

DBHDD Region 6 Regional Advisory Council Minutes

Minutes: March 13, 2019

Present:

Annie Davis	Muscogee	Lori McSwain	Upson	Jim McCarten	Fayette
Jeffrey Cantor	Coweta	Marlene Rozell	Meriwether	Kattie Kendrick	Peach
Maggie McGruther	Sumter	Geraldine Jackson	Spalding	Lisa Fort	Stewart
Nikki Bryant	Webster	BJ Lawrence	Pike	Jodie Goodman	Carroll
Melissa Johnson	Troup	Mike Patterson	Macon	Edward Barnwell	Muscogee
Irene Cheyne	Fayette	Cynthia Smith	Muscogee		

Conference Call:

Alan Everidge	Houston	Ted Kirk	Fayette	Ryran Traylor	Lamar
Starla DeSaussure	Harris				

Absent:

Betty Cason	Carroll	Sher'Londa Walker	Talbot	Syntel Brown	Spalding
Celeta Cavender	Carroll	Cathy McGill	Crisp	Tomika Sales	Marion
Chanda Moore	Coweta	Sandra Willis	Randolph		
Neydi Belmonte	Coweta				

Guest:

Anthony Williams	Respect Institute Speaker	Yosha Dotson	MH America of Georgia
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DBHDD Staff:

Valona Baldwin	Regional Service Coordinator (DD)
Sam Page	Housing Transition Coordinator (presenting on behalf of Ann Riley BH RSA)
Lawonna Parks	Administrative Assistant/ RAC Assistant

	AGENDA ITEMS	PRESENTER(S)	DISCUSSION
	Call to Order	Irene Cheyne, Vice Chair	<p>Meeting called to order – 1:05PM</p> <p>A. Welcome and Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irene Cheyne – Good afternoon and Welcome. There will be a few changes to the agenda today, our special guest presenters will speak at our May meeting and we have a guest speaker who is not on the agenda present later in the meeting. • Cynthia Smith – Irene, per our last meeting, we discussed of finding a more centralized meeting place to hold our RAC meetings. Can we add this to the agenda as I have information pertaining to the topic? • Irene Cheyne – We will add the topic under Region 6 Advisory Council Business. We will now go around the room with introductions. Tell us your name and how long you have been with RAC and if you are new, please tell us something about yourself.
	RESPECT Institute Speaker		<p>Respect Institute Speaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthony Williams, Respect Institute Speaker (Presentation)
	Special Guest Presentations		<p>Special Guest Presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yosha Dotson, Mental Health America of Georgia (Presentation)
	Public Comments		<p>Public Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talbot Co. Area (Tornado) Cynthia Smith – The director of Family Connections in Talbot Co. expressed the concern for more Mental Health services and support for young individuals who were impacted by the tornado. • Irene Cheyne – Sam do you know if Ann is aware of the issues and if so, is there anything in place. • Sam Page – Ann is aware and is currently working with New Horizons to provide support to the victims in Talbot and Harris Co. • APEX Funding (Stewart Co. Area) Lisa Fort – At a Family Connection meeting for Stewart Co., we were informed the CSB for the Stewart Co. area did not receive grant funds for the APEX program and which would also help place a therapist in the school. There were talks of the school receiving funding however it did not happen.

			<p>Irene Cheyne – In the proposed state budget, there were more money requested for the APEX program. It is still an opportunity, that was one of the items on the survey and the questions asked were how many were aware of the program if so what they thought of it. I don't know how the budget increase will translate into programs however there is lots of opportunity to keep adding schools to the program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suicide Awareness (Meeting) Jodie Goodman – Carroll Co. has had several suicides and attempts in our school system as a result of that, our community partners decided to have community conversations on suicide awareness, April 18th, 9am – 12pm. Sally VanderStraten with DBHDD will be a presenter along with a panel of local representatives from our court system, law enforcement, hospital and CSB. • Adult Programs for individuals with DD, Annie Davis – As an advocate and the voice for families who have love ones with DD, are there any facilities or adult programs in which our love ones can attend? There are no facilities as such in Muscogee Co. <p>Valona Baldwin – There are a variety of facilities for our DD population can utilize. What type of program are you seeking?</p> <p>Annie Davis – Facilities other than an adult daycare. A facility which can assist with helping individuals achieve independency with daily living skills. Once our child graduates from high school, what is out there for them.</p> <p>Valona Baldwin – There are several facilities in the area that provides those services. We can discuss this further after the meeting.</p> <p>Melissa Johnson – The Roosevelt Institute has an excellent program that teaches independency and helps with their living and coping skills.</p> <p>Valona Baldwin – New Horizons has a program in Cuthbert completely without walls. The individuals there participate in activities in the community, surely if they have a program in Cuthbert, there is one in Muscogee.</p>
	<p>Region 6 Advisory Council Business</p>		<p>Region 6 Advisory Council Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Places (Cynthia Smith) – We were tasked with finding other locations to house our meetings. I was able to visit the Family Connection facility in Talbotton and the director stated she would provide snacks during our meetings. Also, we may want to look into the Chamber of Commerce and enquire about utilizing their meeting room.

We were focused on the Talbotton area due to it seems to be more centralized for everyone according to the Region 6 map.

Jeffrey Cantor – With changing the location of the meetings, will this increase the attendance. When you accepted to represent on the Council, you committed to represent your county, participant and attend meetings. I’m here and most of you that show up you are here because you want to make a difference. I’m not sure if changing locations is going to solve the attendance issue.

Irene Cheyne – Jeffrey, could you, Cynthia and LaVonne get together and construct a few survey questions relating to relocating the meetings elsewhere and what barriers may be preventing Council Members from not attending. In our last meeting, that was one of the questions of concern, if we moved the meetings around to various places, would that increase the attendance of members. I think we should poll every member and see what feedback we receive.

- **Attorney General (Jeffrey Cantor)** - We had a discussion a few months ago about the Georgia Torque Claims Act. This does not apply to the full time State Employees, however, this does effect the RAC volunteers. As RAC members, we stood before our County Commissioners and accepted the role to represent our county and communities as an Advisory Council Member and the responsibilities that follows. In doing that, it’s a certain amount of public exposure. People come for public comments, they have issues, they present the issues. Sometimes their happy with the results or lack of, they can turn around and challenge us, even though we are volunteers, we can be sued. There was an incident that occurred with one of the RAC in another Region which resulted in a law suit. The RAC members discovered that DBHDD Attorneys felt that volunteers were not be covered under the Georgia Torque Claims Act. If you are sued, you are on your own. The volunteers asked the State Attorney General Office if volunteers are covered under the claims act and we’re waiting for a response. I reached out to my District State Representative, Josh Bonner and he visited the State Attorney Office and explained the situation, the end result is we are in fact covered and the language explained in the act did cover us as volunteers and others statewide and any state agency who utilize volunteers. I brought this to the attention of Coweta County Administrative and County Attorney,

volunteers appointed by the Coweta County office is covered under the county's liability policy. I suggest other counties have this in place for their volunteers.

Jim McCarten – Was an actual opinion issued?

Jeffrey Cantor – We have not received the actual document from the Attorney General office of what was actually said.

Jim McCarten – My question to you is are you certain he asked for a formal opinion because a lot of times they will issue informal opinions and there will not be anything in writing that could be traced back to them.

Jeffrey Cantor – Yes, Steve assured me that we would have the AG's full findings document in our March Statewide Leadership Council packets at the next meeting. Not wanting to wait until then, I asked Josh if he could retrieve that document for me.

- **Membership Updates and Actions (Lawonna Parks)** – Everyone should have had a chance to review the RAC Membership Roster. Please check and make sure your information is correct. Members who have been re-appointed to the Council: Geraldine Jackson & Syntel Brown, Spalding Co. Resigned: Kristy Smith, Schley Co. & Francis Peed, Houston Co. Newly Appointed: Nikki Bryant, Webster Co. & Jim McCarten, Fayette Co.

Irene Cheyne – We may have a representative for Crawford Co., Lesley McNary has recently moved to Crawford Co. and I spoke with the County Clerk in Crawford, unfortunately, the representative we have there has not contacted the County office. I was able to contact the rep for Crawford and asked if she would contact the office as soon as possible to announce her resignation so we may be able to fill that vacancy.

Jodie Goodman – Probate Judge Betty Cason will be retiring soon and it's a possibility our Commissioner will appoint the new Probate Judge to the Advisory Council. I can double check to make sure if that is going to go as plan.

Irene Cheyne – Henry County is our largest county with five vacancies currently open. I attended the Board of Commissioners meeting and I spoke about the vacancies for Henry County and there hasn't been representation for quite some time. I also spoke about the survey that

			<p>was being distributed throughout the communities in all 31 counties of Region 6. The entire time I was addressing the Board, there was no reactions from any of the Board Members. The only person who had questions was the Chair of the Board. I assumed I did something wrong, well apparently I did something right because they have not stop contacting me. They are looking to fill the vacancies for RAC, their survey response went from forty to ninety. The survey is now in the library and the librarian contacted me about reaching out to other libraries. They also sent out a press release regarding the survey and encouraged the community to take part and if they do not meet their quota of one hundred – fifty, their community will not be heard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statewide Survey Update: Handout (Irene Cheyne) – Take a look at the handout which is being passed around. The completed numbers of surveys as of March 12th is five thousand and counting, the numbers listed reflects the surveys completed by each county the Region 6 service. By participating in the study is to help improve the lives of people with mental illness, addictive diseases and intellectual-developmental disabilities and strengthen prevention and early intervention. Any resident of the state of Georgia can complete the survey, no personal information or questions are asked (other than which county they reside in) and the results will be compared regionally and statewide. Printed surveys, promotional cards and online surveys are available and ready to use at their discretion. By looking at the handout, we need to collectively help those counties who are struggling to meet their minimum. I encourage everyone to reach out to your county employees, community leaders, law enforcement, hospitals, family connections, etc. every county deserves a voice and it must be heard so we can better serve our individuals and their families.
	<p>Region 6 Field Office Reports</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual Developmental Disability (Valona Baldwin) – Just a few updates. Middle Flint and Phoenix Center will be merging, full implementation will be July first. Beth Ragan will become the CEO of both facilities and it’s possible there may be a name change in the process. WISE in Georgia (Washington Institute on Supported Employment) has a name change and would like to be recognize as Wise instead of the acronym. DBHDD has contracted with them for three years to improve quality services, develop compacity with our

Supported Employment service. They also will focus on system change for DBHDD, as you know, Georgia is a employment first state and they want to develop the quality network capacity of our supported employment providers and to accomplish this goal they are going to intensive training and technical assistance for our provider network, training and technical assistance for individuals and families who are interested in working and learning more about employment opportunities. They also are developing Supported Employment support groups for continuing education for Supported Employment providers. Upcoming waiver amendments, this is just changes and or additions to our existing waivers which are (NOW) New Option Waiver and the (COMP) Comprehensive Option Medicaid Program. The changes have not been officially approved but have been submitted to the centers of Medicaid and are being reviewed. Adding interpretive services for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing, language communication and interpretation training to staff of agencies who provide this service. Increasing the annual maximum for behavior support services. The current cap is 96 units and we want to expand that for individuals who have intensive behavior challenges and need more. Waiver amendment propose submitted to allow Support Coordination to engage with individuals up to 90 days prior to transitioning from an institutional base setting like a hospital, nursing home or jail. This will allow Support Coordination to begin an early process of transitioning the individual to help alleviate the worry of payment through a PA (Prior Authorization) due to a PA cannot be approved unless the individual is in a community setting. The Division of IDD is embarking upon multiple efforts to expand our provider development and overall quality improvement within provider network through training. The Emory Nursing curriculum has been offered to not only the DBHDD nurses but also our provider nurses. It is a six-month training course for nurses to better serve individuals with intensive medical support needs. Behavioral Health Support Techniques is a training course is also offered through DBHDD. Our providers are required to utilize the course themselves or develop a train to train model where their staff must partake in the training. This model will help the current staff train any new staff that may be hired within the providers agency. MLevel Learning is a web-

			<p>based program develop specially for direct care staff which familiarizes the staff with DBHDD policies, healthcare plans and protocol, practices. It's an interactive web-based program designed like a game, it allows the training to be fun and it has a scoring system. The scoring system allows leadership to monitor the competency of the staff. Lastly, if you have any questions or concerns about providers or systems as a whole is a resource you can utilize to help with clarity and ask questions. PIMS (Provider Information Management System) is a website designed just for this, typical response time for questions is around twenty-four hours. I will send the link to Irene and she can distribute to the Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral Health (Sam Page) – In your packet there is an information card expressing the resources for Supported Housing for individuals with mental illness leaving a hospital emergency room, jail or prison. It gives you a summary of what the supported housing is all about, regional contact information for all six regions, services offered through your local (CSB) Community Service Board, completion of the housing survey and assisting with the completion of the referral process. If you need additional cards, please feel free to contact the regional office. <p>Irene Cheyne – In terms of the Justice Department agreement, where are we at in terms of the agreement for housing?</p> <p>Sam Page – It has not been met yet. There was an extension and part of the process of reaching out to jails and prisons the main component has not been met therefore the state office has hired personnel throughout the state to solely focus on completing those surveys and capture those being release from incarceration.</p>
	<p>VIII. Adjournment</p>		<p>Next Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Meeting Adjourn – 4:00 PM B. Next scheduled meeting – May 8, 2019 - Upson Co. Senior Center

RAC minutes prepared by Lawonna Parks