

Region Ten Community Services Board**Board Meeting Minutes****September 13, 2021, 4:00 PM**

500-B Old Lynchburg Rd

Charlottesville, VA

Members Present

Barbara Barrett, Chair
John Kronstain
Peggy Whitehead (Zoom)
Helayna Banks (Zoom)
Tom Worosz
Dr. Barry Blumenthal
Stephen Wunsh
Patti Heggie

Members Absent

Ms. D Pryor
Edna Harris, Secretary
James Murphy

Others Present

Lisa Beitz, Executive Director
Jessica Phipps, Business Office Manager
Kathy Williams, Senior Director
Joanna Jennings, Community Relations

I. Call to Order

Ms. Barrett called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

II. Welcome

Ms. Barrett welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Board introduced themselves.

III. Comments from the Public

There was no public present.

IV. Community Relations Presentation

Ms. Jennings presented her role and creating a partnership with the media outlets in our community. In two weeks, a training will be held on how to best handle mental health and substance use in the media. There are roughly 60 signed up for the training event. Region Ten has a Facebook page with 1,000 followers. The social media page has allowed Region Ten to host staff profiles, announcing events and showcasing various experiences for the public. Ms. Jennings also handles grants for the agency, to include the Power of Ten grants connected to the Fundraising Committee.

Several events are planned for Recovery Month in partnership with the Mental Health and Wellness Coalition. There is a Behavioral Health Equity speaker series upcoming. This month's staff spotlight is Shannon Wright.

V. Chair's Remarks

Ms. Barrett that at this time, Region Ten is at its most needed. Region Ten has been doing what it can to help.

VI. Executive Director's Remarks

The end of the state of emergency has brought the Board back together for in person meetings, requiring a quorum on site. President Biden signed an executive order requiring some staff across the nation to be vaccinated. Region Ten falls into this category due to the number of staff (over 100) as well as that we receive Medicaid funding. There are two exemptions: medical and religious. Staff will be required to show proof of vaccination or request an exemption; two which accommodations can be made. Testing requirements may change, but because of the Medicaid piece, weekly testing is not permitted for those who are exempt. Direction has been provided to have this process completed within 75 days.

The agency has a staffing shortage, as does the nation. The average shortage for CSBs is 15%. At Region Ten our rate is 9%. Specific programs have a higher rate, up to 20%. Between now and July 1st, staff will receive bonuses, the ability to cash out annual leave, and then in July, staff will receive a COLA. These incentives are aimed to help retain quality staff, and boost morale. There is possibility to cash out extra annual leave on a yearly basis, depending on how it works this December. Hard to fill positions are being offered sign on bonuses. Staff are also able to get a bonus if they refer someone who is then hired. Some programs that are short on staff, are freezing new admissions. Beyond shortages, the agency also faces burnout for staff working over their normal 40 hours a week to help fill in some of the gaps. Programs that have been deemed priority are the ones that must be provided by code, residential programs since these are people's homes, PACT, and DD and MH case management, housing and then from there the agency will look at what we can no longer do.

Early July the Commissioner closed admission to 5 of 8 state hospitals. Money was then requested to provide bonuses and raises for staff in the psychiatric hospitals. Beds are becoming harder to find in some instances, and law enforcement are being asked to sit with these individuals until placement can be satisfied. A request is being made to bring back beds to ease the pressure on emergency staff, law enforcement, and emergency departments, and to stop the crisis from becoming larger.

VII. Consent Agenda

Ms. Barrett asked for approval of the consent agenda. Mr. Krontstain moved to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Worosz seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously approved.

VIII. Other Business

There was no other business.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.