

Mental Health Advisory Committee

Minutes – July 1, 2021

Members Present	Members Absent	Ex-Officio and Staff Present	Ex-Officio and Staff Absent	Guests
Ziva Azhdam	Michelle Grigsby-Hackett	Michael Chindbloom		Muhammed Hasan
Jamie Gu	Jennifer Grinnell	Michael Maher		Jessica Kronstadt
Stephanie Joseph		Meredith Peace		Laura Mitchell
Susan Kerin		Kyle Potter		
Helga Luest		Rolando Santiago		
Garrett Mannchen				
Tami Mark				
Libby Nealis				
Saher Rizvi				
Celia Serkin				
Susan Smith				
Robert Tettlebach				
Heather Thompson				

- I. **Welcome** - The meeting came to order at 7:05 p.m. Members were asked to announce themselves and put their microphones on mute unless speaking.
- II. **Discussion on Budget priorities for FY-22-** Helga Luest.
Helga and Garrett met to discuss upcoming budget priorities and below is their proposal.
 - a. Discontinue the Suicide prevention subcommittee – have a couple of members be on the County Suicide prevention coalition and report back at each meeting updates on their progress. It will continue to be a priority just not a subcommittee.
 - b. Continue to have the Environmental Impacts on Mental Health and Resilience subcommittee and continue as a priority.
 - c. Address Gap in residential services – have a study group to find out what are the issues and how is this affecting Montgomery County citizens. Discussion was concerns with narrowing down which residential services MHAC will study. Regina Morales, Chief of Local Behavioral health authority (LBHA) would be best person to outline for MHAC what the issues are and how MHAC can best affect change. LBHA monitors contracts in the county for residential services. Regina reported that State recently approved 8 new residential rehabilitation beds for psychiatric patient being discharged from State hospital.
 - d. Continue to have the Mobile Crisis subcommittee and continue as a priority.
 - e. Motion was made to accept the budget priorities as the Mobile Crisis concerns, Environmental Impacts on Mental Health ad Resilience and Suicide prevention. Garrett and Helga will work on a document that will be presented at a 2nd meeting of the MHAC on July 19 at 7pm. Dr. Crowel, Director of Department of Health and Human services had asked all the HHS Commissions to have their budget priority documents ready in August so that he can incorporate into FY-23 fiscal plan.
- III. **Discussion on changing MHAC Legislation** – Members would like to change the title of Consumer of Mental Health services to Person with lived mental health experience. Would also like to add AODAC member as a non-voting member. It was also discussed that perhaps the addition of health and race equity should be added to the mission. Helga and Garrett will come up with a document to be reviewed at the July 19th meeting.
- IV. **Minutes** – Minutes from June were reviewed. Motion was made to accept the minutes.
- V. **New Business**
 - a. **Quarterly meeting of HHS Board/Commission Chairs with Dr. Crowel** – Garrett reported that he attended the meeting. Dr. Crowel reported that Montgomery County is at a record low Covid positivity rate. The county had received 30 million in federal funds and 29 million in state funds for Covid related issues. Updates from all the HHS boards/committees/commissions were presented.
 - b. **AODAAC Representative** – Laura Mitchell from AODAAC reported that they are working on a fall forum which will be a three-part mini-series on Substance Abuse, Addiction and Treatment. AODAAC sent a letter to the County Executive and County Council asking for a change in their name to Alcohol and Other Drug Addiction Council. They have also recently filled their vacancies on the Council and upgraded their website. In June, there was record overdose rate, Laura posted a link to the report from the State in response to the growing overdose rate.

VI. BHCS Report – Dr. Santiago reported that on June 4 they had the grand opening of the Avery Road Treatment Center. The Center was rebuilt after numerous complaints that the building was not in good condition. They have also hired for the six positions on the mobile crisis unit. Staff are concerned about what it will mean to go out on calls with out the police and are receiving specialized training in harm reduction and de-escalation. They are continuing work on the Restoration center, and it will be in the Capital improvement budget for FY-23. It could take about 6 years to complete. Recently submitted paperwork to apply for SAMSHA grant which provide the funding to expand the Crisis center and give them the ability to provide a stabilization center for psychiatric and substance usage. This would stabilize the client prior to their next resource.

a. Tammy Marks asked if the Restoration Center could be one of the budget priorities for the MHAC. A motion was made, and all were in favor of the Restoration center being on the budget priorities document.

VII. Springfield Hospital Report- Michael Maher reported that Springfield had recently loosened restrictions on visitations for clients. Staff are continuing to wear masks. There is a waiting list of about 75 inmates statewide for psychiatric hospitalization. Discharges from the hospital were slowed down due to Covid which has increased the backlog.

VIII. Subcommittee Reports -

A. Mobile Crisis Subcommittee – Garrett reported that he had no update.

C. Suicide Prevention Subcommittee – Michelle was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

D. Environmental Impacts on Mental Health and Resilience – Helga reported that Subcommittee met on June 16. Nine people were in attendance. The plan is to come up with a presentation of priorities to give to the county council, county executive and the emergency preparedness unit. The committee is meeting again on July 26 at 4pm.

IX. Comments or questions from the Public or Commissioners – Susan Smith reported that Housing Opportunity Commission received vouchers for non-elderly homeless individuals. If interested need to sign up on website.

VIII. Meeting Adjourned – meeting ended at 8:20pm