



*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*

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**NEW HORIZONS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
2100 Comer Avenue – Conference Room B  
Columbus, GA 31906**

Date of Meeting: February 14, 2022

Members Present: Damon Hoyte, Nancy Schroeder, Joseph Williams,  
LaVerne Chaffin, Karen Johnson, April Hughes,  
David Ranieri, and Sandra Gill,

Members Excused: Edwina Turner, Ed Harbison, and Linda McElroy

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

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 3:28 p.m. A quorum was established at that time.

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

**RECOGNITION OF NEW BOARD CHAIR:** Andrea welcomed our new Board Chair, Damon Hoyte, who was elected during the January meeting. Mr. Hoyte met with Andrea recently to learn more about New Horizon, the Georgia Association of Community Service Boards (GACSB), and the role of the Board.

**SERVICE AWARD PRESENTATION:** A service award was presented to outgoing Board Chair, David Ranieri, who has served on the Board since 2013 and served as Chairman from December of 2018 to January of 2022. Mr. Ranieri has been a dedicated, faithful member and an exemplary Board Chair. Mr. Ranieri expressed his appreciation for the award, acknowledging it has been his pleasure to serve both as a Member and Chair of the Board. He expressed his support for Mr. Hoyte in his new role as Board Chair. Mr. Hoyte stated he is honored to continue the legacy of leadership on the Board established by his predecessors.

**LOSS OF BOARD MEMBER:** With great sadness, we learned of the passing of Board Member and Vice Chair, Sherrell Terry, in January. Ms. Terry had served on our Board since 2017 and was the first female Magistrate and Probate Judge for Talbot County. Her passion and zest for life was evident in her dedication to her community, her family, her sorority, and her work. Mr. Hoyte attended Ms. Terry's funeral and shared that she was a pillar of both the Talbot and Harris County communities and touched the lives of all who knew her. A moment of silence to remember and honor Ms. Terry was shared by the Board.

**\*ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR:** To fill the vacant Vice Chair position, Nancy Schroeder was nominated to serve as Vice Chair. M/S/P Karen Johnson/Joseph Williams to approve, Board approved.

**\*SECRETARY'S MINUTES (Approval of January 10, 2022 minutes):** M/S/P Joseph Williams/Nancy Schroeder to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2022 meeting, Board approved.

**FINANCIAL REVIEW / HISTORY:** Valerie reported the agency had a surplus for the month of December 2021 of \$272,483 compared to the budget of \$21,937 and a year to date surplus of \$713,508 compared to the budget of \$111,236. There were no unusual items in the December financials. We have started receiving funding for the SAMSHA Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) grant and the DBHDD Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCBHC) grant. This funding will help to cover agency costs as we prepare to be CMHC and CCBHC certified. And, this funding is time limited to two years so this will help to put us in a position to weather the conversion to CCBHC. Days Cash on Hand at the end of January were 60.00 days.

For information and educational purposes, a history of the agency's worst and best financial positions was presented.

To illustrate New Horizons' worst financial position, Valerie reported that on 6/30/10, we had a deficit of \$1,236,542 and in February of 2015, negative 4.26 Days Cash on Hand. During June of 2011, our line of credit use was \$250,000 and in June of 2018, \$150,000. These amounts were repaid over time. Two furlough days a month were required for staff from January of 2010 through June of 2010 and one furlough day a month from January of 2012 to February of 2016. Loss of 30 staff through attrition/layoffs occurred on 6/30/2005 and a larger decrease of 128 staff through attrition/layoff on 6/30/2007.

Our best financial position came on 6/30/21 with a surplus of \$1,942,216 and in January of 2022 with 60 days cash on hand. CCBHC and CMHC two-year grants totaling \$4,500,000 were awarded in 2021. Right sizing, that took place in June of 2020 due to the Covid pandemic, resulted in annual savings of \$700,000 in salaries/benefits and \$260,000 in rent and overhead expenses from combining program sites. Provider relief funds through the Health Resources and Services Administration of over \$700,000 were allocated for June 2021 and June 2022. Salaries have been reviewed for various job categories and raises implemented to bring salary levels closer to market rates. Bonuses of \$200 for full-time staff and \$100 for part-time staff were distributed in November 2021.

**NEW HORIZONS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH – THEN & NOW:** Andrea presented “Where it All Began,” historical information from the late 60’s to present. New Horizons began with only three programs and was then known as Columbus Area Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Program. The 70’s saw programs increase to 8, an expansion in substance abuse treatment programs, and the creation of the Department of Human Resources (DHR) under Gov. Jimmy Carter. Day Treatment Programs for Mental Health and Substance Abuse were added in the 80’s bringing the program number to 15. A street team to fight AIDS, substance abuse treatment for adolescents, and a clinical evaluation team and family support for mental retardation were added. The 90’s brought an increase in programs to 25 and target area funding was received for chronically mentally ill adults and seriously emotionally disturbed children. Numerous programs were implemented to better serve these populations and we were charged with reducing utilization of state hospital beds. With many changes within the agency, change was also occurring at the State level. Community Service Boards (CSBs) were created in 1993, as a result of House Bill 100, a measure reforming the delivery of MH/MR/SA services. and administratively separating the Columbus Area Program from public health. An employee contest resulted in our new name, New Horizons Community Service Board. In 2006, House Bill 1223 was enacted into law. This legislation addressed the problem of board membership size resulting from population increase reflected in each county based on the United States census. It also addressed concerns raised about the operations of CSBs in recent reports of the State Department of Audits and Accounts. The organization was known as New Horizons Community Service Board until 2014 when the name was changed to New Horizons Behavioral Health. Currently, we have 293 team members and 36 locations in our eight county service area. The Covid pandemic led to a reduction in staff due to less individuals being served. An organizational chart was displayed that outlined programs, staff, and specialty services.

**REGULATORY AND GOVERNING BODIES:** To educate the Board on “Who does New Horizons answer to?” Denise shared information on the regulatory and governing bodies who provide oversight of the agency. New Horizons aspires to achieve in our efforts to ensure that we are aware of and take steps to comply with relevant laws, policies, and regulations on local, state, and federal levels. Applicable statutory requirements, rules, regulations, licensing, accreditation, and contractual/agreement requirements are evident in organizational policies, procedures, and practices. Regulatory agencies for programs/services, housing, licensing, inspections, billing, fiscal transparency, transportation, and the payee program include: Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Department of Community Health (DCH), Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Public Health (DPH), Columbus Consolidated Government, USDA Food Assistance Program, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Independent Annual Financial Audits, ModivCare, and the Social Security Administration. Websites were provided for the Board for additional information if interested. These agencies provide a high level of oversight to ensure we are monitored regularly.

**INTERNAL GOVERNANCE:** Cyndy presented information on governance within the agency that ensures we are following guidelines, policies and procedures, rules and regulations, and best practices to deliver quality services. An organizational chart was presented outlining the structure of leadership committees including Staff Executive, Performance Improvement, Medical Services, Clinical Care, and Environment of Care. Subcommittees are formed, as needed, with the recent additions of Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers and Electronic Medical Records. Committees meet on a regular basis and share information/data. These committees ensure that the agency has the appropriate level of checks and balances for service delivery, individual rights and ethics, policies/procedures, fiscal management, safety, and data collection.

**CURRENT INITIATIVES:** Denise gave an update on current initiatives including Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT), Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (CCBHC), Co-Responder Program, Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC), and the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) Search. AOT is a legal procedure that may be employed in the case of a specific individual who meets certain criteria for involuntary commitment to a program of outpatient care. The AOT pilot program will be funded for four years. CCBHC, funded by DBHDD, is the future of behavioral health in Georgia that will treat the whole person including primary health care. We are working closely with DBHDD and other CSBs to move toward this value based care. The Co-Responder program partners Community Service Boards with Law Enforcement Agencies to reduce burdens on law enforcement in handling crisis situations involving behavioral health individuals. This is a nationwide initiative with several teams operating successfully in Georgia. The goal of the CMHC project, “Recovery, Resiliency, Restoration,” is to restore services to pre-pandemic levels using a combination of enhanced telehealth services, increased staffing, evidence-based practices, targeted outreach, cultural competencies, and staff mental health wellness support. New Horizons lost 934 individuals to services in FY20 as a result of the Covid pandemic. Our goal is to serve 1,000 new individuals over the two year grant period. The search for a new or updated EMR, made possible by grant funding, continues with several vendors under consideration and demos scheduled to help us determine the best fit for the agency. We are very excited about these initiatives that will bring new, enhanced services to our individuals.

**DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS:** “Did You Know” marketing campaign cards were distributed to each Board Member. Susan reminded them that a different topic/service will be highlighted each month. Susan suggested they use the cards to start a conversation about mental health with community leaders, co-workers, and friends, and to leave a cards in public places to spark conversations and share information with others. Susan is working with Image by Design on development of a new video with the theme “Hope is on the Horizon.” We continue to run ads related to mental health and Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) on WTVM.

Mr. Hoyte asked for an update on the motivational speaker, Shaun Golden, to speak to students in the county school systems that Susan mentioned in the January Board meeting. Susan indicated some of the schools have been hesitant to schedule an assembly type program due to the pandemic. Ms. Hughes requested Susan send her the information to present to the Chattahoochee County school principals. Susan added that May is Mental Health Awareness Month and that would be an opportune time to schedule these programs for middle and high school students.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Andrea announced that we have recently learned that our contract for jail services will end soon. A new vendor contract for medical services at the jail will include mental health and dental services. Andrea reached out to the Sheriff's office to discuss this further and was not able to speak with him directly, but was told they had decided to "go with something different." Our contract with the jail ends in June, but could be terminated sooner. Plans are to transition our jail staff to open positions.

The GACSB is working with CSBs on a strategy for alternative payment plans based on costs for services. More information will be shared as plans are developed.

Ms. Johnson inquired about the best approach to get someone into services in her area. Andrea suggested she reach out to the Behavioral Health Clinic in Randolph County to set up an intake and take the individual there as voluntary treatment works best. If the individual is not willing to come in for services, other options may be necessary. She asked Ms. Johnson to please contact us if additional assistance is needed.

Mr. Hoyte extended a Happy Valentine's Day to all in attendance.

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

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, M/S/P Joseph Williams/Sandra Gill to adjourn the meeting at 4:46 p.m., Board approved.

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Damon Hoyte  
Chairperson