



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

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**NEW HORIZONS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
2100 Comer Avenue – New Horizons Training Room  
Columbus, GA 31906**

Date of Meeting: May 13, 2024

Members Present: Damon Hoyte, Nancy Schroeder, Ed Harbison,  
Terry Edwards, LaVerne Chaffin, Karen Johnson,  
Sandra Gill, and Linda McElroy

Members Excused: April Hughes, Joseph Williams, David Ranieri, and Edwina Turner

Staff Present: Andrea Winston, Susan Gallagher, Danny Davenport,  
Karen Cotton-Everett, Denise Wade McLeod,  
Chloe Landreth, and Molly Jones

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Damon Hoyte at 3:32 p.m.  
A quorum was established at that time.

**RECOGNITION OF GUEST(S) ATTENDING TODAY’S MEETING:** Dr. Edward Minor,  
Medical Director, NHBH and Dr. Harjesus Sandhu, St. Francis-Emory Healthcare.

**\* SECRETARY’S MINUTES (Approval of March 11, 2024 minutes):** M/S/P Terry  
Edwards/Nancy Schroeder to approve the March 11, 2024 minutes, Board approved.

**JERRY “POPS” BARNES TRIBUTE:** In Loving Memory of Jerry “Pops” Barnes - 1943 to  
2024. Among all of the great things Jerry “Pops” Barnes was, he was a dear friend and great  
supporter of New Horizons and those we serve. He served our community, our people, and our  
country in so many ways. He was in the Army for 20 years, on the Columbus City Council for  
20 years, was a nurse, a proud Columbus resident, devoted husband and father, and a public  
servant in every sense. He cared deeply about his constituents, taking the time to go door-to-door  
and personally meet hundreds of residents in his district. He used his platform to support and  
promote local organizations whose mission is to serve the underserved, like New Horizons,  
through his CCG-TV show and live FaceBook shows. A wide range of topics and information  
related to health, mental health, well-being, and community events were presented on his shows by  
New Horizons staff and others in the community, but “Pops” made the show relatable, informative,  
and entertaining. “Pops” will be greatly missed, but his impact will remain everlasting. A  
moment of silence followed honoring “Pops” memory.

**ST. FRANCIS/EMORY RESIDENCY PROGRAM:** Dr. Edward Minor, Medical Director at New Horizons, introduced Dr. Harjesus Sandhu. Dr. Sandhu presented an overview of the Psychiatry Residency Program of St. Francis-Emory Healthcare. The program's mission is to make communities healthier, train psychiatrists to be excellent clinicians who will be leaders in our communities, provide high quality healthcare, promote health and wellness of our residents and staff, and engage in social/charitable organizations to decrease health disparities in underprivileged populations. A number of community psychiatrists and Internal Medicine physicians are on board to teach and supervise the residents and community partners including West Central Georgia Regional Hospital, Martin Army Community Hospital, Pastoral Institute, New Horizons Behavioral Health, and the Bradley Center will offer residents experience in inpatient and outpatient clinical psychiatric rotations for adults, elderly patients, children and adolescents. The program will enable Board Certified Psychiatrists to take care of the community in inpatient and outpatient settings, conduct outreach seminars to teach disparities in cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, and enhance community workforce and economic development. With a goal of to create the best psychiatry residency program and the vision to have 7 residents each year for a total of 28 residents in the 4-year program, this is a great opportunity for New Horizons and our community, and the impact will be significant.

**FINANCIAL REVIEW:** Susan reported that for February 2024, Medicaid and GIA-FFS billing remained below budget. The Revenue Acquisition Department (RAD) Team and Information Technology (IT) Team continue to work to ensure CareLogic growing pains are identified and addressed. In response to the Change Healthcare cyber attack, we have moved to Availity to facilitate claims processing. Grant in Aid and Federal Funds revenue are higher than budgeted while contract revenue is trending downward. Investment interest was not budgeted and is part of the Employer Retention Tax Credit interest earned. Overall, YTD actual revenues are higher than YTD budgeted revenues, but expenses are also higher than budgeted. February expenses were \$215,572 over budget with Salaries/Benefits the largest contributors to the budget variance due to salary increases and bonuses mandated from the Governor's office. The YTD deficit is \$841,431 for the month ending February 29<sup>th</sup>. We continue to operate under the CCBHC model with no corresponding CCBHC payment rate from DBHDD. Costing Information was provided to DBHDD on February 29 to establish the PPS rate for the agency, but we have not had any feedback or approval from DBHDD. We received an additional \$625,000 from DBHDD for our CCBHC contract that provided \$125,000 monthly for assistance with personnel costs. In March, Medicaid and GIA-FFS billing continued to be below budgeted amounts. Grant in Aid and Federal Funds revenue were higher than budgeted and contract revenue reversed its downward trend due to the CCBHC contract in March. Overall, YTD actual revenues are higher than YTD budgeted revenues, but again, expenses continue to be higher than budgeted. March expenses were \$181,212 over budget for the month; however, we did realize a monthly surplus of \$87,547 due to additional CCBHD funding of \$125,000 per month for February and March. Without this funding, our loss for March would be \$162,436. YTD deficit is \$753,885 for the month ending March 31. The Executive Leadership Team is looking at current staffing levels, open positions posted, and program census levels to see where reductions in Salaries/Benefits can be made without jeopardizing CCBHC readiness, and while factoring in the State's proposed 4% salary increase for full-time State employees. April Medicaid, Medicaid Waiver, and GIA-FFS continue to be below budgeted amounts. RAD and IT teams continue to work on CareLogic billing/collection issues.

Grant in Aid and Federal Funds revenue are higher than budgeted and contract revenue reversed its downward trend. YTD actual revenues are higher than YTD budgeted revenue, but expenses continue to be higher than budgeted. April expenses were \$279,275 over budget for the month with Salaries/Benefits, as in February and March, being the largest contributors to the variance. YTD deficit is \$1,033,160 for the month ending April 30<sup>th</sup>. The Leadership Team continues to review ways to reduce expenses. The DBHDD State CCBHC Team is aware of our need for continued financial support while awaiting a PPS rate. In addition, we have indicated on our Financial Quarterly Reporting to DBHDD the need for additional funding to maintain the current level of operations without a PPS rate.

We have experienced a 33 day reduction of Days Cash on Hand since the sunset of the SAMHSA and DBHDD grants in October. This is a serious concern and is not sustainable. Our March Financial KPI scores indicate Cash on Hand is 148.21 with daily expenditures of \$66,778.

The Finance Department continues to have budget meetings with Executive Leadership and are budgeting for three possible scenarios: PPS Rate starting July 1, PPS Rate starting January 1, and no PPS Rate in FY25.

We have partnered with Morehouse School of Medicine on an HRSA Rural Community Opioid grant that was submitted on May 6. Cheryl Williams, CSS Coordinator, submitted multiple applications to DCA/HUD for funding to allow us to leverage resources, if awarded. This would allow for more funding of our CCBHC Rural Expansion Plans while we await a PPS rate. We continue to explore lease/purchase opportunities to return to our Pre-Covid level of facilities and CCBHC expansion, especially for Midtown Recovery, Integrated Health, and Youth Serving programs.

**SERVICE PROCESS QUALITY MANAGEMENT (SPQM) – GACSB FINANCIAL DATA:** Due to time constraints, this agenda item will be presented in the June Board Meeting

**CARELON AUDIT RESULTS:** Due to time constraints, this agenda item will be presented in the June Board Meeting.

**OPIOID SETTLEMENT UPDATE:** Turning the tide on opioids in Georgia is a mission to collaboratively eradicate and prevent the opioid crisis in Georgia, fostering healing and safeguarding future generations. Andrea reminded Board Members that, in 2021, a nationwide settlement was reached to resolve all opioid litigation brought by States and local political subdivisions against the three largest pharmaceutical distributors, McKesson, Cardinal Health, and Johnson & Johnson. In 2022, the Georgia Opioid Crisis Abatement Trust, with Commissioner Kevin Tanner of DBHDD as Trustee, was created to receive Georgia's portion of the settlement funds and any interest generated by those funds. The Georgia Opioid Settlement Advisory Commission was established by Executive Order from Governor Brian Kemp in May of 2023. Georgia's share of the settlement funds is just over \$636 million. That money is coming in over 18 years and must be spent for Prevention, Treatment, Recovery, and Harm Reduction. The Advisory Commission is responsible for administering the grant process to local entities in Region 6 via an RFP and approval process. Applications will be accepted from April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 17<sup>th</sup>.

**INTENSIVE TREATMENT RESIDENCE FIRE:** Denise reported on a fire that occurred April 2 during the night at the ITR group home. Thankfully, all four residents and one staff got out safely, with no injuries. Staff noticed one of the individuals walked outside during the night and upon checking the individual's bedroom, noticed the fire. That individual, who had started the fire, was sent to The Bradley Center and the other three residents were transported to another group home. An arson investigator visited the home April 4<sup>th</sup> and warrants were later issued for the individual for multiple charges and he was incarcerated April 5<sup>th</sup>. McIntosh Trail (another CSB) accepted the other three individuals into their residential program. The Insurance Adjuster inspected the home and damage and submitted an estimate for clean-up and repairs. The ITR remains closed at this time.

**DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING, AND PUBLIC RELATIONS:** Chloe reported on a number of outreach events attended recently including health fairs, resource, and wellness fairs, New Horizons' I/DD Talent Show, clothing giveaways, and the HOPE Center Celebration. In June, staff will participate in the Pride Festival and the Juneteenth Celebration. Social Media contacts continue to increase and Suicide Prevention and HIV PSAs are airing over the next few months on TV and Radio. Mental Health First Aid Training for faith leaders is May 30 and Youth Mental Health First Aid Training is offered in English and Spanish June 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. New online donation and sponsorship forms are available on New Horizons Behavioral Health's website. Andrea presented of overview of New Horizons for the Columbus CEO website and email newsletter, and WRBL filmed an in-depth interview with motivational speaker Marquis Hill that is airing on their website. Upcoming projects include: Mental Health Awareness Month proclamation presentation at Columbus City Council meeting tomorrow, Dr. LaKaren Rickman and Susan Gallagher are attending Board of Commissioner meetings in all eight counties to present the Community Mental Health Needs Assessment, the new Mobile Unit has arrived, decals will be installed soon, and sponsors are being sought for Recovery on the River to be held in September. Chloe encouraged Board Members and staff to vote for New Horizons for Columbus Peoples' Choice Award.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Susan announced New Horizons will participate in setting up a scholarship in memory of Jerry "Pops" Barnes. A meeting has been held to discuss implementation with his family involved and more details will follow.

Board Members were reminded to save the date for the GACSB Leadership Conference October 27-29 at Lake Lanier.

Mr. Hoyte expressed appreciation to New Horizons staff who reached out to assist following a tragic family violence episode in his area.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** No public comments were made.

**ADJOURNMENT:** At 5:15 p.m. M/S/P Laverne Chaffin/Ed Harbison to adjourn the meeting, Board approved.

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Damon Hoyte  
Chairperson

