

Mental Health Advisory Committee

Minutes – September 5, 2023

Members Present	Members Absent	Ex-Officio and Staff Present	Ex-Officio and Staff Absent	Guests
Bill Ellis	Joshua Lemere	Meredith Peace	Michael Mayer	Donna Cawley
Michelle Grigsby-Hackett	Marissa Leslie	Jordan Satinsky	Rolando Santiago	Susan Emery
Jennifer Grinnell	Garrett Mannchen			Laura Mitchell
Kelly Gruitt				Arnecia Moody
Stephanie Joseph				Sara Rose
Susan Kerin				Sami Sapkota
Tami Mark				
Libby Nealis				
Alan Orenstein				
Celia Serkin				

- I. **Welcome** – The meeting came to order at 7:02 p.m. Susan Kerin chaired the meeting. There was a quorum of committee members by the time voting was required (e.g., approval of meeting minutes). The meeting was held virtually.

A special welcome was made to Arnecia Moody who is the new Senior Manager for Treatment Services.

II. Discussion on Budget Priorities for FY-25

A. There was robust discussion on the proposed priorities. The following decisions were made:

- **Embed Social Workers at Recreation Centers** – Susan will reach out to Dr. Leslie for additional information on the funding (e.g., was it a set-aside from parks and recreation). This information will be share with MHAC members for final voting.
- **Support for Peer Community-Based Organizations** – This was approved. There were two members who voted no (Tami Mark and Bill Ellis).
- **Provide Incentives for Addressing the Workforce Shortage** – All agreed this was an important need but there were a variety of options proposed to address. It was agreed that there would be a working group over the next two weeks to provide a recommendation and that would be voted on by the larger group. The working group will include Alan Orenstein, Meredith Peace, Michelle Grisby-Hackett, Libby Nealis, Jennifer Grinnell, Celia Serkin, Laura Mitchell, Arnecia Moody and Susan Kerin.
- **Other Items** – The other proposed recommendations (e.g., CIT for Police, LGBTQI+ programs at the Sheppard Pratt Drop-in Center and Teen Mental Health First Aid) are in the works already. But MHAC members were open to resurfacing the issue later if needed.

III. Discussion on Advocacy Priorities for FY-24

A. The following advocacy priorities were approved by unanimous consent:

- That the county be aware and responsive to recent regulation changes related to crisis services which may impact the availability of State funds for services. This was in response to Ms. Grisby-Hackett's update on the issue.
- That the county continues to seek Medicaid reimbursement for sustainable services.
- That the county continues efforts to build the MRSS crisis approach for youth. This was in response to Sara Rose notifying the MHAC that the proposed pilot with State funds was cancelled.
- That all programs be evidence-based and incorporate outcomes.

Susan will draft the written testimony of the priorities by email for Committee review and vote.

IV. Old Business

A. **July minutes** – The minutes for July 2023 were approved unanimously.

IV. New Business

A. **AODAAC update** – Laura Mitchell shared that she attended a White House event focused on substance abuse. She noted that the U.S. Department of Labor is involved and can add “teeth” to any violations in terms of services through employers. She also shared that the Montgomery Goes Purple was well-attended and that the multiple proclamations indicate political buy-in on addressing

overdoses. They are now working on a Rockville event. There will also be a recovery conference planned.

- B. Commission on Health** – Donna Cawley noted that her Commission had not met recently, but they plan to meet soon. They will also be testifying on their priorities to the County Council in October.
- C. October Meeting** – Celia Serkin proposed a presentation by Youth Move Right related to the MRSS. Since it is a longer presentation, it will be reserved as a separate event. Tami Mark proposed a presentation by Oklahoma Crisis Services Commissioner (Carrie Slatton-Hodges) as they are doing innovative work in this area.
- D. Nominations Committee** – Susan and Jennifer agreed to serve on the nominations committee. Diane asked people to forward nominations to her. Self-nominations are accepted. She also noted that since Susan is on the Committee, it means the Chair position is open.
- E. Suicide Prevention Coalition** – Sara Rose shared that they haven't had meetings recently but plan to start up in late September. Kelly Gruitt was interested in attending the meetings.

V. Announcements

- A. Mental Health Awareness Week** – Kelly Gruitt outlined a number of MCPS activities related to Mental Health Awareness Week (October 30-November 4, 2023).
- B. Subcommittees** – Because of the lack of time during this meeting, this will be followed up by email as well as in the October meeting.
- C. AOT Legislation** – Laura Mitchell expressed concern about the AOT legislation which can mandate individuals receive assisted outpatient treatment through civil commitments. Because of the lack of time, it was agreed to discuss this at a later meeting.
- D. Crisis Center Recliners** – Meredith Peace noted that the sobering recliners are now available at the Crisis Center.

VI. Meeting Adjourned – The meeting ended at 8:59 p.m.