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### MINUTES of July 13, 2020

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

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Kelley Costello, Carole Cottrill, Laura Esslinger,

**MEMBERS UNEXCUSED:** Katie Shepherd

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER PRESENT:** Richard Chaney

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Tammy Brewer, Susan Graham, Alicia Fine, Patty Hassel, Pamela Lindeman, Heather Smith

**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 July 13, 2020 Board meeting. (Motion-Dorothy Glancy, second-Geoff Schwerzler).
3. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2020 Board of Directors’ meeting. (Motion-Greg Varner, second-Dorothy Glancy).
4. Executive Director’s Report: Executive Director Karen Scherra shared a few highlights from her report. Karen said there have been several calls and zoom meetings pertaining to recent lawsuits filed against several Boards. Karen said she would discuss the lawsuits later in the agenda.

Karen has been asked to participate in the newly created OACBHA Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council, which was developed as a follow-up to the statement on racism which the OACBHA membership approved last month. The primary goal of the Council is to develop and implement a strategic plan for supporting and working with Boards and communities to address racism and develop strategies to improve health equity and inclusion.

Karen said Lee Ann Watson had an interview with a VISTA applicant, Lauren Lipps, on June 19. The VISTA position is through AmeriCorps and will work with the Board to support expansion of the Opiate Task Force. Lauren is finishing her Master’s in Applied Psychology at the University of Cincinnati and is interested in doing community volunteer work. Lauren became interested in a Vista position after a colleague told her how much she enjoyed the

program. After a second interview on July 1 with the other Board staff, Lee Ann offered the position to Lauren. Her start date will be August 31.

Under OMHAS related activities, Karen said she has been working with Child Focus, Inc. to assist school districts in completing their self-assessments, which is the first step in the process to use the K-12 Prevention funding from OMHAS. Six of the nine districts did the self-assessment by the June 30th deadline. Karen and CFI staff plan to encourage and assist the other three in completing their assessment so as to avoid the districts having to sign a waiver to not participate in the project.

Karen has also been focusing a lot of time on the Emergency COVID-19 grant from OMHAS that was awarded to the Collaborative. As the Lead for the Southwest Collaborative, Karen has a lot of information to communicate to the other Boards, as OMHAS has been working through the leads, not the individual boards. As the lead, Karen has been designated by OMHAS as the Data Coordinator for the project, which involves time-consuming oversight of the forms to be completed and the data to be collected from clients, as well as working with the evaluators from OSU. Karen has also been working with OACBHA staff to get clarification on the rules applicable to this funding from OMHAS. Montgomery County has pulled out of the grant, and the funds allocated to Montgomery are being divided between the other boards. For Clermont, the grant will aid in the expansion of MRSS and mobile crisis into Brown County.

Lee Ann Watson has been reaching out to retired law enforcement officers as potential candidates for a consultant position which is part of the \$40,000 Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) expansion grant. The consultant would contract with the Board and would be responsible for improving policies and procedures followed by CIT trained officers when dealing with civilian mental health situations. The consultant would also work with the different jurisdictions to develop a form for officers to use that will help track mental health calls and possibly pinpoint any high-risk groups. Retired Clermont County Sheriff's Office Corporal Lori Saylor has agreed to take the consultant position. In addition to the above duties, Lori will also assist in training police dispatch on identifying mental health calls, de-escalation training, and protocol for dispatching officers with the Mobile Crisis Team in the event of a mental health emergency. Lee Ann has also contacted the County Police Chief's Association about scheduling a meeting with the Police Chiefs to discuss the CIT expansion project.

Lee Ann Watson met with the Linkage Program Committee on June 16 to review progress on the staff re-entering the jail. Until the beginning of June, the jail was not allowing outside partners to come into the jail. On June 5, GCB started having the Re-entry Case Manager meet with clients in the jail, and the Diagnostician can provide some intakes. Due to space limitations at the jail, the program staff are not yet able to return to seeing inmates as they did prior to COVID-19. During the time when the Re-entry Case Managers were not able to enter the jail, they were providing outreach and case management services to clients of the Linkage program who have been released from jail.

Gov. DeWine recently unveiled the Public Health Advisory Alert System to track the risk levels of COVID-19 on a county-by-county basis. The system has four warning levels based on seven data indicators. Karen Scherra informed the Board members that Clermont is now at the red

level which is the third highest warning level. Karen also mentioned that there are some boards with staff members who have tested positive for COVID-19. A staff member at the Clermont Board may have been exposed and is currently self-quarantining until test results come back.

State rules for allowing telehealth services expire July 19. There has been no word yet if the state is going to continue to allow telehealth services as a billable and allowable service until the end of the year, or permanently.

Regarding the section of the Executive Director's Report on hospital utilization, Board member Karen Conrad asked Karen Scherra if June was the highest bed usage month of the year at the state hospital as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Karen Scherra explained that the reason for the high bed usage was that Judges are ruling that hospitalization is necessary for competency restoration for many court-involved individuals. Several Boards, OACBHA and Summit Behavioral Health are currently developing a training to assist Judges with a protocol for determining when forensic individuals require hospitalization and also to explain the impact hospitalization of a large percentage of forensic individuals is having on creating a shortage of beds for civil clients.

5. Financial Update: Erica Pursley, Board Fiscal Officer, provided a financial update. To date, the Board has received 94.4% of its budgeted FY20 income and has used 78.5% for expenses. Erica explained that June claims are still being processed.

Erica stated that the Board has been notified of the expected FY21 allocations, and if the number does not change, the Board will have \$222,051 less than in FY20. However, the Board has not received all the OMHAS allocations; CTP, community investment funding, and the crisis and withdrawal management funding has not yet been distributed. OMHAS is awaiting information from the boards on the amount of carry over from FY20 for these programs before they release those allocations.

Karen Scherra added there could be additional state cuts later in the year if the amount of collected taxes are less than expected. However, there is the possibility of additional federal funding, through stimulus packages, that has not yet been announced. Karen said she is confident that Governor DeWine is fully aware of the mental health and addiction funding needs and hopes there will be no significant cuts at the state level later in the year.

6. Clinical Services Update: Lee Ann Watson, Board Associate Director, provided an update on clinical services. Lee Ann said that it is "COVID-19 business is as usual" at the agencies and not much has changed since last month. Agencies are still providing a mixture of telehealth and face-to-face services and practicing COVID-19 protocols. GCB, CRC, and CFI have obtained proper PPE from various sources. Masks will especially continue to be a "hot" item as Clermont County is in the COVID-19 "red" level and masks are needed for clients who are seen in person.

Lee Ann said that Outreach and QRT teams restarted face to face QRT outreach in early June. Outreach at Mercy restarted in the middle of June.

GCB, CRC, and CFI are all reporting steady intake numbers and diagnosticians are remaining very busy. The Linkage Program in the jail is once again operating, but not at its usual level due to social distancing guidelines.

The Crisis Hotline and Mobile Crisis Team are still receiving less calls than before COVID-19. However, the level of severity of the calls has increased. Previously, 14% of crisis calls/mobile crisis runs resulted in hospitalization. Now, hospitalization is necessary for 50% of the calls/mobile crisis runs.

Community partners, such as Mercy Clermont and Health Source, are reporting increases in suicidal ideation, opioid overdoses, depression, and alcohol abuse.

Lee Ann Watson reported that the County has the first person on Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) through Probate Court. To date, the process is working well and the client, together with GCB and Lee Ann, meet with the Probate Court Magistrate for a hearing each month to review progress. Three other probate cases are pending approval for AOT.

7. Action Items: The first action item was the FY2021 MOUs with school districts for prevention funds. As discussed in previous meetings, OMHAS provided K-12 Prevention funding to Boards for FY20-21. The funding required that schools participate in a self-assessment process and that Boards review those self-assessments to develop an action plan(s). The plan(s) must be approved by the Board and a community advisory group, which will be Family and Children's First in Clermont, and then submitted to OMHAS for approval.

The arrival of COVID-19 halted the progress in moving the project forward, but 6 of the 9 school districts have completed the self-assessment and the project is moving to the next phase. Karen Scherra has started developing a county-wide prevention plan with staff at Child Focus, Inc. Karen stated that she will share the plan with the Board members once it is completed.

As part of the process, the Board needs to enter an MOU with each school district participating. This MOU will initially be signed individually with Batavia, CNE, Goshen, Milford, West Clermont, and Williamsburg. If those school districts decide quickly to participate and complete the assessment, MOUs will also be signed with Bethel, Felicity/Franklin, and New Richmond. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the FY2021 MOU with the participating schools for the K-12 Prevention Funds and to authorize the Executive Director to sign the MOUs on behalf of the Board. (Motion-Erica Koe-Krompecher, second-Patty Lawrence).

The second action item was the cancellation of the August 2020 Board of Directors meeting. Most years, the Board cancels the scheduled August Board meeting due to vacations and issues with making quorum. Karen Scherra said she does not anticipate any significant issues that will need Board approval in August. Cancelling the August Board meeting should not cause any difficulties, as all the required contracts and agreements were completed and approved by the July meeting. Cancelling the Board meeting also allows for time to begin working on the levy campaign and to have Levy Committee meetings. The next Board meeting would be September

14<sup>th</sup>. A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the cancellation of the August 10, 2020 Board of Directors meeting. (Motion-Jacki Block, second-Dorothy Glancy).

8. Discussion Items: The first discussion item was the levy. Karen Scherra gave her levy presentation to the Clermont Board of County Commissioners (BCC) on June 24<sup>th</sup>. The presentation gave an overview of the Board's financial activities and services. Karen said Tim Dick, Director of the Department of Job and Family Services (DJFS), gave his levy presentation for Children's Protective Services (CPS) on July 8<sup>th</sup>. Tim mentioned the importance of the partnership with the Mental Health and Recovery Board and its work to decrease the opioid overdoses twice in his presentation. Although no approval from the BCC has been given yet, Karen is hopeful she will hear soon, as the August deadline for ballot issues is quickly approaching. Clermont Senior Services, CPS and the Board are all on the same levy cycle.

Karen also informed the Board members that she is participating in the OACBHA Levy Committee, which consists of eight other Boards, including Clermont, with upcoming levies. The next call will be at the end of July and Board member and Levy Committee Chairperson Patty Lawrence will be on the call as well. The call is scheduled to feature levy consultants hired by two of the participating Boards. The call will give the other six Boards the opportunity to hear professional advice and tips for their levy campaigns.

The second discussion item was the new logo. Karen Scherra stated she has yet to hear back from the logo designer representative that she contacted earlier in the year. Karen said it is the same logo designer used by the Clermont Chamber of Commerce and Karen was told to expect a somewhat long timeframe for the process of changing the Board's logo. Karen said she would let the Board know as soon as she had any new information on the progression of updating the logo. It is not expected that the new logo will be developed in time to use for the levy.

The third discussion item was the COVID-19 impact. Karen Scherra said the recent coronavirus pandemic could very well have a long-term impact on behavioral health funding dollars and may increase the number of residents that are in need of services. Karen stated that regardless of the funding impact, the Board must continue to provide services to current and future clients. Karen further mentioned that the schools' decisions on how classes will reconvene in the fall could also impact the system by increasing the number of youth needing services while many of the students may not be in the schools to access assistance. Karen said her goal is to remain flexible and creative with funding. At this point the agencies are stable and seem to be prepared for possible future challenges.

The fourth discussion item was lawsuits. Karen Scherra said there are currently three Ohio mental health and recovery providers with lawsuits against their County boards. Karen said they are mainly multi-county Boards, but more lawsuits are anticipated. The lawsuits pertain to how those Boards are currently contracting and funding their agencies. One of the agencies involved in the suits had lost funding from their Board prior to the legal action. The lawsuits are pushing for all Boards to use the same contract, which Karen believes is not feasible.

Karen Scherra pointed out that this is not the first time an agency has sued a Board. About 10 years ago, the Clark/Greene/Madison Board was sued, and the legal battle lasted for years.

Karen does not want to see that happen again, especially since all boards could be impacted by the current lawsuits as judges' decisions unfold. To avoid a worsening of the situation, OMHAS, OACBHA and local Boards, as well as provider agencies and their trade association, have agreed to be proactive and meet to discuss any possible conflicting issues between Boards and agencies. Members from OACBHA, Lori Criss of OMHAS, several Board Directors (including Karen) and agency Directors will be participating in the meeting. Jeff O'Neil of Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services (GCB) will also be participating as the Vice President of the Ohio Council. The meetings will not include attorneys or focus on the lawsuit language. Board member Karen Conrad asked who would represent the Clermont County Mental Health and Recovery Board (CCMHRB) in the event of a lawsuit. Karen Scherra advised that the Clermont County Prosecutor's Office is CCMHRB's legal counsel.

The fifth discussion item was mini-grants. Karen said that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, school and other community programming being cancelled, and the anticipated shortage of funding, the Board had previously decided not to offer mini-grants for FY2021. However, the mini-grants have provided funding to a lot of important community and school programs. Board member Patty Lawrence agreed that providing mini-grants is important to the community, and especially to schools who may be returning to in-person classes in the fall. Karen Scherra asked the Board for thoughts on re-offering the mini-grant program, a \$40,000 total allotment. The Board decided to revisit the mini-grant discussion at the September Board meeting.

The sixth discussion item was articles. Karen mentioned a few highlights from the articles included in the Board mailing. The first article discussed the spike in overdose deaths in Hamilton County. The spike is being attributed to fentanyl being widely available again. Methamphetamine is also on the rise and is not treatable with Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT). On a side note, Karen said Clermont has seen a drop in opioid misuse. At Tim Dick's presentation to the BCC on the CPS levy that was noted earlier in the meeting, he mentioned that at one time, 70% of CPS cases involved opioid misuse. That number is now down to 10%. Mr. Dick credited CCMHRB and its provider agencies in their role as contributing to the decrease through prevention and treatment services. In contrast, CPS cases involving methamphetamine have increased to 30%.

Another article looked at what to expect when the coronavirus pandemic ends. The article highlighted that expectations are that there will be an increase in individuals reporting mental health distress. The last article was about the question of constitutionality of a Kentucky law that allows families and friends of people with addiction to have their loved one admitted into an involuntary treatment program.

9. Agency Directors Reports: Patty Hassel of Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services (GCB) said her report stands. Patty added that GCB continues to be open, with most staff relying on telehealth services for treatment of clients. Patty hopes to see telehealth services continue as a billable service. Patty also added GCB has a new Board Chair as of July 1. In closing, Patty said GCB's audit will resume in late September. Alicia Fine also of Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services (GCB) as well as Clermont Recovery Center (CRC), a division of GCB, said her report stands. Alicia added that GCB staff are adhering to COVID-19 protocol by utilizing telehealth services as much as possible and limiting face-to-face contact if feasible. GCB/CRC staff are also using proper PPE. Alicia said the limited contact and constant mask wearing of staff and clients is getting to be a bit stressful.

In terms of CRC, Alicia stated that on-site adolescent programs have restarted, but all of the contact parameters are very controlled. Alicia also said that MAT services are at an all-time high with 504 enrolled in the program. CRC is seeing a steady induction turnaround of about two days. MAT assessments are being done both face-to-face and online. MAT services are to be reviewed by the state in October.

Alicia reported that OMHAS has extended licensure renewals to the end of December considering the current pandemic. Alicia added that GCB/CRC is in the process of hiring for the positions being created by the newly awarded SAMHSA grant which allow GCB to become a “certified community mental health clinic”. Alicia closed by saying that the coronavirus pandemic has created a greater need in employment services. GCB/CRC currently has two employment services programs: one in Amelia and one in Batavia.

Pamela Lindeman of Child Focus, Inc. (CFI) said her report stands. Pamela added that CFI staff are providing in-office as well as telehealth services based on client preference. CFI has a staggered work force with staff rotating between working remotely and in the office.

Pamela also said that CFI has held off on releasing new school based mental health programming dates due to the uncertainty of COVID-19 cases and school start up plans. However, Pamela said that even with the pandemic, CFI is only seeing about 100 less program admissions from FY20. Outpatient services have increased. As far as other news at CFI, Pamela said they have a new Board Chair as of July 1. Pamela also said CFI’s golf outing event was a great success and raised \$28,000. CFI has also applied for a \$3 million federal grant that is for marriage enhancement and divorce reduction programs. Pamela closed by saying that CFI was denied FCC funding for reimbursement of telehealth expenses.

Heather Smith of NAMI said her report stands. Heather added that NAMI is offering a free virtual workshop to parents helping children adjust to back-to-school anxiety due to the pandemic. The program is called “Coping with COVID” and will take place on August 2 at 2:00 pm and again on August 5 at 7:00 pm.


Karen Scherra noted that Amy Foley of Hope Community Center (HCC) is on medical leave and will be back in August.

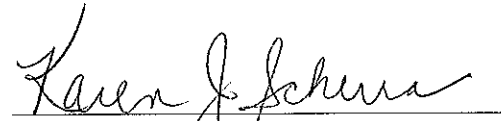
Before moving on, Karen Scherra announced that Board member and Program Committee Chair Carole Cottrill is moving out of Clermont County and has resigned from the Board. The Board will need to vote on a new Program Committee Chair very soon. Karen said Board staff would send Carole a card thanking her for her service.

Karen also announced that former Board member Scott Wheeler recently passed away. Karen said Board staff will send Scott’s wife a sympathy card.

10. Comments from Public Attendees: There were no public attendees at the July 13, 2020 Board of Directors meeting.

11. Adjournment: There being no further business, a motion was made, and unanimously approved, to adjourn the July 13, 2020 Board of Directors meeting. (Motion-Dorothy Glancy, second-Carrie Brown).

  
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Karen Conrad, Chairperson

  
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Karen J. Scheera, Executive Director