



A Community Mental Health / Developmental Disabilities / Addictive Diseases Program

*Administration
P.O. Box 5328
2100 Comer Avenue
Columbus, GA 31906*

*(706) 596-5588
FAX (706) 596-5589*

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

Date of Meeting: February 13, 2023

Members Present: Damon Hoyte, Edwina Turner, Joseph Williams,
Karen Johnson, LaVerne Chaffin, Sandra Gill,
and Linda McElroy

Members Excused: David Ranieri, Nancy Schroeder, April Hughes,
and Ed Harbison

Staff Present: Andrea Winston, Denise Wade McLeod, Susan Gallagher,
Randall Newberry, Chloe Landreth, and Molly Jones

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chair Damon Hoyte at 3:32 p.m. A quorum was not established at that time, but was established later in the meeting.

RECOGNITION OF GUEST(S) ATTENDING TODAY'S MEETING: Mac Moye, Stewart County Manager.

*** SECRETARY'S MINUTES (Approval of January 9, 2023 minutes):** M/S/P Joseph Williams/LaVerne Chaffin to approve the January 9, 2023 minutes, Board approved.

FINANCIAL REVIEW: Susan reported New Horizons closed the month of December with a surplus of \$572,280 and a year to date surplus of \$1,475,516. Medicaid Waiver Revenue was higher for the month and is no longer in a deficit. This is attributable to the 5% I/DD increase from FY22. Medicaid fees are higher for both the monthly and year to date budgets. Grant in Aid-FFS has a year to date deficit of \$135,958 under budget. Personnel expenses continue to be lower than budgeted which is attributed to the number of positions vacant across the agency. Motor vehicle expenses, excluding leases, are higher than budgeted, reflecting the age of the fleet. Equipment costs, mainly consisting of IT equipment, is \$101,135 year to date over budget. Days Cash on Hand at the end of December was 133.69 days. We have received the final Audited Financial Statements. The final report indicated we received an unmodified opinion, meaning the auditor concludes that the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The report will be emailed to Board members for review.

Rhonda Collins, CPA will attend the March Board Meeting to formally present the report and answer any questions. We are investigating automation of the annual budget process through our Accumatica Software and are looking for ways to enhance services to individuals in our Representative Payee Program by implementing Stable accounts.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH REFORM AND INNOVATION COMMISSION'S FINAL

REPORT 2022: The Commission, appointed by the Governor, and led by Kevin Tanner, who has now been appointed DBHDD Commissioner, released their final report/recommendations for 2022. The report listed seven priorities: Addressing the workforce shortage, data collection and information sharing, building a robust crisis system, building capacity within Medicaid, expanding and improving successful community-based practices, services, and programs, and streamlining existing policies and statutes. To address the workforce shortage, recommendations included increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates, modernizing licensing practices, establishing loan forgiveness/repayment programs, increasing psychiatric residency programs, and strengthening Georgia's peer support workforce. Building data sharing capacity, establishing a uniform process for data sharing, and funding of additional crisis services to increase capacity were also included in the report along with expansion of programs for children and adolescents, coordinating practices between the criminal justice and behavioral health systems, and studying the benefits and limitations of the Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCBHC) model.

***EMORY UNIVERSITY COMPASS CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT:** Susan explained that the Emory COMPASS Coordinating Center offers capacity building grants up to \$25,000. These grants support activities which focus on reaching the next level in operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational growth. Funding is specifically for capacity building around HIV activities. The focus of our application will be training for two additional HIV rapid testers and marketing/communications around our new mobile unit. M/S/P Joseph Williams/Edwina Turner to approve the grant application, Board approved.

CERTIFIED COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTER (CCBHC) UPDATE:

Denise reported on a recent CCBHC meeting with Lexicon, a marketing company, DBHDD, and Region 6 staff to discuss current challenges and opportunities provided by CCBHC funding and designation, current perceptions of persons served in the community and opportunities for growth, and the development of marketing strategies around CCBHC. CSBs are moving through the process of developing new Prospective Payment System (PPS) rates, but it is possible the State will not be ready to move to the new rates due to the process required by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, State Plan Amendment. An actuary will need to approve the new rates. Denise added there is a new website, ccbhcgeorgia.org for more detailed information on CCBHC.

CAPITAL INVESTMENTS: Susan reminded Board members that in response to the Covid pandemic, New Horizons turned its service delivery model around quickly moving to telehealth services and letting go of office space. While these moves helped us survive the pandemic and decreased our overhead expenses, we are now moving to a post-pandemic world and are in need of more office space for staff and programs. Several of our buildings currently house multiple programs.

New Horizons' Leadership met with a local realty team recently to discuss our need for office space and are hopeful they will find a suitable location for additional offices to relocate some of our departments from Comer Avenue. Our vehicle fleet, while well-maintained, is aging and, as vehicles get older, they need more maintenance and repairs. Computers have limited useful life of 3 to 5 years, and laptops even less. As we continue to expand our telehealth services, we continue to need upgrades to our wi-fi technology, data security, and the staff to meet the IT needs of an 8-county service area. To return to pre-pandemic levels, we need additional facilities, staff, laptops/computers, and vehicles. We are in the information gathering stage for facilities, determining our needs and looking at commercial inventory, assessing our vehicle fleet to establish a replacement plan, and looking at our IT needs, especially around staff growth. To grow the number of individuals served, we need to grow our infrastructure and to grow our infrastructure, we need to serve more individuals.

GIVING HEALTH PARTNERSHIP – CLAY/RANDOLPH COUNTIES: Denise reported a new partnership with Giving Health for Clay and Randolph counties. Giving Health, Inc is a 501(c)3 Not-for-Profit that provides access to no cost telehealth services (medical, counseling, and discount prescription drug program) to low income, uninsured and underinsured residents in Georgia. Giving Health recently added Social Care, which includes identification of insecurities associated with the Social Determinants of Health and referrals to community services. They partner with free clinics, FQHCs, community organizations and other non-profits to remove longstanding barriers to accessing healthcare. Telehealth technology is revolutionizing the healthcare industry and it is their goal to ensure that members of communities who are struggling with access to healthcare can leverage their no-cost telehealth service. As Board Members were interested in this no cost service for their communities, we will inquire about availability in other counties and share that information.

DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING, AND PUBLIC RELATIONS: Susan announced that Chloe Landreth has joined the New Horizons Team as the Marketing and Outreach Coordinator. Chloe, a 2022 graduate of the University of South Carolina, majored in Public Relations and most recently worked at Valley Hospitality as Marketing and Social Media Assistant. To celebrate National Recovery Month in September, the Georgia Council on Recovery and other partners are sponsoring the Mobilize Recovery across Georgia Bus Tour with 43 tour stops planned. New Horizons will host the Recovery on the River event Friday, September 8th at Woodruff Park during the Columbus tour stop. More information will follow as plans develop. It was also announced that motivational speaker, Jeff Yalden will present mental health awareness assemblies at schools in Clay, Randolph, and Stewart counties in September. Newspaper, television, radio, and billboard ads continue running and applications for funding of two federal grants will be submitted this cycle. Board Members were requested to like New Horizons on Facebook and share posts with friends, family, and community members. The official announcement of funding for a new Mobile Unit has not been received, but is expected soon.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Andrea indicated some changes/restructuring of New Horizons' leadership will be announced in next month's Board meeting.

A Proclamation designating March as Intellectual Developmental Disability Month will be presented to New Horizons at the City Council meeting on Tuesday, February 28th at 5:30 pm. Board Members are invited to attend.

The Department of Transportation has made an offer on the right of way in front of our Intensive Training Residential group home to widen Veterans Parkway. A meeting is scheduled to discuss the impact of the widened road at that location.

DBHDD Commissioner Tanner made a presentation to the GACSB on 2/8/23 with the following areas of focus: Behavioral Health and Intellectual Developmental Disability rates studies to support the workforce to increase rates, Managed Care Procurement process to manage CMOs, workforce development, continue to use the Behavioral Health Reform Commission's recommendations to help guide DBHDD, and develop a seamless and more timely system for contracts.

It was recently announced that Veterans in crisis can go to any VA or non VA healthcare facility at no cost with inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days and outpatient care up to 90 days. Veterans do not need to be enrolled in the VA system to use this benefit.

Our application was approved for Co-Responder services in Harris County. A meeting is scheduled for February 24th with law enforcement, DBHDD, and New Horizons staff to discuss next steps.

Several Board members' terms will expire during 2023: Edwina Turner, Sandra Gill, Linda McElroy, and Nancy Schroeder. Letters will be sent to the designated County Commission or City Council for reappointments.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comments were made.

ADJOURNMENT: M/S/P Joseph Williams/Edwina Turner to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m., Board approved.

Damon Hoyte
Chairperson