

# Behavioral Health Advisory Council (BHAC)

## August 18, 2021, Minutes

**DRAFT**

MEETING DETAILS	
<b>Date and time:</b>	August 18, 2021 from 10am to Noon
<b>Venue:</b>	Virtual through Zoom due to the ongoing pandemic
COUNCIL DEMOGRAPHICS	
<b>Present</b>	Heather Orrock (VOCAL); Patrice Beard (Parent and Partnership for People with Disabilities); Hilary Piland (VACSB); Bruce Crusier (MHAV), Quyen Duong (DOE); Livia Jansen (DJJ); Heather Pate (Robin’s Hope); Nathanael Rudney (DBHDS); Tara Belfast-Hurd (DBHDS); Karlyn Clevert-Smith (Private Provider); Dreamel Spady, LCSW (Private Provider); Mary McQuown (DBHDS); Katharine Hunter (DBHDS); Patricia Parham (DOC); Nick Pappas (PEER); Shatada Floyd-White (Private Provider); Elizabeth Bouldin-Clopton (PEER);
<b>Guest(s)</b>	Michael McDermott (Advocate with lived experience); Chris Miller (DARS Brain Injury Services Unit); Charlotte Arbogast (DARS); Kathryn Clarke (SAARA); Mary Beth Walsh (NAMI-VA); Adam Creveling (DMAS) Caitlin DiBenedetto (NAMI); Justin Wallace (Suicide Prevention at VDH);
<b>Unexcused Absences</b>	Gail Taylor (DBHDS); Oketa Winn (DMAS);
<b>Excused Absences</b>	
<b>Minutes Taken By</b>	Hilary Piland
<b>Presiding Officer</b>	Patrice Beard, President
<b>Order Called</b>	Council convened at 10:00 AM

Quorum was present in today’s meeting (requires 13 members, a majority [7 out 13] of these members need be consumers/peers, advocates, and family members)

	Item	Discussion/Action	Responsibility/Follow-Up (if applicable)
<b>Welcome, Introductions, Public Comment:</b>			

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Patrice began the meeting with introductions and an icebreaker.</li></ul>	

**Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The council counted the number of members in attendance that are under the categories of either of the following: advocacy organization, Peer, Peer Organization or Family Member. It was determined that there was a quorum.</li><li>• Patrice asked if there are any questions about the minutes. Bruce moved to approve the minutes. Heather Pate seconded the approval.</li><li>• Michael McDermott noted the inconsistencies in the ways the BHAC meeting minutes are available for the public. The meeting minutes are not on the Commonwealth Calendar like they should be. There is a BHAC page on the DBHDS website. The BHAC meeting minutes are posted on that webpage. Mr. McDermott’s explanation is here: <a href="#">Explanation of Inconsistencies with how BHAC Meeting Minutes are Publicly Available</a></li><li>• Nathanael shared that normally the draft version of the minutes would be posted on the BHAC page as soon as they are available. For some reason, at the time of this meeting, the meeting minutes shown on the BHAC page were minutes from a past meeting. The website seemed to have reverted to some minutes from a previous month.</li><li>• Nathanael is working with VITA and DBHDS IT staff to have the meeting minutes posted in all the places it should be for public view.</li></ul>	
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**Committee Reports/ Nominating Committee Report**

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Livia Jansen shared that Heather Orrock, Mary McQuown and Quyen Doug served on the nominating committee. That committee met virtually on July 7<sup>th</sup>.</li><li>• The committee nominated Patrice Beard to remain as President, Elizabeth Bouldon-Clopton agreed to serve at Vice President, and Hilary Piland will remain as Secretary. Bruce Crusier will continue as Treasurer by default because Mental Health America of Virginia acts as the fiscal agent for the BHAC. Sixteen people voted in support, which is a quorum.</li></ul>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This term will be through June 30, 2022.</li> </ul>	
<b>Treasurer's Report:</b>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bruce Crusier shared that the BHAC has a balance of \$10,069. Because the council has not been meeting in person, it has not had many expenses.</li> </ul>	
<b>Executive Committee Report:</b>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No Update</li> </ul>	
<b>Membership Report:</b>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ron Pritchard is the new membership chair.</li> <li>The 2 new forms for the BHAC members to fill out have not been filled out by everyone. Patrice has sent Ron Pritchard the 2 forms. The forms list who has not filled them out. He will email those people to try to get 100% participation.</li> <li>Caitlin DiBenedetto will be joining the membership committee.</li> </ul>	<p><b>OUTCOME:</b> Ron will email BHAC members who have not filled out the 2 forms to try to get 100% participation</p>
<b>DBHDS Report:</b>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nathanael noted that the DBHDS application for the ARPA funds is being submitted with the regular block grant federal application. These COVID related funds are what Margaret Steele from DBHDS had presented to the BHAC at the June council meeting.</li> </ul>	
<b>Block Grant Report:</b>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The BHAC sends a letter every year to the commissioner. That letter will be submitted with the block grant application. In early August Nathanael sent BHAC members the Block grant with sections he suggested each committee to review.</li> </ul> <p>There have not been any changes to the application in terms of what is being requested. The application is sectioned out by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State information</li> <li>Planning tables</li> <li>Environmental factors – which are sectioned out by program area</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Areas the council would like to see in the letter to the Commissioner that will accompany the Block Grant Application:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The council is appreciative of the increase in funds for Peer Support Services. Investing in Peer Support services is something the council agrees is a worthwhile investment. The council also supports funds for Youth Support Services and well as Family Support Services.</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ The council sees the need for and recommends that ongoing funds be provided for staffing incentives not only at state hospitals, but at Community Services Board as well. Services can't properly be provided if there is not enough staff to provide the services. As well, a much-needed expansion of services cannot happen if there are already workforce issues with existing services.</li><li>➤ The council advocates that the Medicaid reimbursement rate for Peer Services is increased. A rate increase will mean that more providers will be willing to offer Peer Support Services because the reimbursement rate will be high enough to justify the administrative cost it takes to bill for that service.</li><li>➤ The council would like to have more clarity on the requirements around in-person meetings and virtual meetings. Clarity and guidance are especially needed during this time where the COVID-19 variant is causing people to want to continue to meet virtually, but the Governor's emergency orders that were in place throughout last year are no longer in place.</li><li>➤ The council discussed that since the ARPA funds are one-time funds, it recommends that some of the ARPA funds be used to invest in developing tools that show program outcome measures that can be used a justification for the General Assembly to invest ongoing state funds for certain programs.</li><li>➤ The council discussed the importance of a shift in the mindset of what a first responder is. People in the behavioral health (BH) community would want BH providers to be considered first responders, just like police officers, paramedics and firefighters are considers first responders.</li><li>➤ A suggestion was made to advocate for more funds for syringe services and other harm reduction services. Peers are starting to use harm reduction services and CSBs are integrating harm reduction services in their services.</li></ul> <p>Bruce asked if the total amount of money this year is the same as what it was in the last cycle. He noted that if the fund increase is appreciably larger, then the BHAC would want to know where the extra funds are going. The Mental Health (MH) Block Grant funding went from \$17,120,000 to \$17,190,000. This is not a large increase. The Substance Abuse (SA) funding stayed the same.</p> <p>Heather Orrock asked why the MARCUS Alert was not included in the Block Grant</p>	
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		<p>application. Nathanael shared that the Block Grant application talks about programs and services that have been established and running and since the MARCUS Alert is new, information on that would not be in the block grant application this year.</p> <p>Patrice shared that Family Support Partners just applied for the Systems of Care grant. Virginia did not receive it last year. She asked if more funds can be given for the System of Care. Family Support Partners is not represented equally across the state.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ DBHDS had applied for the Systems of Care grant by there is no indication yet if Virginia will receive this. Some funds for Family Support are being provided through STEP-VA.</li></ul> <p>Nathanael will send a draft of the block grant letter to the council for its review before it goes to the Commissioner. This is the letter that will accompany the block grant application.</p>	
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**Committee Reports:**

		<p><b>Adult and Elder Committee:</b></p> <p>Elizabeth Bouldin-Clopton shared that the survey for colleges and universities should be going out in the fall in time for colleges starting back. This is the survey the committee developed to get an idea of what MH services colleges and universities across Virginia provide for their students. The end goal would be that if it's found that certain colleges don't provide an adequate level of services, then the committee would encourage them to provide more services.</p> <p>Tara Belfast-Hurd shared that the committee had to cancel its committee meeting last month, so it did not meet in July.</p> <p>The committee is still working on getting the information together on jails. This is to find out more on the MH services in jails. Elizabeth Bouldin-Clopton is working on this.</p>	
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<b>New Business:</b>			
<b>Public Comment:</b>			
		<p>Adam Creveling from DMAS suggested that the BHAC Block Grant letter to the commissioner have a push for more funds for syringe services and other harm reduction services. Peers are starting to use harm reduction services and CSBs are integrating harm reduction services. He suggested the council advocate for more funds for this.</p> <p>Michael McDermott gave public comment representing <b>Faces and Voices of Recovery (FAVOR) of Virginia</b>. (he gave comments earlier in this meeting, which is noted above)</p> <p><u>Mr. McDermott's Contact information is the following:</u>  The website for FAVOR is <a href="http://www.favorva.org">www.favorva.org</a>.  He can be contacted at <a href="mailto:michael@favorva.org">michael@favorva.org</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michael McDermott noted the inconsistencies in the way the BHAC meeting minutes are available for the public. The meeting minutes are not on the Commonwealth Calendar like they should be. There is a BHAC page on the DBHDS website. The BHAC meeting minutes are posted on that webpage. Mr. McDermott's explanation is linked here: <a href="#">Explanation of Inconsistencies with how BHAC Meeting Minutes are Publicly Available</a>.</li> <li>• Mr. McDermott has been following the BHAC for two years and is not satisfied with the availability and consistency of the BHAC meeting announcements and meeting minutes.</li> <li>• He wants it to be easy for the public to know where on the internet is the one central place for BHAC meeting announcements and meeting minutes being posted. As well, the BHAC information for the public needs to meet the FOIA requirements.</li> <li>• Nathanael shared that normally the draft version of the minutes would be posted on the BHAC page as soon as they are available. For some reason, at the time of this meeting, the meeting minutes shown on the BHAC page are minutes from a past meeting. The website seems to have reverted to some minutes from a previous month.</li> <li>• Nathanael is working with VITA and DBHDS IT staff to have the meeting minutes posted in all the places that should be for public view.</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. McDermott noted that the public comment time on the agenda is only 5 minutes, where as the icebreaker and introductions at the beginning of the meeting took 15 minutes. He suggested that more emphasis should be placed on promoting public comments.</li> <li>• Mr. McDermott asked again that the DBHDS Recovery Blast distribution list send announcements about the BHAC meetings. He had asked about this previously at the June 2021 meeting.</li> <li>• Mr. McDermott shared that he waited a long time to getting to the meeting room at DBHDS for this meeting. He wants the BHAC meetings to be easier for the public to know about and easier to attend in person. Nathanael shared that the meeting starts at 10 am and Mr. McDermott was able to get into the meeting room by 10 am.</li> <li>• Patrice shared that the Executive Committee will discuss the issues Mr. McDermott had brought forward and will keep everyone informed.</li> </ul>	
		Notes taken by Hilary Piland	
	<b>Meeting was adjourned at 11:40. The committees met after this meeting.</b>		
<p><b>Next Meeting(s):</b> October 20, 2021</p> <p><b>Location of meeting: via Zoom</b></p>			

**MINUTES APPROVED BY COUNCIL ON \_\_\_\_\_**