



*A Community Mental Health / Developmental Disabilities / Addictive Diseases Program*

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**NEW HORIZONS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

August 9, 2021                      Via Teleconference

Members Present:                David Ranieri, Sandra Gill, Ed Harbison, Edwina Turner,  
Joseph Williams, Nancy Schroeder, Linda McElroy,  
Sherrell Terry, LaVerne Chaffin, and Karen Johnson

Members Excused:                April Hughes and Damon Hoyte

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 3:30 p.m.    A quorum was established at that time. Board Chair David Ranieri welcomed Board members and staff.

Today’s meeting was originally scheduled as an in-person/teleconference option per Board approval. Due to DBHDD and GACSB having recent cancellations of trainings and conferences and with Covid numbers increasing in many areas, it was decided that today’s meeting would be a teleconference call and, in accordance with the GACSB rules, will be recorded. Board members were contacted about the change and it was announced upon dialing in to the call that the meeting would be recorded. A decision will be made about the September Board meeting at a later date. Molly did a roll call of Board members and staff participating on the call.

**RECOGNITION OF GUEST(S) ATTENDING TODAY’S MEETING:** Dawn Nguyen-Truong, Director, Center for Health Disparities and Community-Based Research, Columbus State University.

**CSU COMMUNITY PARTNER PRESENTATION:** Susan introduced Dawn Nguyen-Truong from Columbus State University who was our external evaluator and wrote the final project evaluation for the Women of Worth grant and is the current external evaluator on the NEXUS Project. Dawn, Director of the Center for Health Disparities and Community-Based Research Center, announced that a plaque was being presented by Columbus State recognizing New Horizons Behavioral Health as a valuable community partner. Through the center, service-learning and research opportunities are available to students in the College of Education and Health Professions in order to provide real-world experiences to prepare them for the workforce and graduate education.

Dawn expressed gratitude and appreciation to New Horizons' leadership and staff and her hope to continue this partnership for many years to come.

**\* SECRETARY'S MINUTES (Approval of June 14, 2021 minutes):** M/S/P Edwina Turner/ Karen Johnson to approve the minutes of June 14, 2021 meeting, Board approved.

**FINANCIAL REVIEW / YEAR END REPORT / ANNUAL AUDIT:** Valerie reported we had a surplus of \$46,634 for the month of June compared to a budget of \$6,100. This brings the FY21 surplus to \$1,938,051 compared to a budget of \$576,735. We were able to exceed budget for the year due to DBHDD extending the timeframe that we were able to receive 1/12 of our GIA FFS allocated funds each month and the Annex K DD retainer billing we were allowed during FY21. And, we were able to be reimbursed for Medicaid and insurance by providing services via telephone, facetime, zoom, telemedicine, etc. Downsizing our program sites has greatly helped to reduce expenses. Revenues for the FY21 are actually \$2,326,000 less than FY20. The planned expense reductions to address this shortfall, along with program operating expense being down due to programs not operating at full capacity, has helped the agency to exceed budget for the year.

We are working to finalize the FY22 budget. The DBHDD 1/12 of GIA FFS allocated funds provided each month and the Annex K DD retainer billing are no longer available for FY22. This will negatively impact our revenue by approximately 1.7 million dollars. We are reviewing each program to determine where we can produce additional revenue or reduce operating costs.

Days Cash on Hand at the end of June were 45.00 days. Revenue collections are down, but we have also been keeping expenses down and have been able to increase days cash on hand for the fiscal year.

The Annual Financial Audit will take place the week of August 16. We are currently preparing for the audit. It will be a combination of remote and on-site auditing.

Board Members acknowledged the agency is in a good position to begin the fiscal year as we anticipate many challenges and unknowns ahead. They encouraged staff to keep up the good work.

**FY22 COUNTY SERVICES AGREEMENTS:** Andrea reported that with FY21 ending, county agreement renewals are due for FY22 and specifics of the agreements will be shared with the Board. Valerie quoted the DBHDD contract requirement that states the Contractor agrees to seek and apply to the services delivered under this Contract the historic level of local financial support provided by participating county and municipal governments. The agreements have been consistent for many years with the exception of Muscogee County which was reduced a few years ago due to their budget cuts. Services provided were also listed with some counties offering more, but core services are available to all individuals in each county.

Data, by county, was presented as follows:

County	County Match	Individuals Served FY21
Muscogee	\$144,932	5,688
Harris	\$6,000	217
Talbot	\$2,748	64
Chattahoochee	\$2,508	64
Stewart	\$1,872	77
Randolph	\$5,208	182
Quitman	\$624	52
Clay	Office space provided	46

**\* RESOLUTION TO PARTICIPATE IN CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM:** The CACFP federal program provides reimbursement for nutritious meals and snacks at our programs. M/S/P Edwina Turner/Sandra Gill to continue participation in the CACFP program, Board approved.

**FY22 DBHDD CONTRACTS:** Andrea announced new contracts and increases to existing contracts, not including core services, for a number of DBHDD contracts for FY22. They include:

1. Increase in HIV funds of \$75,000 for the next 4 years. This should come as an amendment to the core contract in August.
2. Increase in the Gambling Addiction contract of \$50,000 for the next 4 years. This will also be an amendment to the Gambling Addiction contract.
3. MAT: \$50,000 for two years, \$25,000 per year  
To be used by adults w/o entitlements in MAT services. For example, medications. Will be added to regional core contract.
4. ICM & Supported Employment:  
\$2,857 for each team for the purchase of material & supplies for skill building, teaching tools, etc. Outings for individuals, transportation to medical appointments. Will be added to regional core contract.

5. Workforce hazard pay: \$50,000 for two years, \$25,000 per year  
For retaining & attracting qualified nursing & clinical staff. Will be added to regional core contract.
6. Co-responder Program: 1 FT Licensed clinician. New funding allocations; \$179,571 spread across 2 fiscal years to fund a licensed clinician who will work along w/ law enforcement as a co-responder, targeting areas with highest volume of BH related 911 calls and areas of high officer-involved shootings during the pandemic within areas of highest population. For diversion of individuals with SMI from jails to treatment but would also steadily decrease the volume of non-violent 911 calls in which officers are involved.
7. HUM program reinstated: \$92,983 for two years. Covers one full time staff salary & benefits and program operating costs. Will be new contract.
8. Corrections Pilot Project: Providing supports to individuals with SMI exiting the correctional facility in Muscogee County to facilitate their successful re-entry to the community and their connection to community-based services and resources, including housing and potential referral to the Georgia Housing Voucher Program. The team will consist of 1 Case Manager and 1 CPS who will work with identified individuals as they transition back into the community and have not yet connected to a long-term provider or accessed supports with securing housing through GHVP. The Muscogee Co. Jail has a mental health component through community-based provider New Horizons and the Licensed Mental Health Professional has agreed to complete the assessment and diagnosis on the referred individuals. This position and the assessments are not funded by this grant. These positions will support an existing partnership involving DBHDD and its Region 6 Regional Field Office, Department of Corrections, and the Department of Community Supervision.  
Budget \$231,200  
115,600 per year x 2 years = \$231,200      Contract years (2)

Board Members inquired about staffing shortage issues reported in recent Board meetings and expressed concerns on how we would provide new or increased contract services for FY22 in this environment. Andrea acknowledged that this is still very much a problem, as we continue to have many vacant positions, and the workforce hazard pay will only help a little. Transportation is also an area of concern due to lack of funding and lack of staff, but a recent meeting with the Chief Financial Officer and staff of the Transportation Department at DBHDD gave us hope that funding may be available soon. Positive feedback on the new programs was expressed by several Board members.

**DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING, AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS:** The Community Reinvestment Department of the Columbus Consolidated Government has awarded (2) grants to New Horizons Behavioral Health through their “Public Services” Funding. New Horizons will receive \$32,000 to fund a Wheelchair-Accessible Minivan for its I/DD Program and \$7,500 to fund bedroom furniture for GHFA Permanent Supported Housing units in Muscogee County. Both of these programs support the City’s Consolidated Plan by serving low income individuals in special populations.

The Facebook Live Show with Pops Barnes is on hiatus and will return August 23. Our ads for the MAT Program and Child and Adolescent Services are running on WTVM. We are scheduling small Outreach and Education events at the Parks and Recreations Centers and Senior Centers throughout the year with one location highlighted each month from 11 AM – 1 PM. Pops Barnes is coordinating for the other agencies to participate, with New Horizons selecting dates and locations. We are in communication with Holli Browder with Parks and Recreations.

A suggestion was made to invite Jerry “Pops” Barnes to a future meeting and honor him publicly for all he does for New Horizons and the community.

Mark your calendar and save the date for “Recovery on the River” celebrating National Recovery Month. New Horizons has received a \$1200 mini grant from the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse to help host the event. Our event is scheduled for Saturday, September 11th from 10:00 am - Noon and will include a .7 mile stroll through Uptown as well as Recovery speakers and door prizes.

**COVID SURVEILLANCE REPORT:** Andrea reported that nationwide the vaccination rate is at 50%, but in Georgia the rate is only 39%. We continue to encourage staff and individuals to get vaccinated. Updated Coronavirus Cases for New Horizons are at 266 (combined individual and staff exposures and individual and staff confirmed positive cases) with 6 new cases since 7/21/21 and 2 Covid-19 related deaths.

Many of us developed a false sense of safety once we were vaccinated and Covid numbers had decreased, but with the Delta variant more widespread and transmissible, we are being more cautious and hope to see an increase in vaccinations. Andrea presented the following data from the Department of Public Health for fully vaccinated people in our eight county area:

County	Percent Vaccinated
Muscogee	31%
Chattahoochee	15%
Clay	46%
Quitman	30%
Randolph	31%
Harris	35%
Talbot	36%
Stewart	27%

An inquiry was made as to how New Horizons staff is doing. Andrea responded that our Medical Director asked if all employees could be required to be vaccinated, but the Governor has announced that we can not mandate staff vaccinations. We have continued requiring masks and following sanitizing and other precautions in our building and, due to the increase in Covid numbers, continue to have PPE on hand and rapid testing available. We have certainly seen an increase in stress, anxiety, overdoses, violence, and suicides over the past months and an email to sent to All Employees recently was a reminder to be more vigilant and prepared as crisis situations are becoming more frequent and to exercise self-care on and off the job. During these challenging times, we must take care of ourselves and those around us.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Andrea announced that nationwide settlements totaling \$26 billion have been reached to resolve opioid litigation brought by states and local political subdivisions against the three largest pharmaceutical distributors: McKesson, Cardinal Health and AmerisourceBergen, and manufacturer Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and its parent company Johnson & Johnson. The focus of these proposed settlements is funding services related to abatement of the opioid epidemic.

The GACSB Annual Educational Exchange is November 7-9 at Legacy Lodge on Lake Lanier Islands, Georgia. A block of rooms has been reserved and those interested in attending should let us know as soon as possible. As with all conferences and trainings scheduled at this time, plans are subject to change and Board Members will be notified should this occur.

Information on the Lifeline Wireless Program, providing free connectivity for Georgia Medicaid Members, was presented. Free smartphones, with unlimited talk and text, plus a monthly data plan are available to all Medicaid members. This information will be shared with staff, individuals, family, and friends.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Edwina Turner announced she had received an email from Cheryl Kolb, Program Director for the West Central Health District, regarding counterfeit pills and new opioid analogs showing up in Georgia and all types of illicit drugs are testing positive for Fentanyl. There was also a link for Addiction, Opioids, and Narcan Administration training and after the training, Nasal Narcan will be provided to the participating organization. She will forward the email after the meeting. Susan added that the information was posted on New Horizons Facebook page.

Appreciation was expressed to all of our Board Members who volunteer their time, with no pay, and are truly dedicated to the individuals in our services with mental illness, addictive disease, and developmental disabilities and to New Horizons employees.

A determination will be made for either in person, teleconference, or a hybrid option prior to the September Board meeting and Board Members will be notified.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, M/S/P Joseph Williams/Linda McElroy to adjourn the teleconference/meeting at 4:26 p.m., Board approved.

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David Ranieri  
Chairperson