

**State of Connecticut**  
**State Board of Mental Health and Addiction Services**  
**January 21, 2015**  
**Connecticut Valley Hospital**

**Present:** John Hamilton, Chairman; Craig Allen, Peggy Ayer, Kristy Barber, Sharon Castelli, Marcia Dufore, Danielle Elliott, Kathy Flaherty, Ingrid Gillespie, Irene Herden, Jennifer Gross, Juan Hernandez, Tina Inferrera, Marcus McKinney, Pat Mosimann, Bob Painter, Brian Reignier, Kevin Sevarino, Jim Smith, Janine Sullivan-Wiley, Nancy Urgell, Margaret Watt

**Excused:** Manuel Paris, Ismene Petrakis, Tom Steen

**DMHAS Staff:** Commissioner Rehmer, Doreen Del Bianco, Kate McNulty, Mary Kate Mason, Marilyn Duran

**Agenda Item 1: Call to order and introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 2:40 PM by John Hamilton, Chairman

**Agenda Item 2: Agenda review, Minutes of previous meetings review and action**

The minutes from the November 19th meeting were reviewed and accepted.

**Agenda Item 3:**

1. ***Central Access to Housing/Homelessness:*** Commissioner Rehmer started the conversation so that the Board can express their concerns and she in turn will bring it back to DMHAS Housing Director Steve DiLella. Some of the concerns are people having difficulty getting through 211 for assistance and call-backs take a very long time; shelters turning people away; and no-shows are also an issue.
2. ***Responding to media in supportive ways:*** Mary Kate Mason talked about supportive ways in which DMHAS can address the media. She would like people to share positive stories with her about what we are doing, what is working and how we can improve things around the state. Her contact information is [mary.mason@ct.gov](mailto:mary.mason@ct.gov) and her phone number is 860-418-6839.
3. ***Legislative Update:*** Doreen Del Bianco announced that the commissioner's reappointment hearing will be held on February 5<sup>th</sup>. DMHAS has three bills this year two are very technical and one is about people under the Psychiatric Security Review Board at Whiting who commit a crime and how they are treated when they commit an assault while they are at Whiting. The theme this year is "Defense" and we need to protect our rights. Committees that you should get to know are the Planning and Development, Government Administration and Elections, Public Health, Human Services and Housing. The budget will come out on February 18<sup>th</sup>.
4. ***Rewards to Quit:*** Kate McNulty announced that Michael Michaud is now in charge of the implementation of the Rewards to Quit program. Kate worked on the program with DSS for the state-operated systems. It has been streamlined and the MOA was signed by all. This program will benefit our clients' smoking cessation efforts.
5. ***Mental Health Screening:*** Margaret Watt was asked by her board of directors to share their experience with the annual national depression screening day event which was very successful and a great community collaboration. Region one has been doing these screenings for around seven years now. It's a free and confidential program with no appointment necessary held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every October. For more information you can go to [www.mentalhealthscreening.org](http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org)

#### **Agenda Item 4: General Updates**

**Region 3:** Jennifer Gross stated the RMHB is embarking on an oral history project about the Norwich State Hospital and they are partnering with several other organizations including the oldest library in Norwich. The region needs help getting the word out to anyone who was hospitalized in the hospital or who had family members or friends there as well as anyone who worked there and can share some of their stories.

**Region 5:** Janine Sullivan-Wiley stated that Waterbury Hospital is in the process of substantial layoffs and access to out-patient services are closed and have been closed for weeks now.

- Ingrid Gillespie, of the Connection Prevention Network, stated that CPN spear-headed a proposed bill submitted by Representative Conroy. We are hoping that CT will not allow the provision of powdered alcohol in the state.
- Kathy Flaherty, of the CT Legal Rights Project, stated that because of the previously announced rescission to CLRP's budget they have had to restrict their housing intake the last week of every month for new cases. CLRP will temporarily close down housing intake for community cases starting Monday the 26<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Other Business, Items for future agenda and Announcements**

- Commissioner Rehmer announced that DMHAS has a new Deputy Commissioner Miriam Delphin-Rittmon.
- Mary Kate Mason is the new DMHAS Director of Communications.
- Juan Hernandez talked about having a discussion on educational and vocational opportunities as a future agenda item.
- Commissioner Rehmer made an announcement about the budget. A letter came out about deficits and surpluses. The deficit continues to grow and there will be rescissions after April of this year.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:34 PM. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 18, 2015 beginning at 2:30 PM in room 217 of Page Hall.