



2337 Clermont Center Drive • Batavia, Ohio 45103

TELEPHONE: (513) 732-5400 FAX: (513) 732-5414 TTY: 1-800-750-0750

WEBSITE: [www.ccmhrb.org](http://www.ccmhrb.org) CRISIS HOTLINE: (513) 528-SAVE (7283)

### MINUTES of February 8, 2021

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

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Kelley Costello, John Kelly

**MEMBERS UNEXCUSED:** Katie Shepherd

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER PRESENT:** Richard Chaney

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Raymond Bailey, Heather Cokl, Alicia Fine, Amy Foley, Susan Graham, Patty Hassel, Pamela Lindeman, Laura Stith

**STAFF PRESENT:** Cindy Knoblauch, 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 February 8, 2021 Board meeting. (Motion-Dorothy Glancy, second-Greg Varner).
3. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2021 Board of Directors’ meeting. (Motion-Greg Varner, second-Carrie Brown).
4. Executive Director’s Report: Executive Director Karen Scherra shared a few highlights from her report. Regarding Hospital Update/Utilization, during January, there were no civil clients hospitalized, and a high of 14 and a low of 12 forensic clients. Karen added that training for the Judges on use of the state hospital is currently on hold due to COVID-19.

Regarding the Boards’ state association, OACBHA, Karen stated that the meetings with Legislators for OACBHA’s virtual Legislative Week occurred at the end of January/beginning of February. The meeting with Senator Johnson included the Directors of the boards in Adams, Lawrence, Scioto, and Brown Counties, along with Karen and two Board members, Patty Lawrence and Greg Varner. The Brown County Board Director and Karen met with Representative Bird, and Andy Bateman and Karen met with Representative Schmidt. Karen said the discussions with the Legislators went well overall, and all the Legislators seemed to understand the need for behavioral health services and for continued funding. On a side note,

Karen said she also participated in the Clermont Chamber of Commerce's Legislative meeting, held via Zoom, but there was not much mention of behavioral health since the meeting was geared toward business leaders. Senator Johnson did mention the opioid epidemic, but his focus was advocating for child welfare needs which have increased.

Regarding Opioids/Drug Issues, Karen said researchers think they may have found the first medication treatment for methamphetamine addiction, a significant step toward stemming the increase in overdose deaths seen in recent years. A study published in The New England Journal of Medicine found that a combination of two medications may be a safe and effective treatment for adults with moderate or severe methamphetamine use disorder. Karen also said that national fatal drug overdoses have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, Clermont County's overdose numbers are down.

Regarding OMHAS related activities, Karen Scherra said she has continued to participate in all ENGAGE Team and Board Representatives meetings. Karen said there is also a monthly local Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) meeting led by Child Focus staff to discuss how the program is going and any changes that may be happening. The group is beginning discussions on sustaining the MRSS program under Mobile Crisis when the grant ends. MRSS is supposed to become a Medicaid billable service, including the initial contact, when the OhioRISE program is implemented in January 2022. The Department of Medicaid has an OhioRISE Advisory Board, along with four sub-committees. One is focused on MRSS, and both Cathy Krieg from CFI and Karen are on that committee; they hope to provide significant input to the development of the MRSS rules and funding. Some of the current plans are problematic as they would impact the way Clermont's program operates, so Karen plans to bring those issues up for discussion. One issue is the implementation of a statewide MRSS call center. We use the same crisis hotline in Clermont for all crisis calls, and it would be confusing to families, law enforcement, schools, and others to have to call a separate number to access MRSS.

Karen also briefly mentioned some other OMHAS activities. Board and Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services (GCB) staff worked together to apply for additional funds for Clermont's Linkage program through a SAMHSA grant. The team was notified in late January that the grant was approved. They are now waiting for specifics from OMHAS regarding the funds and implementation. Karen also stated that the Board's Community Plan submission was approved by OMHAS in January, with no questions or requests for additional information. Karen also said that State capital funds, which were on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, have been released and OMHAS has requested that Boards submit plans for FY 21-22 and 23-24. Karen said Board staff are in discussions with the provider agencies about proposed projects. On February 2, Karen met with a couple who are trying to open recovery houses in Clermont to determine where they are in their process. Clermont's capital plan priorities continue to be recovery housing and crisis stabilization, along with potential additional office space for CRC/GCB and Child Focus.

Karen said she will be meeting with Municipal Court on February 19 about the indigent driver alcohol treatment (IDAT) funds for FY21, as well as the Probation grant funds previously provided to the Board to offset costs of programs focused on Municipal Court clients involved with Clermont Recovery Center (CRC)/GCB. Karen added that Judge Kramig is investigating

the possibility of starting a Mental Health Court in Clermont County. Karen said there is a group being formed to discuss the requirements to implement such a court in Clermont.

As part of her COVID-19 related updates, Karen mentioned that while OACBHA did not hold its usual in-person Legislative Day this year due to COVID-19, the awards usually given out during that event were still provided. The President's Award was given to the state Association of Ohio Health Commissioners for their leadership and dedication throughout the pandemic. Each Board was also provided with a certificate for the local Health Commissioners. Clermont's Health Commissioner and recipient of that certificate is Julianne Nesbit, and Karen will present her with the certificate in the near future.

Karen also mentioned some federal/legislative activities from her report. Senator Rob Portman will not be seeking a third term in the U.S. Senate in 2022. He has been a huge advocate for behavioral health. Karen also mentioned that the Biden Administration continues to issue executive orders and directives that significantly impact federal and state basic needs assistance programs. One of those orders is the extension of the Public Health Emergency (PHE) through 2021. This move will provide much needed stability and will help ensure states can continue providing vulnerable populations with life-saving care at a time when they need it most. Another legislative item was funding for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs), which have become the new model for behavioral health services. More than 220 CCBHCs are operating in 33 states, with more on the way thanks to Congress' recent allocation of \$850 million for CCBHCs. CCBHCs make it possible for people to receive timely and high-quality behavioral health treatment. The CCBHCs provide both behavioral health services (mental health and substance use disorder treatment) and primary care screening and monitoring. Through federal grant funding, GCB is operating a CCBHC in Clermont County. The last legislative activity Karen mentioned was a newly created Ohio House committee on Behavioral Health. Previously, issues regarding behavioral health were included in the Health Committee, but with that committee focused so much on COVID-19, it was determined that a separate committee to address mental health and addiction needs was warranted. This will be a positive in advocating during the state budget process and when other legislation is being considered.

Karen wrapped up by mentioning the articles attached to her report. The first article was titled "Suicide in Cincinnati Region was Near or at 5-year Low in 2020 Despite COVID-19 Pandemic". The next article was titled "New Combination Drug Therapy Offers Hope Against Methamphetamine Addiction". The final article was issued by OACBHA and highlighted the SFY 2022-2023 priorities for advancing community mental health and addiction services.

5. Committee Reports: The Finance Committee met prior to the February 8, 2021 Board meeting. Finance Committee Chairperson Jacki Block reported. Regarding the County's accounting system, Munis, Jacki stated that after six weeks, the system is back in operation. Board fiscal staff have not been able to complete reporting during this time period. Fiscal Officer Erica Pursley added that she will be able to provide financial profit and loss statements and charts to the Board members at the next Board meeting.

Jacki also reported on the FY 2020 agency audit reports. The Board's provider agencies are all required to submit an annual audit report. Jacki said all the SFY 20 reports have been submitted, with no findings reported.

Jacki discussed the mid-year budget updates. Board staff met with the provider agencies for a mid-year budget review. Thus far, it is not anticipated that any of the agencies will overspend their contracts. Clermont Recovery Center (CRC), a division of GCB, currently has a higher than usual Medicaid penetration rate due to COVID-19, but CRC expects the Medicaid rate will decrease over the next six months. GCB reported currently being over budget by \$11,000 but does not expect to overspend its contract by the end of FY21. Child Focus reported being underspent by \$108,000 in prevention services/school based mental health services due to COVID-19 restrictions in the schools. Hope Community Center (HCC) reported possibly being able to add to its reserves through the help of several grants. However, many of those grants will soon be ending and HCC will need to reassess its financial situation. Karen stated that we could see a surge in need for services as a result of COVID-19. With no overages predicted for FY21, additional funding could be available for FY22 to assist with meeting the increased need for services.

Finally, Jacki discussed Board staff salary actions. The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved a county-wide salary increase for 2.5%. Jacki advised the full Board that the Finance Committee is in favor of extending this salary increase to Board staff. The increase will be an additional \$6,076 in expenditures. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the Board staff salary action of a 2.5% increase. (Motion-Jacki Block, second-Patty Lawrence).

6. Action Items: The first action item was the FY 21-22 POS Addendum for SOR 2.0 Funding to Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services (GCB). The Board has received notice of the SOR 2.0 funding award for FFY2021. Some of the funds will be allocated to the County for the operation of the women's CASC program. The majority of the remaining funds are being allocated to CRC/GCB in the amount of \$881,896 to be spent for the following services: peer support, nursing and prescriber services, recovery housing costs including rental subsidies, contingency management training, supplies and indirect costs.

Since these funds are not included in GCB's POS contract, there needs to be an addendum to the contract which spells out the amount and purpose of the funds. These are federal funds, with a grant period of 10/1/20-9/30/21, which crosses the Board's fiscal year. In order to avoid having to split the funds between two fiscal years and then reconciling the funds twice, this addendum will include both fiscal years, with the reconciliation of the funds occurring before the end of CY2021. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the FY21-22 POS Addendum for SOR 2.0 Funding to GCB and to authorize the Executive Director to sign the Addendum on behalf of the Board. (Motion-Jacki Block, second-Greg Varner).

The second and final action item was the Addition of an Associate Member to the Board. According to our bylaws, the Board can appoint an Associate Board Member to be part of the Board of Directors. An Associate Board Member cannot vote on any motion before the Board but can attend and participate in Board meetings and trainings and receive all the materials

provided to members. This opportunity was designed in part for consumers who might want to be a Board member but are concerned about required attendance at the meetings.

Raymond (Ray) Bailey, who previously was an Associate Board Member, has expressed interest in again serving on the Board in this capacity. During Ray's previous stint as Associate Board Member, he was an active member of the Board and shared his thoughts about Board actions. Ray addressed the Board and said he offers a unique perspective and has been in mental health care since he was in his twenties. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the addition of Raymond Bailey as an Associate Board member to the Board of Directors. (Motion-Patty Lawrence, second-Andy Bateman). Board Chairperson Karen Conrad welcomed Ray aboard and said he will be a valuable asset.

7. Discussion Items: The first discussion item was the SOR 2.0 Funds Update. Karen Scherra said the Board received its SOR 2.0 allocation in the amount of \$1,174,041. The allocation is approximately \$50,000 less than the requested amount. The original proposal also included an allowable \$75,000 for renovation of recovery housing, but OMHAS is now stating that the \$75,000 amount will not be an additional allotment and therefore will not be available to cover additional services discussed at the January Board meeting. We were able to add some GCB staffing. Karen said the SOR 2.0 funds will allow for the continuation and expansion of programs in Clermont such as the CASC program. The grant period started October 1, 2020 and goes through September 30, 2021. Karen said hopefully there will be a year two and that carryover will be allowed.

The second discussion item was the Meetings with Legislators for OACBHA's Legislative Week. Karen Scherra stated that she had covered that item earlier in the agenda during her Executive Director's report.

The third discussion item was the Board In-Service Training and the Board Retreat 2021. Office Manager Cindy Knoblauch advised the Board of the status of setting the dates for the Board in-service training and the 2021 Board retreat. Based on Board member feedback, the in-service training will take place February 24 at 6:30 pm via Zoom. The training is expected to be approximately 1.5 hours long. Based on Board member feedback, the retreat will take place on March 13<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and will be in-person at the Carter Center Lecture Hall at 4286 Wuebold Lane, Cincinnati, Ohio. Breakfast, lunch, and refreshments will be provided by Board staff. There will also be a Zoom link established for Board members to attend the retreat remotely if they prefer. Pamela Lindeman, CEO of Child Focus, is allowing the Board to utilize the Carter Center Lecture Hall and its audio/video equipment for the event, and the space is big enough for social distancing. Karen Scherra reminded the Board there will still be a March Board meeting on March 8 at the regular time, but the meeting will be brief.

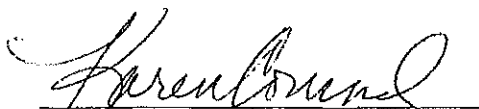
The fourth and final discussion item was the Governor's FY 22-23 State Budget. Karen Scherra advised the Board members that she believed it would be helpful for them to directly hear OMHAS discuss the FY22-23 budget. Board staff played a video that was part of a webinar lead by OMHAS Director Lori Criss in which she gives an overview of Governor Mike DeWine's budget priorities for SFY 2022-2023 and the specifics of the OMHAS allocation. A link to the video can be found at <https://mha.ohio.gov/About-Us/About-OhioMHAS/Budget-Bills-and-Legislation>.

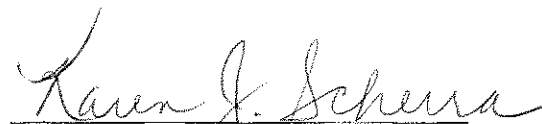
8. Agency Directors' Reports: Laura Stith of Child Focus said her report stands. Laura added that Child Focus's report was missing some data due to some recent IT issues within her agency. Laura advised the Board members that next month's report will include that missing data. Laura also said that 67% of Child Focus staff have received or are scheduled to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Laura also gave an update on the Mobile Crisis hotline. January was a record month for the hotline with 369 calls. Laura said calls and responders during the hotline's expansion hours are also up. Laura closed by saying she is excited to have Child Focus staff member Cathy Krieg as part of the committee for the OhioRISE program. Laura said Cathy, along with Karen Scherra, will be great representation for Clermont County.

Alicia Fine of Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services (GCB)/Clermont Recovery Center (CRC), a division of GCB said her report stands. Alicia mentioned that the Board meeting packet included a very detailed mid-year report on GCB's prevention programs and invited Board members to review it if interested. Alicia also gave an update on COVID-19 related activities at GCB. She said GCB continues in its efforts to slow the spread of the virus through management and containment strategies. Alicia said it has been a challenge to maintain safe strategies while still making sure clients have access to services and are receiving the level of care they need. Alicia said 66% of GCB staff have accepted the COVID-19 vaccine. Unfortunately, GCB has been met with some resistance in getting access to the second dose. As far as programming, Alicia said GCB's CCBHC currently has 224 clients enrolled. Alicia also said GCB has 1,654 clients enrolled in its Care Management Program.

Amy Foley of Hope Community Center (HCC) said her report stands. Amy added that HCC is open on Tuesdays from 10am-12pm for in-person peer groups. Transportation for HCC clients has not been available for two weeks, but Amy is currently working with Clermont Transportation Connection (CTC) to restart the transportation. Amy also said that HCC's Parent Support Partners (PSPs) are meeting with clients in a hybrid fashion, both face-to-face and by Zoom. Each PSP has a full caseload, serving 15-17 families. Amy said HCC has some grants that will be ending soon, and she is concerned this may impact the PSP program. Amy closed by saying HCC did not make the list for the first round of COVID-19 vaccines.

9. Comments from Public Attendees: There were no public attendees at the February 8, 2021 Board of Directors' meeting.
10. Adjournment: There being no further business, a motion was made, and unanimously approved, to adjourn the February 8, 2021 Board of Directors meeting. (Motion-Dorothy Glancy, second-Greg Varner).

  
Karen Conrad, Chairperson

  
Karen J. Scherra, Executive Director