

**Minutes of the
Winnebago County Mental Health Advisory Committee
Wednesday, October 9, 2013 @ 7:30 a.m.
Rosecrance, 1021 N. Mulford, Rockford, IL**

Present: Angie Goral, Carol Klint, Richard Kunnert, Phil Eaton, Donny Parham

Absent: Dr. Marilyn Griffin, Matthew Toohey

Others Present: Harriett Roll (Boone County Mental Health Advisory Committee), Brad Benedict (Public Policy and Government Affairs Committee of the Board of Realtors), Mike Bacon

The meeting began at approximately 7:30 a.m.

WELCOME / INTRODUCTION

The Advisory Committee members introduced themselves for the benefit of the two guests present at the meeting (i.e. Harriett Roll and Brad Benedict). Members expressed appreciation for their interest in the MHAC activities and dialog.

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2013 MEETING:

Minutes from the September 11 meeting were reviewed with Dick Kunnert and Carol Klint moving to accept moving to accept the minutes of September 11 as presented with all members voting aye.

COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT:

Mr. Bacon reported that a meeting has not been able to be arranged with Health Systems Research to discuss their experience and lessons learned from community behavioral health needs assessment activities in other jurisdictions. It is the intent of MHAC to meet with Mr. Jim Powers from Health Systems Research (HSR) to discuss his work with a number of jurisdictions in northern Illinois for which such work has been conducted through HSR. That meeting will be arranged prior to the next MHAC meeting.

BOARD OF REALTORS GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMISSION (Chairman, Brad Benedict):

Mr. Benedict provided an overview of his personal interest in the centrality of a healthy community when it comes to addressing a wide range of problem areas that the Winnebago County area currently faces. Mr. Benedict offered that what goes for business is good for the community and to the extent behavioral health services are lacking in Winnebago County only shifts the cost to the criminal justice and law enforcement system and other downstream investments and away from the kinds of prevention and wellness opportunities that have the potential to improve behavioral health, greater levels of civility and community cohesion that underpin safer, healthier communities. To the extent the Government Affairs Commission of the Board of Realtors can assist and provide support and speak to these needs, MHAC was reminded that their organization and in particular their Committee is ready to help. This lead to additional discussion around services that are already being provided. Mr. Kunnert mentioned his personal work with Lutheran Social Services in the jail (including

Ruth Fairchild) in providing a broader context for improved levels of civility, community involvement and help of others through their ongoing in-jail training opportunities.

Donny Parham offered his perspective based on his many years of experience in law enforcement. The war on crime and drugs has lead to a number of unintended consequences affecting disproportionately a range of minority groups, especially black men, hit hardest by economic changes, dramatically increased levels of incarceration, accompanied by negative effects on family formation and dramatically changing the percent of births to unmarried women and growth in single head of household families with children, some 40% or greater living presently in poverty. Available jobs were accompanied by low wages where one-worker family with children could not make enough to escape poverty. Locally, unfortunately, along with other economic / corporate, structural changes have destabilized the economy and community mix and increasing the concentration of poverty locally. This has only been further exacerbated by the larger economy.

Mr. Benedict was reassured by Committee members of their interest in working with the Commission and encouraged his ongoing attendance and involvement in Committee work as we move forward in identifying needs and evidence-based strategies for effective interventions.

Angie Goral mentioned the great work of the jail ministry. She pointed out however that the reality is that upon release some of the more immediate needs relate to jobs, housing, and a range of other support services including job readiness training and skill enhancement opportunities. Without such support, recidivism likelihood only increases.

REPORTS FROM OTHER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMITTEES

Phyllis Russell from ACHMAI attended the last Boone County Mental Health Advisory Committee meeting sharing a matrix of service categories that their advisory committee has found useful in deliberating around service area needs. Ms. Roll expressed her interest in learning and sharing from each other.

OTHER MATTERS: None

NEXT MEETING:

There was a reminder of the next meeting, Wednesday, November 13, 2013.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other items for discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Maichle Bacon (Winnebago Count Health Department)

Approved by the Mental Health Advisory Committee: November 13, 2013
DATE