



A Community Mental Health / Developmental Disabilities / Addictive Diseases Program

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**NEW HORIZONS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

May 10, 2021 Via Teleconference

Members Present: David Ranieri, Sandra Gill, April Hughes, Joseph Williams,
Ed Harbison, LaVerne Chaffin, Karen Johnson and Sherrell Terry

Members Excused: Damon Hoyte, Nancy Schroeder, Linda McElroy, and
Edwina Turner

Staff Present: Andrea Winston, Valerie Bowden, Denise Wade,
Susan Gallagher, Randall Newberry, and Molly Jones

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 3:31p.m. A quorum was established at that time. Board Chair David Ranieri welcomed Board members and staff.

For safety concerns during Covid-19 pandemic, today's meeting is a teleconference call and, in accordance with the GACSB rules, will be recorded. Board members were made aware of this prior to the call and it was announced upon dialing in to the call. Molly did a roll call of Board members and staff participating in the call.

RECOGNITION OF GUEST(S) ATTENDING TODAY'S MEETING: No guests were in attendance.

*** SECRETARY'S MINUTES (Approval of April 12, 2021 minutes):** M/S/P Joseph Williams/ Karen Johnson to approve the minutes of April 12, 2021 meeting, Board approved.

FINANCIAL REVIEW: Valerie reported New Horizons had a surplus of \$120,248 for the month of March compared to a budget of \$40,262. This brings the year to date surplus to \$1,546,588 compared to a budget of \$496,798. There were no unusual items in March except that we continue to see the decline in DD Medicaid Waiver revenue as the Annex K DD Retainer billing has run out and there is no longer any DD Retainer Billing allowed after February 28, 2021.

We have also been able to exceed budget for the year due to DBHDD extending the timeframe that we are able to receive 1/12 of our GIA FFS allocated funds, which has now been extended to June. When we developed the budget we did not know yet if it had been extended beyond June 2020. And we are still able to provide and be reimbursed for Medicaid and insurance services providing services via telephone, facetime, zoom, telemedicine, etc. And of course, downsizing our program sites has greatly helped to reduce expenses. Revenues for the first 9 months of the current fiscal year are actually \$2,274,000 less than the first 9 months of last fiscal year. The planned expense reductions to address this shortfall along with program operating expense being down due to programs not operating at full capacity due to COVID has helped the agency to exceed budget for the year.

In developing the FY22 budget, we will assume the DBHDD 1/12 GIA FFS will end in June 2021 so that we can plan accordingly.

Days Cash on Hand at the end of April were 40.00 days. Revenue collections are down, but we have also been keeping expenses down and have been able to increase days cash on hand.

Board members praised staff for the great job they are doing, especially with the challenging circumstances caused by the pandemic.

MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES DAY SERVICES REOPENING PLANS POST COVID: Denise indicated that while there are some Covid-related changes/improvements, there is much uncertainty of what and when post Covid will look like. In reference to our day services programs, the common threads related to reopening are staffing shortages, transportation, and space. At REACH, we currently have 50 individuals attending and have identified individuals who are ready to return. Our plan is to add one group at a time; however, a counselor is needed at the Program and transportation is currently limited to 6 (normally 12) per van. Midtown Recovery has 35 attending in all groups. Individuals are identified who are ready to return and we have some capacity to handle the group size, keeping the current morning and afternoon tracks. Staff shortage is a potential barrier to increasing attendance as quickly as we would like and transportation limitations are a barrier with drivers also needed. The Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Peer will conduct face-to-face groups that will be added. If additional space is needed at these locations to accommodate the numbers, while following guidelines, space may be available at another location. For our I/DD Service Centers and SEP programs, staff are in contact with families to identify individuals who are ready and willing to return to services. Families are being offered assistance with scheduling Covid-19 vaccines as needed and are encouraged to ask questions and/or tour program buildings to help them feel comfortable. Plans are to increase group size where we currently have capacity, but again, staff shortages and transportation are potential barriers to this happening as soon as we would like. The Randolph County Service Center recently held their annual Spring Fling with 20 individuals attending, returning to some semblance of normalcy, while following CDC guidelines.

Andrea added that the work staff shortage is at a critical level for all positions at CSBs and across the industry. Some agencies are limiting services due to the staff shortage. Stimulus funds and enhanced unemployment benefits are preventing people from applying for jobs.

Board members asked if we are advertising the open positions and requested the link for our current listings. The link will be sent following the meeting.

***IN-PERSON BOARD MEETINGS:** Mr. Ranieri asked Board members how they felt about returning to in-person Board Meetings and, if they were in favor, when would be an appropriate time to start. As most Board members and staff who attend have been vaccinated, and with current guidelines being followed, it was suggested that June Board Meeting be held via teleconference, there is no Board meeting scheduled for July, and for the August meeting, consider a hybrid meeting of both in-person and teleconference, so attendees would have a choice. M/S/P Joseph Williams/Sherrell Terry to approve holding a hybrid in-person/teleconference meeting in August, Board approved.

GEMA GRANT: GEMA and Homeland Security has awarded New Horizons \$10,689.23 in Public Assistance Funding to reimburse us for purchases of PPE and other items necessary for staff and individual safety for the period January 20, 2020 through June 30, 2020. Additional funds were requested for extra cleaning supplies needed during the pandemic, but those were not approved and telehealth expenses also were not covered. This is a very slow federal process. The next step will be a contract sent from GEMA/Homeland Security. Once the contract is processed, we will receive reimbursement for approved expenses.

USDA Rural Grant Update: We had our first virtual consortium meeting of the Georgia Digital Framework for Health Equity on May 6th. Year 1 of the project will be dedicated to ordering and installing the telehealth equipment. Initial steps will include site visits from PolyCON, the telehealth equipment provider. Morehouse School of Medicine will be working on this timeline and implementation plan.

SAMHSA Grant: This grant is to enable community mental health centers to support and restore the delivery of clinical services that were impacted by Covid-19. The application will be submitted by the May 21 deadline and funding is based on numbers served.

DBHDD PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING: Andrea reported that DBHDD has made application for Federal Emergency Covid Funding. CSBs and other agencies may be eligible for the funding that could help us in several areas that include: Additional Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) funding, hygiene items for distribution to the homeless, hazardous pay incentives, development of Co-Responder program for crisis calls, return of the High Utilization Management (HUM) Counselor position, Child and Parent Peer Support, expanding the APEX program, and adding Crisis Respite Beds.

DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING, AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS: We received a \$2500 donation from Dr. Jonathan Liss and the Columbus Memory Center thanks to the Facebook Live Program with Pops Barnes. Eight representatives from New Horizons attended the Columbus Laughs Event on April 30 and Valerie accepted the check on behalf of the Agency. The funds will be used to support individuals receiving Integrated Health Service from Dr. Shaw and the REACH Program.

As more people are vaccinated and COVID safety precautions are eased, more Health and Wellness events are being scheduled in the Community. Randolph County will host a drive through Health Fair on Saturday, May 15. River Valley Regional Commission hosted a drive through event on Friday, May 7th.

Mr. Ranieri gave special thanks to Dr. Liss and the Columbus Memory Center, Councilman Barnes, Morehouse School of Medicine and Susan for these valued partnerships and the impact they have on the communities we serve.

COVID SURVEILLANCE REPORT: Andrea reported that since our last Board Meeting New Horizons has had one (1) individual and no (0) staff with lab confirmed positive tests for Covid-19. She stated that, according to the myvaccinegeorgia.com website, 28% of Americans are fully vaccinated and 36% have had at least one vaccine dose. Our goal now is to get the word out and encourage staff, individuals, and their families to get the vaccine, that is safe and free, to protect themselves and those around them. Andrea added that in Georgia, on Friday, May 7th, there were 2,071 individuals hospitalized with Covid-19 and 30 individuals died across the State.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS: Board members shared reports on how they, their families, and communities are managing the ongoing challenges of the pandemic. Most indicated they are fully vaccinated and are looking forward to meeting in-person in the next few months.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Laverne Chaffin was reappointed to another three-year term by the Clay County Commissioners. We so much appreciate her dedication and faithful service to New Horizons.

The GACSB Annual Educational Exchange is scheduled for Sunday, November 7 to Tuesday, November 9, 2021 at Legacy Lodge on Lake Lanier. Board Members interested in attending should let us know as soon as they can as a limited number of reservations will be made in advance.

Vaccine sites will be scheduled at several New Horizons locations through a partnership with the Department of Public Health. Dates, times, and locations should be announced early this week and will be sent out via email.

Andrea encouraged Board Members to join in the FaceBook Live with Pops Barnes show every Monday at 10:00 a.m. It is always interesting, informative, and entertaining with speakers on a variety of topics. If unable to catch the show live, you can also go to New Horizons website for information on the archived shows.

Mr. Ranieri recapped plans for our next few meetings: The June meeting will be held via teleconference, there is no meeting scheduled for July, and the August meeting will be a hybrid in-person/teleconference meeting.

Mr. Ranieri extended thanks to fellow Board Members, New Horizons leadership, and staff for the great job they continue to do during these very challenging times.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comments were presented.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, M/S/P Joseph Williams/Sandra Gill to adjourn the teleconference/meeting at 4:25 p.m., Board approved.

David Ranieri
Chairperson