

**Minutes of the
Mental Health Advisory Committee
Wednesday, May 9, 2012 @ 7:30 a.m.
Rosecrance, 1021 N. Mulford**

Present: Angie Goral, Carol Klint, Matthew Toohey, Philip Eaton, and Richard Kunnert

Staff Present: Mike Bacon

Guest Present: Barb Smith (LWV), Melissa Westphal (Rockford Register Star), Judy Emerson (Director of Communications, Rosecrance), and NAMI Representative.

INTRODUCTION

After brief introductions, the meeting was called to order at approximately 7:30 a.m.

MINUTES of March 1 and April 11, 2012

There was a motion made by Dick Kunnert and seconded by Matt Toohey to accept both sets the March 1 and April 11, 2012 meeting minutes as presented, with all members voting aye.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Bacon shared with the Committee that Ms. Grans has resigned since our last meeting. She was most impressed with the work of the Committee. She simply felt that her position really would benefit from someone with a strong behavioral health background. After some discussion by Committee members, it was moved by Phil Eaton and seconded by Matt Toohey to accept Sue Grans's resignation with regret and appreciation of service to-date, with all members voting eye.

DRAFT OF BYLAWS

A copy the initial set of bylaws developed by the Civil Division of the State's Attorney's Office was included in the Committee packet for discussion. Mr. Eaton and Mr. Bacon had met with States Attorney Joe Bruscato and Dave Kurlinkus (head the Civil Division) to review the general needs of the Mental Health Advisory Committee, the outcome of which are the enclosed draft for consideration.

- It was recommended by the Committee that the bylaws include a definition section which should clarify the meaning of "majority of a quorum" and "majority of the Committee" and "quorum" (see Article VII). It was moved by Matt Toohey and seconded by Dick Kunnert and Phil Eaton to seek these clarifications for inclusion in the bylaws with all members voting aye.

- There as a motion made by Dick Kunnert and seconded by Phil Eaton to amend Article II to read... assess current “behavioral health” instead of “mental health” services, with all members voting aye.
- It was moved by Dick Kunnert and seconded by Phil Eaton to amend Article IV to include “one additional three year term”, with all members voting aye.
- It was moved by Matt Toohey and seconded by Dick Kunnert to amend Article V to remove the requirement of a “two-third” vote, but rather a “simple majority” vote of remaining Committee members, with all members voting aye.
- It was moved by Dick Kunnert and seconded by Phil Eaton to amend Article II to remove the words “if deemed necessary” but rather include the word “to”...provide an “annual report”, with all members voting aye.

Mr. Bacon indicated that he would work with the State’s Attorney Office to achieve these changes and will bring back a revised version for the Committee’s consideration.

REVIEW OF THINGS FROM LAST MEETING

Committee members expressed concern about the State budget reductions and their impact on the behavior health care system in Illinois and more broadly the human services network. These concerns were about both budget reductions as well as the dollars that are owed for services already provided. Mr. Kunnert indicated that he will be addressing the adult learning and retirement group at the Unitarian Universalist Church on May 22 on these issues and the implications for Singer closing.

There was further discussion about the implications for the Singer closing and the importance of transitional planning and the development of the necessary community resources. There was additional discussion on the proposed community-based system of care that would likely be more efficient and effective in serving client needs. The mix of patients at Singer was a further matter of discussion.

There was immediacy around the need to debug the ongoing myths that are commonly resurrected from time to time on the sources of clients and the vulnerabilities that exist in all communities in Illinois and the challenges that must be overcome to assure adequate and timely services for those in need and proactively to avoid crisis interventions. One of the more common misperceptions revolves around safety concerns associated with those with mental illness when actually the reverse is predominately true. Those with MI are more often than not the victims of crime, not the perpetrators of crime.

It is important to recognize the accomplishments of a progressive judicial system and the support of the County Board Chair in addressing the disproportionate representation in the criminal justice system by those with substance abuse, addiction and mental illness issues.

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

There was a brief discussion on the importance of trying to identify some funding to support the activities and responsibilities of the Mental Health Advisory Committee over the course of the next year. There was further discussion about the prospect of an application for an AmeriCorps Fellow that could conduct research for the Committee's needs and deliberations. Mr. Bacon will investigate that prospect.

OTHER REPORTS

NAMI reported on their recent activities. There was also discussion of the 211 initiative through the United Way. This was followed by comments from the League of Women Voters representative

ADJOURNMENT

With that the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted, J. Maichle Bacon

Approved by the Mental Health Advisory Committee June 13, 2012
DATE