

MINUTES
ST. CHARLES COMMUNITY 708 MENTAL HEALTH BOARD
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2015
COMMITTEE CONFERENCE ROOM – MUNICIPAL BUILDING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Barb Gacic, Michael Cohen, Carla Cumblad, Ron Silkaitis, Ron Weddell, Mary Hughes, Carolyn Waibel- (joined in via conference call)

ABSENT:

OTHERS: Tina Nilles

1. Call to Order

Chairman Barb Gacic opened the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

Welcomed Ald. Ron Silkaitis to the Mental Health Board who took over the vacancy left by Ald. Lewis.

2. Approval of minutes of February 26, 2015 St. Charles Community Mental Health Board.

Mary Hughes noted that Jerry Skogmo's last name was spelled wrong – "a" should be an "o".

Motion by Hughes, second by Weddell to approve of minutes of February 26, 2015 St. Charles Community 708 Mental Health Board.

Voice Vote: Ayes: Unanimous; Nays: None. **Motion passed.**

3. Discussion of Site Visit Guidelines and readouts of any site visits.

Went around the table and members talked about their site visits of the different agencies.

Ron Weddell attended the recent Barth Awards event and there were several different agencies there that he was able to network with such as AID, TriCity Family Services, Renz Addiction Center and had some good discussions. (Round table discussion – Renz moved location and shares with Ecker; reviewed financial reports with them; 1 in 5 clients are court referrals to Renz; 1/3 of St. Charles clients are MISA clients (Mentally Ill Substance Abuse). Tri-City has a new satellite office in St. Charles over on Foxfield Road.)

Carolyn Waibel talked about the "Teens Campaign to Change Direction" seminar that both her and Barb attended at the Arcada. There was a panel of five teenagers, in their recovery phase, who discussed their feelings through the process of mental health,

struggling, and anxiety and expounded on their experiences. It was very empowering and courageous of these young people to share their inner most fears and how they dealt with them. They are currently trying to figure out how to roll this out to the schools. (Round table discussion on this subject in how to assist in getting these seminars into the school district through different avenues of other support groups. Reference a website d303.org.helpinghand for people to find what kinds of things are out there to help them.)

Mary: One of the expectations for agencies is that they make their services known; and that is to publicize on their website. I think we can urge this, but we can't take on any particular segment of this agency.

Barb: We can make sure that each agency knows that they have to come to us when they are asking for funding with clearly defined goals, clearly filled out applications and be appreciative of what we do rather than questioning us as to why we are not giving them more.

Mary: You asked if anyone else had been to other agencies; I need to determine if we have some kind of structure. Are these visits to be done yearly?

Barb: No, newer board members have not gone to any and they asked for guidelines, and these guidelines are verbatim from John Rabchuk, former MHB chairperson. I went to all the agencies that I had not been to at least once before, for instance I hadn't been to Easter Seals since 2008 and a lot of things have changed since then. Not much is applicable to what they would be asking of us for funding. They have come up with innovative ways of fundraising with auction bidding primarily for equipment and are being quite successful.

Carla: I didn't do any visits because I didn't know if we were to be assigned to certain ones and not have duplication of visits. Some of these organizations are known very well to this board. For the ones we know consistently, they may not require site visits but the ones that are in question of how they fit into the MHB mission would be worth a visit and especially new applicants that we don't know. Perhaps we might want to target our visits?

Carolyn: I had the opportunity to visit ten agencies.

Mary: We've done these in the past a couple of different ways. We don't do them every year but every 2 to 3 years. I don't think it's necessary for two or three of us to go to one agency, its overwhelming the agency but you could pair up to go on one visit. But if there's an agency that we have serious questions about, maybe we should have some way to schedule them.

Barb: As a chairman of this board, I felt it good that I visit all the agencies, I have gotten a better understanding of their services. Some agencies have taken on different roles from when they first started out. I'm open to any suggestions on coming up with a

format, etc. **ACTION:** Anyone who would like to contribute, send your comments/suggestions to Tina and she'll compile them.

Michael: I have not been to a site visit yet. I do think it sends a very positive message to the agencies that we're funding that we take the time out of our schedules to do a visit. I think we should see them all at some point, even the ones on the smaller scale of receiving money.

Barb: We've done those, especially with the schools. Wredling has an incredible T.E.K. program and are doing what we want to see the schools doing. Unfortunately some of the schools have had changes in personnel over the years and there wasn't any follow through to carry out this program for the new person.

Tina: A few years ago we divided out the schools and met with all of them as a group to try to get them to network together, go forward and share; we had some success, but lost the high schools because they couldn't fit in.

Barb: Thompson Middle School has a large student population outside of the St. Charles city limits that doesn't fit into the MHB parameters and Haines has a very successful fundraising program and did not seem to be hurting for the money and perhaps is why they didn't apply last year. Wredling does fit within the required criteria we are targeting with their students and feels it necessary to get funding.

Michael: So where are we the site visits?

Barb: Send your comments to Tina or even send me a list of agencies you want to visit so we all aren't going at one time.

Ron Silkaitis: So who sets these visits up – how do we contact them?

Tina: I have that information and can forward all of you the list of contacts.

ACTION: Tina to email contact list to board members.

Barb: In the past, we would all let the chairperson know who we wanted to go visit and do it every 2-3 years and work out a schedule to have them completed by.

Ron Silkaitis: With state cuts are agencies coming forward and asking for more money to make up the difference?

Barb: We saw that last year with the majority of the agencies. We had \$167K in requests more than we had funding. A couple were out of proportion, but the majority were well within and very fair in their requests.

Ron Silkaitis: But is that due to lack of state funding or other funding?

Barb: Just overall. Greater needs, less funding.

Tina: Numbers increase every year with client numbers, hours of service, etc.

Mary: Our allotment has gone down considerably over the last five years from 2010 - \$724,500 to give away to this current year 2015 - \$502,351. Do we know what next year's allotment will be?

Tina: No, I don't get that proposed number until right before our meeting in February. On a side note since that was brought up. Carolyn you sent me an email a while back asking why does the City pay out the funding in two disbursements to the agencies? I make first payouts in August after funding has been approved by Council and the second one is in November. I asked our Finance Director, Chris Minick – why and he said “the two-distribution system mimics receipt of property tax revenues. The mental health assistance provided is part of a levy each year and we get the bulk of our property tax receipts in June/July and October/November time frame; so we can't put out the money to the agencies until we have the money coming in.” So we'll always maintain the way we're doing it until the process of receiving property taxes change.

Carolyn: Thanks – good answer.

Michael: So to clarify on site visits, for example, Ron goes and visits Renz; how do we communicate that? I wouldn't know that, and I go to Renz and ask to come for a site visit and they say – Ron was just here a few weeks ago.

Ron Weddell: I sent an email to Barb before so that she is aware of that this is my intention and I guess if other people are going to do the same, would notify her as well.

Tina: Actually back when we kicked these visits off with John Rabchuk, I was that funnel. I sent out a list to everyone stating here are the contacts, everyone sent me their choices. I would compile a site visit list and send it out to the board members with everyone's interests and you were on your own to visit or you could pair up someone if they wanted to visit the same site as you. So I gave them a master plan that they can parcel it out amongst themselves for visitations.

Also keep in mind there can't be more than two of you visiting at one time to keep under a quorum and two is that number since we are a small group.

My question is in piggybacking onto Michael, we pretty much have done the majority of site visits for 2015/16, so are we going to look forward to do this in 2017/18? Are we satisfied now with the exception of Ron Silkaitis who is the newest member, so he hasn't had an opportunity to see any? When's the next date that you want to do this?

Michael: Is there a way we could put a date next to the agency when they come for funding of when their last site visit occurred?

Tina: I could do that, but I don't have any of that information at this point. It's like it done now so let's take a hiatus for the next year and start out again, unless you have questions for a particular agency that may warrant you wanting to go visit them or a new agency that comes in. We haven't had a new one in two years and one was supposed to come back to us with some follow-up answers and never did (Linden Oaks).

Barb: Again, they were going to try to work with the schools and I don't know what that outcome was. We told them to get their program into the schools first, make your presentation and get accepted by the schools – then come back to us.

Tina: NAMI is our most recent new one. They actually came to us a few years ago, disappeared, and just now have come back. Crisis Community Center is another more recent one but that's about 5 years ago. We don't get many new ones.

Michael: Do other agencies know about this funding source?

Tina: In January I send out a press release stating it's time for the Mental Health Board funding and contact me for information and applications or I may randomly get an inquiring phone call in an off time of our cycle and I will forward that to the chairperson to follow up on.

Barb: Literacy Volunteers, which is a wonderful organization for what they do, came a few years ago, but we determined that they did not fit our criteria of what we are very specific about and the same with Marklund Homes came but dropped out.

I brought this article on Fox River Valley Initiative because I wasn't sure if this might be one more group of people who might be coming to us.

Carla: They are kind of a consortium of many of the agencies that do come here: Lazarus House, Renz, Ecker Center, AID – many of those same folks are on their board. They do have a lot of churches that can mobilize for them. They are really a community activist group and are very committed on issues around mental illness.

Also the Health Department did a survey of the whole county and mental health came out as the number one issue across the county. In our area, this center of the county, the resources aren't as great as you think they are. This group is a well-organized group and are pulled to the more poverty stricken areas.

Tina: So the consensus to these site visits are that we are good for now?

Barb: As you go through the minutes/notes from last year and you really want to see an agency, feel free to do so – just send me an email.

4. Review process that was used for 2015/16 and plan future dates for meetings.

Barb: Our annual Mental Health Board meeting is Thursday, February 25 at 6:00 p.m. We collect in here at 5:30 p.m. open up the meeting while we grab a bite to eat and go into the Council Chambers and start off with the first agency at 6:00 p.m.

Carla: Are we going to meet the week prior like last year?

Barb: Yes, we formulated the questions to ask the agencies and that gave us the opportunity to review their applications. **Everyone agreed to have a pre-meeting on Tuesday, February 16 at 6:00 p.m.**

Tina: Proposed schedule:

- Applications mailed out January 1.
- Returned to me by January 31.
- Process them and have ready for dispersements February 5 – gives everyone 2 weeks to read through packets.

Barb: Last year we came up with two questions that were pretty much applicable to every organization and the third one was organization specific. This worked out well. We also talked about the length of agency presentations. We stated 10 minutes but always went over.

Tina: Or do you want to be the one in charge and direct the questions at them. Most things in the application are redundant from the years with exception of increased numbers, hours of service. Has anything new happen this year since we saw you last – Yes/No; then punch in the questions – you’re in control and we don’t have to listen to them recite; not that we don’t want to hear it but when you got that many agencies all night long...

Michael: Also if an agency came forward and ask for \$20K and we’ve already given that to them – I thought what we were trying to get at last time, instead of hearing the whole pitch of every service they provide, was to focus more on what they did with that \$20K.

Ron Silkaitis: And how it affected the St. Charles’ residents. They should know about that ahead of time.

Barb: We can’t make any changes to the application this year because we already handed it to them last year at the meeting stating this was the application for this year. We already made a couple of changes in there and that was to give them a whole year to address these changes and not be blindsided in January.

Mary: I think one sentence in the invite letter you send out could be something like “we are really interested in how you allocated the resources we granted you last year.”

Tina: I'll add that in and send it out to Barb for comment. I'm also adding in the one statement for them to make sure they add 708 Mental Health description is included in their financial statements.

Barb: Also remind them this was a directive on the bottom of their handout last February and also add the 10-year table showing funding from last years.

I did have some push back from one organization who stated that they could not add specifically our 708 Mental Health description to their financial statements which is not acceptable. This was a directive, not a suggestion, and they've been given 11 months to take care of this. They were also not happy with the amount of money they received from us.

Ron Silkaitis: On what grounds? We're supposed to cut someone else?

Carla: We should say your application needs to be better written so that we would understand how they fit into our mission.

Mary: Their administrative cost was very high and they use and train volunteers. There were 24 St. Charles' residents in that program and all their needs are not strictly mental health needs; they need housing, clothes, etc. It's not to say their services are not valuable – they are, but does it strictly fall under our guidelines – I don't think so.

Ron Silkaitis: If they don't follow your directive, are they disqualified automatically? What leeway is there for us?

Barb: Personally I don't feel we can deprive the clients they help totally. I would have no qualms in cutting them even further, there again when Tina sends out the letter she doesn't state as to why they were cut back.

Ron Silkaitis: The charter states that when the Mental Health Board was formed, this is the criteria – correct? They are not following the criteria; therefore we would not be following our own guidelines if we gave them money.

Tina: I actually list the five criteria in the letter they receive with the application.

Barb: I have personally invited them to stay for our entire meeting so they could get a better understanding and see the deliberations on how we come up with our numbers – it's not an easy process.

Ron Silkaitis: They got to follow the guidelines. How can we give them money but have another group that follows the guidelines and we give them less? There's a conflict there.

Carla: Two years ago I wasn't in the decision making part, but I did read all the applications. You really have tidied up what the expectations are and if they don't

include a financial statement to your expectations, it is pushed to the side. It is not a complete application. I think what you said is really pretty clear.

Barb: Last year was the first year we got everything we needed but it was due to the checklist. Out taxpayers have the right to see how much we're giving them and giving us credit rather than being looped in with miscellaneous of some other mental health title.

Mary: I think we would like them to have every dollar we can give them as they are really doing a good job and badly need the money, but on the other hand we're not saying you're not doing a good job; we're simply saying we don't have all the resources in the world and we're not able to give to everyone. We have to allocate the dollars rather prudently so we don't waste it. We're saying we appreciate it what you're doing.

Michael: From my perspective I want to focus on specifically what they are asking for. Let's say, hypothetically, the City of St. Charles decides they want to hire a social worker to deal strictly with people with addictions. While the City of St. Charles' mission might not meet what we are talking about; the funding say \$30K to partially fund this position really does. That's where I want to go with that. If this were to happen they would specifically say – we're from the City of St. Charles and we're asking for \$30K for this position. While all the other stuff that they do might not be within the mission of ours – what they're specifically asking for does.

Ron Silkaitis: But it bothers me that they won't follow and complete the application.

Carla: TriCity is really big and you don't want the money we give them to go into a general revenue to do more of the good things they do. I think what you're saying is that you really would like them to target this money they got last time and say we did this with it and this is what we would like to do with our request for this year. I think we were trying to get them all there last year.

Barb: I'll play devil advocate on this, you can determine you're telling them they have \$60K from us and we want to know what you did with that \$60K. They're going to put it in line 103 and tell you they put it in line 106 – doesn't matter where they're putting it but where they are actually using it – they're going to have a place for you to tell you where they used it. It may have gone into the general fund and then there was a \$60K thing that fits the criteria of what they were doing. You can play with line items any place you want.

Michael: I get all that, but if they're coming asking for \$60K and we give it to them, we need to ask them what's it going towards? If they say it's going to fully fund the social worker position to deal with addictions, they need to come back to us and say this is what this position just did.

Barb: Are we doing this strictly for salary for this position or are we doing it for the handouts in twenty different art programs that is art therapy?

Michael: I wouldn't be happy with that.

Mary: We did have a problem at one time where a school was using the money for water bottles which was years ago, but it was a misuse.

Ron Silkaitis: So why can't this organization give us that information?

Mary: The problem is they are not willing to include it in their financial statement that they received "X" dollars from the City of St. Charles 708 Board. We have a responsibility to taxpayers where that money is going.

Barb: It's grouped with other grant money or allocations. Let them come back this year and see how close they come to what you're looking for.

Carla: I think our process is good, the application changes are good, the checklist is good. We can make a change to have them tell us what they did with the allocation they receive last year and what do you plan for this year, and please limit your remarks to 5 minutes and we ask questions. That would be a good format.

Tina: For wrap-up:

- I'm going to email all of you the agencies' contact list for your own information.
- Make a couple changes to the invite letter and send to Barb for concurrence.
- Letters/applications are going out January 2, 2016 and returned by February 1.

Michael: Do applications ever get turned in late and are they disqualified? How would that get handled? Say the top person that we give the most money to hands their application in a day late – is it still good?

Ron Silkaitis: Their late – their out. You have to have some kind of boundaries.

Carla: Being a grant writer, I always had a postmarked date or received by date.

Michael: My opinion is if you're one day late; it doesn't matter.

Mary: That's hard for me.

Ron Weddell: Someone who gets \$200K and is a day late and they get nothing will be devastating to them.

Tina: People have called me for whatever their reason was to say they would be late and could they still get it in and I allowed it. It takes me a couple of days to process the packets, so if they can get it to me... it's not my decision to make.

There have been situations where I mail out the application packet to the last person I have on my contact list, that person is no longer there, and it falls through a crack on that end.

Continue wrap-up:

- Applications due back to me on February 1.
- Packets to you on Friday, February 5.
- Meeting on February 16 @ 6:00 p.m. (pizza).
- Annual meeting on February 25 @ 5:30 p.m.

5. Additional Items

6. Adjournment

Motion by Hughes, second by Silkaitis to adjourn meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Voice Vote: Ayes: Unanimous; Nays: None. **Motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted by Tina Nilles
Recording Secretary