

DEKALB COUNTY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING

November 21, 2011

Approved

Board Members Present: Cynthia Luxton, Tom Kirts, John Rogalin, Donna Schoenfeld,
Gary Lothson, Eileen Dubin, Jeff Whelan, Jane Dargatz

Board Members -Excused Absence: Ken Ritchie

Board Members - Absent:

Other Persons Present: Tom Zucker

Office Staff Present: Donna Moulton, Kathy Ostdick

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the President, Cynthia Luxton, at 6:34 p.m.

2. AGENDA

Dr. Kirts asked if the board could discuss Ms. Dubin's email regarding the board's position on the state facility closings. Ms. Luxton said that could be discussed under item number eight, Board Member issues.

Mr. Rogalin moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Whelan. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

3. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made.

4. COMMUNITY INPUT

The Voluntary Action Center presentation was made by Tom Zucker, Executive Director. Notes are attached.

5. MINUTES

Mr. Lothson moved to approve the amended minutes of the October 2011 Board meeting; seconded by Ms. Schoenfeld. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

6. CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Several announcements were included in the binder.

7. FINANCE REPORTS

Ms. Dubin moved to approve the November 2011 agency claims in the amount of \$140,619.79; seconded by Mr. Lothson. The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

Ms. Dubin moved to approve the November 2011 office claims in the amount of \$280.01; seconded by Dr. Kirts. The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

8. BOARD MEMBER ISSUES

A. Strategic plan - chart summary – tabled

B. Board member concern – Ms. Dubin sent an email to board members stating her concerns for the proposed state facility closings. Ms. Luxton asked Ms. Dubin for a brief update. Ms. Dubin said she thought the state would start to phase out the targeted facilities but was not sure how soon. Mr. Whelan said he had brought up this topic at the County Board meeting when discussing the Mental Health Board levy. Mr. Rogalin stated that over the last 20 years, the state has closed several facilities and that it takes about 2 ½ years to close one. Closing multiple facilities in a five year span is not likely. The state has responsibilities to people in these facilities and the Mental Health Code states that clients need to be transferred to a place of their choice that is suitable and less restrictive than the original facility.

Mr. Rogalin also stated that closing admissions to Singer is the bigger issue. Ms. Luxton said that she went to a Shelia Simon rally and Ms. Simon was asked about this topic. She said this is political maneuvering. Ms. Luxton said that she feels our board should take a wait and see stance for now. The other piece of this is that several board members took a tour of the Ben Gordon Center before the board meeting and Mr. Flora told them that he had two of his staff at a meeting in Rockford today as part of a group looking at what they could do to help the system to respond if Singer is closed. He is also looking at a planning group to address issues in DeKalb County should the closing take place.

Ms. Luxton again stated that the board should be aware of what is going on but wait to see what happens. Ms. Dubin said she felt that someone from our board should be part of the group Mr. Flora is talking about. Dr. Kirts said that office staff could possibly attend and that the board could send a letter to the editor. The board consensus was to have Ms. Moulton explore information on the group that Mr. Flora discussed during the BGC tour and the office will draft a letter expressing our concerns.

Ms. Luxton said that several board members and the office staff took a tour of the main office of the Gordon Center. Two of the psychiatrists were introduced to the CMHB members, and it was noted how busy the parking lot was at 4:00 pm. The offices have been updated along with the electronic records system.

9. OFFICE REPORT

Ms. Moulton reported on several meetings that she attended since the last board meeting. She had met with Dave Baker of Open Door and took a tour of their facility. Ms. Moulton and Ms. Ostdick visited the INC708 board in Aurora and collected valuable information about the workings of 708 boards. One topic discussed was site reviews. Jerry Murphy suggested that Ms. Moulton talk to the ACMHAI membership to see who has been doing site visits.

Ms. Ostdick shared a positive experience with a consumer who is Dr. Foroutan's client. This consumer utilized both the medication grant and CACDC funding for only several months. He is now working fulltime, will be getting insurance, and is on his way to recovery.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee report was deferred due to the fact that all issues discussed are on tonight's agenda.

Finance Committee:

The Finance committee report was deferred due to the fact that all issues discussed are on tonight's agenda.

Outcomes Committee:

Dr. Kirts gave a brief Outcomes Committee report. The first quarter of GY12 outcomes were reviewed. A considerable amount of time was spent on the Gordon Center outcomes. Some of the agencies may need additional instruction to be able to provide better outcomes. Ms. Moulton said that she is preparing a letter to all agencies stating that the first quarter outcomes have been reviewed and will list some suggestions for the 2nd quarter reporting.

11. OLD BUSINESS

A. County budget and levy appeal update:

Ms. Dubin stated that the newspaper said that at the regular County Board meeting Mr. Whelan was trying to get a motion put forward regarding a Mental Health Board increase that never was completed. Mr. Whelan stated that he could not get a second for that motion. Mr. Whelan said he was going to try to get additional levy dollars but that the County Board said if that were granted, the levy would be increased and in turn taxes would be increased. The majority of the County Board members were opposed to raising taxes.

Ms. Luxton said that she was able to attend the County Board Finance Committee meeting along with Ms. Moulton. There was no discussion at that meeting about the Mental Health Board appeal. Several other appeals were brought up and the Sheriff's Department did get the addition of a detective which sounded like it was a much needed position.

B. Agency review and recommendations – Ben Gordon Center and Opportunity House:

Ms. Luxton reported that recommendations for the Gordon Center are not completed yet. More information has been requested and has not been received to date. Ms. Moulton stated that Mr. Flora said it would be two to three weeks before the information is ready. Ms. Moulton also said that she is working on the Opportunity House recommendations and will have a draft ready for the January board meeting.

C. CMHB meeting calendar:

The 2012 meeting calendar was discussed. Ms. Luxton asked board members to review the dates and the calendar will be voted on at the December meeting.

12. NEW BUSINESS

A. Agency request:

A Hope Haven request for funding to develop a day program to help the homeless and at-risk clients was presented. Ms. Luxton stated that the Finance Committee has reviewed the proposal and approved moving it forward to the full board. Ms. Moulton said that she had spoken to Lesly Wicks, Executive Director of Hope Haven, who felt that some of the clients were not getting the kind of support that a day program could provide. Mr. Rogalin asked how Hope Haven would know that a client utilizing this program has a mental illness. Dr. Kirts responded that Dr. Dennison sees clients at Hope Haven 20 hours per week for psychiatry and Hope Haven knows when clients are seeing other psychiatrists in the community. Ms. Moulton added that the proposal states that 40% of Hope Haven clients have a mental illness.

Mr. Rogalin moved to approve the Hope Haven request to develop a day program for \$30,255; seconded by Ms. Dubin. The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

B. New board membership:

Ms. Luxton said that the Executive Committee interviewed six potential board members and is bringing three forward for board review. The board discussed each of the three candidates.

Mr. Lothson moved to submit Cheryl Brauer to the County Board for appointment to the Mental Health Board as of January 1, 2012; seconded by Dr. Kirts. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

13. CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Rogalin moved to go into Closed session at 8:58 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Whelan. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Dr. Kirts moved to return to Open session at 9:17 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Schoenfeld. The motion passes unanimously on a voice vote.

Mr. Whelan moved to increase the salary of the Administrative Assistant by a total of 2%, 1.5% COLA and .5% merit, to begin at her anniversary date of 12/12/11, and in addition, to approve the payment of \$750 additional compensation which will be paid in January 2012; seconded by Ms. Dubin. The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

14. ADJOURNMENT - Next Board meeting date: 12/12/11 6:00 p.m. at Johnny's restaurant

The meeting was adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Luxton, President

Kathy Ostidick, Recording Secretary

DEKALB COUNTY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

**To: Cindy Luxton, John Rogalin, Donna Schoenfeld, Eileen Dubin,
Thomas Kirts, Ken Ritchie, Jane Dargatz, Gary Lothson, Jeff Whelan**

From: Kathy Ostidick

Date: 11/21/11

Re: Notes from the Voluntary Action Center presentation
to the CMHB on 11/21/11 to be included with the 11/21/11 Board meeting minutes
(recorded and typed by Kathy Ostidick)

Voluntary Action Center presentation to CMHB 11/21/11

Mr. Tom Zucker, Executive Director of the Voluntary Action Center, gave a presentation to the board. Mr. Zucker thanked the board for their past and current funding. This funding provides rides and meals for persons with mental illnesses, substance abuse and developmental disabilities. Most of these clients are clients from other 708 board funded agencies. VAC has been able to use the 708 funds along with other local partner funds to provide services and for local match for federal programs.

VAC was incorporated as a not-for-profit in 1974. They are a mission driven organization. They provide high quality meals and transportation to our community. VAC was originally a volunteer clearing house. Even back in 1974, the services provided were for those with disabilities and seniors that didn't have the mobility to access community facilities and resources. This community is rich with resources. But for many people, they have to get to those resources. In the beginning, volunteers used their own vehicles to provide rides to medical visits, shopping, etc.

In 1988, DeKalb County gave VAC a grant to construct their current transportation facility on Bethany Road. In approximately 2001, the senior nutrition program, which had been a stand alone service up until this time, decided to merge with another agency. They were having difficulty continuing on their own and decided to become a part of VAC. At that time, through a local fund raising effort, VAC was able to construct their community kitchen which is also located on the same property as transportation.

About the time that the facility was constructed on Bethany, the VAC transportation program became the public transportation for DeKalb County. That was made possible by a number of funding opportunities from the state and local government with many strings attached; including all the services to be public transportation. Public transportation has evolved into things like mass transit and has also transformed into specialized transportation for those people that can not use mass transportation. In DeKalb County, there really isn't a mass transit system. The transportation services provided by VAC are actually demand-response services, when someone demands, VAC responds, almost like individual service. Over the last group of years, they have moved into the more traditional mass transit by providing some flexible route services. The city of DeKalb Green Line, city of Sycamore Blue Line, and the Kishwaukee College bus route are like the mass transit model of service.

Jeff Whelan asked if VAC transportation services all areas of the county. Tom said that most service is concentrated in the DeKalb/Sycamore area because that is where the population is. However, there is a considerable amount of service all around the county. Most of the service outside of DeKalb/Sycamore is

demand-response, prearranged rides, picking someone up at their home, taking them to their destination, and back home again. Both the Blue and Green Lines have grown in the past two years by 14% each year.

TransVac supplies rides on a demand-response basis. MedVac supplies individual rides for people who need to go to doctor appointments out of the county. Medvac service is still using volunteer drivers.

Tom said that next month VAC will be getting four new full size buses from a federal grant. These will look different than our normal buses.

About two years ago, VAC went from a completely manual scheduling and dispatch system to a computerized system. In the last 6 months VAC has upgraded that system in order to do real time scheduling and dispatching. Buses are now equipped with on-board computers so the drivers do not have to carry paper schedules. This has shown a significant efficiency increase.

Approximately twelve years ago, VAC transportation was running from 8 am to 6 pm but identified a need for longer hours. VAC came to the 708 board, and other funding sources in the county, to ask for funding to expand the bus hours. There was a particular need for Opportunity House clients to move the morning hour up to 7 am. The evening additional hour was used by all agencies.

A couple of years after that, VAC came to the 708 board to ask for support to supply meals for people in need. Supplying meals to Reality House and DeKalb High Rise were the first two ventures.

The nutrition program operates efficiently through out the county with approximately 1,200 volunteers.

There are no accrediting bodies for an organization like VAC. The kitchen and all lunch sites are regulated by the County Health Department. VAC just went through a once every three year visit from the Federal Transit Administration for their tri-annual review. They do a very thorough review of transit operations which includes 24 compliance areas and takes several months to complete. VAC received a Certificate of Excellence from that review due to zero findings.

Premier Catering is the arm of the nutrition program used as a fund raising source.

Cindy Luxton asked how many employees are at VAC. Tom responded that there are 120 paid employees, approximately 2/3 are part-time and 1/3 are full-time. There are also approximately 1200 volunteers.

VAC started implementing cost saving measures several years ago. Adding a computerized scheduling and dispatch system was a large savings. VAC put in a hiring freeze for all non-essential positions several years ago and that remains in effect. VAC targeted their overtime expenses for a 30% reduction and actually accomplished a 50% reduction, due to better scheduling. They have tried to reduce food and fuel costs by 10% but both of those areas are out of their control. With the more efficient computerized scheduling system, however, fuel consumption has dropped. VAC has tried to purchase less expensive food items but need to be aware of quality for the end users. VAC continues to struggle with late grant payments from the State of Illinois which have been running 4-5 months late.

This grant year VAC has started a phone survey. They decided to conduct a telephone survey to all clients receiving transportation or meals. Some questions that are asked are: were client's needs met, were transportation clients able to better access community facilities and resources, are clients satisfied with the meals being served, etc. All clients will be surveyed over the course of a year.

Cindy Luxton asked if Tom had any feedback on the board's new review process, etc. Tom said that not many funders ask for outcomes. This forced VAC to take a look at outcomes.

Tom said that the trainings that the 708 board has provided in the past have been helpful.

Tom also stated that while there have been cuts to grants received from funding agencies; they have not seen a reduction in charitable giving.

Ms. Luxton asked if the Productivity by Service 3 year report could be broken down by year in order to see growth. Tom said he would provide that report.

Ms. Luxton also asked about the cost per meal. Tom responded that the actual cost was approximately \$10 per meal, but that is heavily subsidized, and for the senior meals program that is subsidized from the Department on Aging, VAC can not charge clients but they can suggest a donation based on their income. On the transportation side, seniors and those with disabilities ride free. All others are charged \$1.50 per ride and \$.50 per mile for MedVac, but again that is subsidized.

Tom said he fears that moving into the public transportation arena will displace those that truly need VAC with those that just chose not to drive themselves.

Dr. Kirts asked if there were issues with MedVac taking sick clients to farther away locations like Chicago. Tom said they stress that VAC is for non-emergency transportation.

Cindy Luxton suggested that when VAC is working on their grant application for GY13, they provide numbers of people that receive services from the other agencies that we fund. Example is Opportunity House and how many rides per day, how many days, etc. Another example is Reality House, how many rides and meals per day. It would be beneficial to the board to get numbers of all agency rides and meals provided to persons with mental illness issues, substance abuse, and developmental disabilities.