Motion-Jacki Block, second-Dorothy Glancy).


Karen Conrad, Chairperson


Karen J. Scherra, Executive Director