**VA BHAC Retreat – October 19, 2022**

**FACILITATORS:**

Cheryl Grace-Wright

**ATTENDEES:**

Elizabeth Bouldin-Clopton – On Our Own of C’ville

Nathanael Rudney - DBHDS

Tara Belfast Hurd - DBHDS

Bruce Cruser – MHAV

Heather Orrock – VOCAL

Hilary Piland - VACSB

Bruce Cruser – MHAV

Tara Belfast-Hurd – DBHDS

Jeff VanArnam – DBHDS

Jenny Sappington – MHAV

Mary McQuown - DBHDS

Patrice Beard

Livia Jenson

Mary Ottinot - Parent

Shatada Floyd-White – Veterans Administration

Teri Nunley – DARS

Katharine Hunter

Justin Wallace - VDH

**NOTES:**

**10-10:30am - Introductions, Icebreaker, Setting Intentions**

Introductions and Icebreaker (Favorite Halloween Candy)

Mary Od stepped in to share concerns about the planning process.

Nathanael explained the process and recognized areas of growth and improvement.

Mary continued with speaking about how the chair of each committee is meant to be on the Executive Committee along with the Officers.

Bruce spoke about this by saying that the Executive Committee typically made up the Officers and former President due to not having a committees for times in the past. This allowed the council to continue to move forward in an expedient way.

Mary O raised concern about proper notification and involvement in the planning processes for the retreat. Mary shared that she did not receive any information about what would be done in this meeting and was unable to make the previous meeting. Who is missing in the conversation/table? How are we going to ensure a plan this time with teeth that provides accessible competent care. Who is on the Executive Committee? Wasn’t given that information in the planning of this retreat. Why does the block grant exist? What is our charge?

Nathanael acknowledged and recognized the concerns noted above. A survey was shared prior to the meeting to help determine the focus of the planning retreat.

Mary O shared that committee leaders were not invited to the retreat planning. There were no committees prior to the last retreat. The officers were meeting together for expediency. Understood that we invite the committee leaders to the Executive Committee meetings.

Bruce mentioned that we didn’t have active committees for a long time. The last retreat worked to bring these committees back. It was noted that the executive officers were meeting for expediency purposes, but will be sure to address that in the future.

Mary O shared that did not hear this the same way.

Cheryl Grace Wright acknowledged that there was little known about the council. Identified that only a small group of people who have been active on the council over the years.

Modest familiarity of the goals

Little progress on goals

**From recent survey - investment to key areas**

86% in Peer Navigation

65% in Improving Access to Care

43% Mental Health in Schools

Cheryl clarified that the agenda was developed from the survey to making them a part of a relaunching of what our overall plan.

Heather O shared that overall, the movement is happening by the organizations rather than the council. Let’s instead, take this time on working on the council and making the council what it needs/wants to be with a strategic plan. Federally required. It is an advisory council to DBHDS and required to be peer-run. Let’s take time to truly understand the purpose of us being here. We tend to put the cart before the horse.

Nathanael mentioned that bylaw development, board portal, and other foundational necessities.

Heather O shared that we lost a person on our council because his vision didn’t align with the council. Let’s determine how we can make an impact. This council is here as an advisory council to the Commissioner. Are we acknowledged on Commissioners 4 point plan. Unsure what the work of the council is other than to write a letter.

Hilary mentioned that the bylaws state the specific focus goals for the coalition.

Bruce noted that all of this is very broad and we are all volunteers with turnover and other jobs. Where is some energy and passion that we can focus on that does connect to the focus of this coalition. It’s important to stop at times and review the overall direction.

Mary O suggested bringing in a consultant to help explain more about the history and story of the peer-run coalition. Why is it important that the federal government felt it was necessary for this council to be here with community block grants.

Nathanael mentioned that if there is a need to understand more about the block grant that he can do that both individually and bring it to the overall council. If we can take a piece of that and build passion, then we can address the focus of the council.

Heather P came in a year or two ago and didn’t know what this was all about and voiced that lack of knowledge during the audit process. Mentioned that DBHDS asks the council about important funding initiatives.

Cheryl asked if there is an onboarding process.

There is not a full onboarding process and we need more help than 1-2 people.

Bruce is meeting with someone from a board portal to house all documents and meetings that are easily accessible to all.

Cheryl reflected back on the priorities for 2020. An inward focus seems to be a priority. If we do not have the internal house tight, knowledgeable, and consistent then it becomes easier to focus on goals.

Mary O mentioned improving the foundation of our council and organizing so that we can get to the goals.

Cheryl asked, “How specific are the bylaws about process, chain of command, etc.?”

Bruce stated that he and Duke Burrus (previous member) worked with the policy and procedure manual and they were breaking it out by committee in order to help the committees with process.

Nathanael spoke about, who we are and what we do setting a perceived plan that becomes outdated and then brings us back to floundering a bit. Having a strong mission and larger goal is important for us to keep from going backwards when we work on a goal.

Cheryl responded to not bring on further members without having an onboarding process so that everyone knows the mission, vision, and processes. Processes that include procurement, structure, decision-making, and governance. Information flow is likely a part of the frustration. Great opportunity to make all of this better.

Mary M. spoke about remembering the council when we knew what our charge was and how to accomplish it.

Heather P brought up consultant help to develop cheat sheets and references with the overall goal at the top of it. Keeping our meetings geared to the key areas of the objectives so that we are always looking at those specific points.

Cheryl is there anyone who doesn’t feel like we are going in the direction of stepping back before moving forward. Revisit the goals once we have a solid foundation in order to determine further goals.

Bruce hates to lose the momentum that is happening. Active committees is the way to go. I hope that we can look at the committees, but also to move forward with committees.

Mary O. spoke up about how she sat and looked at what her charge was and giving voice to the community. There is support needed for people coming into this space. What does the process look like for the people who would like to come in and give voice to lived experience. How does the community block grant provide members of the community, to understand what is happening, and being able to get involved in committees.

Heather O asks what Cheryl thinks based on her knowledge could be the next best step.

Cheryl thinks that it is possible that some items can be done simultaneously. Addressing latest trends is proving to be really important to the council. No simple answer.

**Break**

**Redirection based earlier discussions**

**Onboarding Process:**

Building policies and procedures

Board portal for transparency and inclusivity

Goals – lived experience in this space

Identifying Measurements

Membership

Telling Our Stories

**Rocks:**

1. Mission, vision, and values (telling our stories)
2. Core administrative tasks (policies & procedures)
3. Measurement – Impact & Accountability (measurement)

**12:00pm – Lunch Break**

**SOAR – Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results**

Values mentioned – Integrity, diversity, recovery-oriented focus, transparency, passion, and experience.

***What are the current STRENGTHS of the Council and/or working well?***

* + Improved attendance and increased membership
  + Bringing Margaret Steele, DBHDS in to talk about various funds coming to Virginia and took suggestions of ways to utilize the funding in beneficial ways.
  + Advocate at the state level for policy change

***OPPORTUNITIES:***

* + Revisit the mission, develop a vision, and values
  + Improve communication to those with lived experience about the meetings and the possibility of membership on the Council.

**What are some ASPIRATIONS of the Council?**

* + Revisit the
  + Influence and leverage one another

**What are some RESULTS of the Council?**

* + Bring a plan together
  + Utilizing a timeline to measure success

**What are the values upon which BHAC stands?**

**Building a House**

* **Foundation/Walls –** What holds the BHAC up and what supports the organizational structure and foundation? (members present, leadership, partnerships, state/clinical/peer/organizational committed members, and mandate social justice)
* **Windows –** What are you proud of about BHAC and what do people see that lets people know about the BHAC? (diverse stakeholders, advocacy, transparency, energized, relationship, sustained leadership)
* **Doors –** How do people enter BHAC and how do they access what BHAC has to offer? (membership application, website, developed relationships, accessible, and inclusive)
* **Roof –** What protects BHAC and keeps our council safe? (federal mandate, leadership roles, DBHDS audit, reverence for everyone’s background & experience)
* **Chimney –** How does the BHAC blow off steam? (icebreakers, in-person personal engagement)

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| **Area of Focus** | **Outcome we Want** | **What Committee?** |
| Executive Board | * Revisit the mission and develop a vision and values for the council |  |
| Core Administrative Task | **Review mission and look at:**  **Narrow Focus:**  **Peer Support/Navigation**  **Access to Care** |  |
| Measurements |  |  |
| Increased Communication (internal, external, public) |  |  |
| Increased Knowledge of Decision-Making Process with DBHDS |  |  |
| Determining where and when Council can have most influence |  |  |
| Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity   * Internal * External |  |  |
| Interest in Peer Support |  |  |
| Advocacy and Change |  |  |
| Feedback Provision |  |  |

**TOPIC FOUR: Work Plan (see Attachment A)**

**NEXT STEPS:**