

Virginia Mental Health Planning Council Minutes  
October 19, 2011  
1600 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Charlottesville, Va. 22902

Attendees: Anne Burhans, Bob Friedline, Melissa Harless, Donna Sue Harmon, Katharine Hunter, James Johnson, Bonnie Neighbour, Chris Owens, Mira Signer, Susan Williams

Guests: Will Gallik, Virginia Pharis

Staff: Sharon Lilly, Selena Ruffin, Rhonda Thissen

Absent: George Banks, Mary Ann Beall, Irene Walker-Bolton, Ann Cutshall, Betty Elzler~~Etzler~~, Catherine Hancock, Janet Lung, ~~James~~ Jim Martinez, Patricia Meyer, Lisa Moore, Brian Parrish, Steven Peed, Michael Pendrak, Paula Price, Donna Wenzel

Welcome: Susan Williams opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Review and ~~Accept~~ Approval of Minutes: The minutes were corrected. The Council has not been able to approve the minutes of the last three meetings as no quorum was present~~None of the minutes for the last 3 meeting have had quorums.~~ Those minutes will be reviewed and approved~~ey will be accepted~~ when a quorum is present.

Public Comments: Selena Ruffin reported that Paula Price resigned from the office of Executive Director of Mental Health of America effective October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011. The Board of Directors ~~on of~~ MHAV will appoint an Acting Director in the next two days. Selena Ruffin, ~~Celt~~ CELT Manager at MHAV, read Paula's Letter of Resignation to the council. Susan Williams, President of the Council suggested that a letter of appreciation be sent to Paula. The ~~council~~ Council agreed.

Mental Health First Aid: Chris Owens provided a summary of the MHFA training that he attended. As agreed in the support request to attend the training Chris will train the MHPC members. ~~HE~~ He gave out coupons to all members attending. Chris also mentioned that the other classes that are scheduled are on the MHAV website. Selena mentioned the Advanced Advocacy Class coming up on Nov. 9-10, 2011.

Crisis Intervention Conference: Mira Signer reported that the CIT conference was very successful. The feedback so far has been very favorable. The goal of the two day joint conference was to bring together all the localities in Virginia. The program had speakers on Trauma Informed Care. It was great to see Virginia leading the way in some areas of the state and everyone was very enthusiastic about the CIT Conference.

Announcements: Bonnie Neighbour reported on the upcoming VOCAL Conference. This year VOCAL is having ~~2, 4~~ two one-day conferences. One is this Friday, October

21, 2011 at Eastern State Hospital. Bonnie explained some of the topics offered for group breakout sessions.

Mira Signer announced that the Strong Roots Conference is being held by the Virginia Family Network, formerly known as the Federation of Families. Mira explained some of the programs that are going to be included in this conference. So far, the reception has been positive.

Children's Committee Report: Katharine Hunter reported that DBHDS received the Children's System of Care Grant for one year. It will allow them to hire several staff members to help with the grant. All communities in Virginia will need a plan in place by December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011. They are very excited about this grant. SAMSHA wants to keep it going.

Adult Committee: Bonnie Neighbour reported the discussion that was made on the current systems of care for adults in the State-Commonwealth of Virginia. The committee discussed ways to incorporate wellness communities as opposed to putting all the focus on people with labels. Additional discussion was made on the discharge procedures in state hospitals and how to address the issue.

Membership Committee: Chris Owens reported on findings and recommendations from his group's meeting. He recommended and ~~council~~ the Council concurred that currently approved MHPC Policy and Procedures manual be reproduced and placed into binders for each ~~council~~ Council member. The ~~council~~ Council decided that MHAV would have the manuals produced and available for the December meeting. Chris also discussed MHAV managing the online MHPC application. ~~and the group and the DBHDS was to move forward with MHAV post the online application to the World Wide Web and link to DBHDS section for the MHPC. The plan is for the MHPC application to be hosted on MHAV's Web site, with a link to that application from the DBHDS Web site.~~ The next issue discussed was the composition and current needs for recruitment ~~of new to the~~ MHPC members.

Chris raised the concern about the status of the ~~council~~ Council members that we have not seen in a while. Susan Williams reported that upon taking the position of ~~council~~ Council president that she mailed a letter of interest to members who are consistently absent and as a result ~~our~~ 22 members said they wanted to continue on the ~~council~~ Council. Melissa Harless reported on the upcoming Executive Committee members. She reported that the current nominees for 2012 are: President- Susan Williams, Vice-President- Mira Signer, ~~And and~~ Secretary- Robert Friedline. She also reported that nominations for officers remain open until the next ~~council~~ Council meeting.

Robert Friedline raised concerns about the lack ~~of ongoing challenge of the a quorum at Council meetings. MHPC to reach quorum.~~ A discussion ensued about allowing members to attend by phone conference. Chris volunteered to follow up on the cost and

practical considerations for ~~web~~Web/phone conferencing for future consideration by the ~~council~~Council.

Senior Adult Committee: None

DBHDS Report: Rhonda Thissen reported that the governor asked for all state agencies to come up with budget deduction ~~scenarios of two, four and six percents and t.~~The department~~Department has~~ sent in ~~its their budget reduction~~scenarios. Everything about the budget is ~~in the~~considered the governor's~~Governor's~~ confidential working papers from now until the Governor announces his budget, generally in December~~end of the year~~.

On November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the DBHDS and SAARA will host a peer support conference in Charlottesville at the Omni Hotel. Rhonda will send out a notice to everyone. The title of the conference is "If We Build It They Will Come: Growing Peer Support Services in Virginia". ~~The focus of the conference will be growing peer support in Virginia.~~ Darby Penny, an advocate and peer, is presenting a keynote address on November 10~~coming as the Keynote Speaker~~. Darby works for an organization in New York called Advocates for Human Potential~~ey is Essential~~. If you have any questions about the conference, call or email Rhonda Thissen. Call or email her at 804-786-2316 or [Rhonda.Thissen@dbhds.virginia.gov](mailto:Rhonda.Thissen@dbhds.virginia.gov).

The combined block grant application was submitted September 1<sup>s</sup>, 2011, and is being reviewed. It has received some feedback from the Federal Project Officer on the substance abuse side. The ~~department~~Department has not heard from the Mental Health Officer.

The ~~department~~Department requested help establishing the Behavioral Health Council (BHC) from SAMSHA. The ~~State-Commonwealth~~ of Virginia ~~by federal law~~ is still required ~~by federal law~~ by to have a MHPC despite the changes in ~~the state law~~ requiring the Block Grant regulations to create a ~~the~~ BHC. The federal policy states that they are requiring each state to create a BHC in the next year because they want to have combined voices for substance abuse and mental health in one body. DBHDS asked SAMSHA if there are any states we can look to for guidance that have already combined the two groups already. SAMSHA has not issued any guidelines for what the BHC should look like. The existing Substance Abuse Services Council in place looks very different from the MHPC. It has appointees<sup>2</sup> that give input and information directly to the ~~governor's~~Governor's office on substance abuse issues. The ~~department~~Department has received no response from SAMSHA for technical assistance<sup>2</sup> and the two councils<sup>2</sup> cannot just be combined because they are very different. By October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, they need to have the BHC on the ground. A discussion ensued about ways this could be done.

Money for a retreat could be used to bridge the gap between the two councils. ~~Former~~ DBHDS Manager of Planning and Grants Management~~Director of Planning and Programming Standards~~, Millie Randall, is the Office of Behavioral Health Services' primary staff to the Substance Abuse Services Council~~person in the Substance Abuse~~

~~Department of DBHDS. She can give MHPC the lay of the land and help us with consistency. Rhonda thinks it makes a lot of sense to use MHPC as a starting point for the BHC. Rhonda will talk to Jim Martinez about having Millie come to speak to the council at the December council meeting.~~

The MHPC is interested in being a part of the planning phase of the BHC. The ~~council~~ Council needs volunteers and talk to people who want to get started on a plan. A steering committee is needed to find out where we go from here. The Council members present at the meeting asked Susan Williams, Bonnie Neighbour and Chris Owens to represent the MHPC on any committee the Department puts together to plan for the development of the BHC.

The ~~DBHDS~~ Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) sent out a draft RFP for the Medicaid managed care program. They want to get a Managed Care Provider to the Medicaid fund services on a wide scale. The initial draft of the RFP was distributed for department sent out drafts for public comment. One of the provisions of the draft is that a managed care provider could opt to fund peer support services which are currently reimbursed by Medicaid in about 24 states. Once awarded, the managed care contract would begin This would take effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, and the selected contractor could opt to offer peer support services as a reimbursable expense three years later, probably sometime in and for 3 years until 2015. The department is currently looking for some core specialist in Virginia.

Rhonda Thissen reported that the Council's budget includes funds to support Council members' attendance at trainings and conferences, with the goal of improving their ability to serve on the Council. monies spent on conferences are meant for the betterment of the MHPC. The conference should be something the MHPC benefits from and this is not the way the monies have been used in recent times, has not always happened. The Policy and Procedures Manual needs to state the purpose and the goal in the training the MHPC. The fund is not just to be used for members to attend conferences because they cannot afford it on their own. As an example, the MHPC paid MHAV for training and that was not an appropriate use of the funds. The DBHDS considers it is great to have a Mental Health First Aid instructor in the state but the MHPC could have brought in someone else to train them one time on MHFA. The MHPC gave a lot of money to MHAV to send Chris Owens, \$3800.00, for travel and other expenses and it was not considered ahead of time what would be the MHPC's gain.

~~Mira Signer questioned how broadly we want to interrupt the policy that the council already has and does a new policy need to be included in the policy and procedures manual. Rhonda then explained that the DBHDS is the guarantor of the monies since the department receives them from the federal government. The DBHDS has to justify how MHPC spends it because the department gets audited like everyone else. The original intent of this allocation to the MHPC was to provide the operations of the council. Rhonda does not know where the training and conference line item came from. Rhonda wants the money that the MHPC gets to go to the operations. Rhonda questions if this~~

~~was an appropriate use of this money unless it benefits the council's operations. MHAV's goal was to send Chris to this MHFA training to create a program to receive royalties. That is a goal that is not the MHPC's responsibility to fund and it is not the department to sponsor. It is not a correct use of federal funds.~~

~~Mira Signer said she could see multiple sides to this issue. However, it made her uncomfortable for council funds to be used in a way that an organization can benefit from later on~~

~~Anne Burhans and Bob Friedline reported that MHAV and Chris Owens had followed the parameters set forth in the current Policy and Procedures Manual and did not think there was a problem.~~

~~The problem for Rhonda is that there are a number of peer-run organizations who cannot afford to send people to trainings and conferences but they do not have anyone on the council to ask for the money. Rhonda's suggestion is that we put the new policy in place for one year and see how it works with the stipulation that the Executive Committee meets with the DBHDS before any final decisions are made. The reason Rhonda feels this way is with the addition of the BHC the council will grow and the budget will grow. The department will have the additional funds from the Substance Abuse block grant to add to the Behavioral Health Council. As the funds grow there will also be a tightening up on how the funds are spent.~~

~~Rhonda would like to take this back to the department and see if this is acceptable to them. A discussion ensued on how to change the policy and procedures to address the concerns of the department.~~

~~After this discussion, Rhonda felt more confident about the way the issue will be handled in the future.~~

In order to address this issue, Anne Burhans introduced a draft policy that will require Council members to submit a written request to the Executive Committee providing detail on the training or conference they would like financial support from the Council to attend, and an explanation of how their attendance will benefit the Council's operations. The Council members present agreed by consensus to implement the policy as proposed, and tThe changes will be put in the Policy and Procedures Manual when the Council has a quorum to formally approve the policy. The consensus of this October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011, is to move forward with the changes.

Selena Ruffin submitted an expense comparison that Paula Price completed from July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010 thru June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011. It will be put back on the agenda after everyone is emailed a copy of the expense comparison.

Future Agenda Requests: Susan Williams reported she had not forgotten past requests of the Council to invite representatives of programs funded by the Mental Health Block Grant people to present at MHPC meetings and speak to the council. However, the

~~council~~ Council had internal issues to resolve before inviting guest speakers. It was mentioned that the MHPC had not heard from the ~~budget~~ Budget eommittee Committee. Susan explained that since Paula Price was the chair of that committee, ~~and~~ she was waiting for the announcement from MHAV as to who the next MHAV Executive Director would be before hearing from that committee. Bob Friedline would like Selena to email him the name of the new director in order to include the new person's put the name in the documents on the Wweb page.

New Agenda Items: The ~~council~~ Council would like information on the RFP on managed care. The MHPC would like to weigh in on some of that information.

The ~~council~~ Council would like to discuss alternative places to have ~~the council meet~~ meetings next year.

Adjourned: 3:10 pm