

Consumer Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

February 11th, 2020

Meeting Date	Meeting Time	Location
February 11 th , 2020	3:00 – 5:00 p.m.	CT Behavioral Health Partnership, 500 Enterprise Drive, Crandall Room – Suite 4D, Rocky Hill, CT

Participant Name and Attendance

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Jeffrey G. Beadle	X	Kelly Ray			
Robert Krzys	X	Ann R. Smith	X		
Velandy Manohar	X	Denise O. Smith			
Terry Nowakowski	X				
Christiane Pimentel					
Jason Prignoli	X				
Others Present					
Terry Gerratana (OHS)		Dashni Sathasivam (HES)			
Ormand Clarke (OHS)					

Meeting Information is located at: <https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/SIM-Work-Groups/Consumer-Advisory-Board>

	Agenda	Responsible Person(s)
1.	Welcome	Robert Krzys
	<p>Call to Order The scheduled meeting of the Consumer Advisory Board (CAB) was held on Tuesday, February 11th at the CT Behavioral Health Partnership, 500 Enterprise Drive, Rocky Hill, CT. The meeting convened at 3:01 p.m. Robert Krzys chaired the meeting.</p> <p>Members and other participants introduced themselves.</p>	
2.	Public Comment	Robert Krzys
	There was no public comment.	
3.	Approve January 28th, 2020 Meeting Summary	Robert Krzys
	The motion was made by Velandy Manohar and seconded by Jeff Beadle to approve the minutes of the Consumer Advisory Council meeting of January 28 th , 2020. Ann Smith abstained. Motion carried.	
4.	Review CAC By-laws	Terry Gerratana
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robert Krzys described the history of the governance sub-committee's discussion. He asked consultant Quyen Truong to compile the committee's thoughts into a document. That draft was sent for review by Terry Gerratana and internally with OHS. Suggestions were made by OHS and the current draft was disseminated to the CAC. Dashni Sathasivam provided a brief overview of the document. Robert Krzys brought up Article II Section II – Composition. He noted that it is an aspirational statement. He then referred to Article III Section II – Categories of Membership. 	

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- He agreed with Article III Section IIA statement that the “representatives of this group comprise of a minimum of 33%.” He suggested that the rest of the sentence should be deleted and a period to be placed after 33% of CAC. noting that the Council already has the mandate to be representative of Connecticut residents. Also, because the 33% of consumers with direct lived experiences can encompass members from the entire CAC and can count towards that percentage.
- Robert Krzys asked where in the document was there reference to amending the by-laws.
- Terry Gerratana referenced the By-laws committee (Article V Section II A2) stating that if there is a need to amend by-laws in the future, the by-laws committee can meet whenever it is needed to meet. As stated, they also would meet once every 2 years as well to make recommendations at the annual meeting. Having a standing By-laws committee allows a formal process for amendment.
- Robert Krzys noted that it is important to define who can submit a by-law change. He suggests that any member of CAC can submit a revision to the by-laws committee a revision and that additional language should include that the standard of passage amending the by-laws would requires 2/3 approval by CAC members.
- Ann Smith noted that she concurred with Robert Krzys’s suggestion. She also asked to amend the revised language to include *approval by a minimum of 2/3 of the CAC*. She also commented Article V Section II A2 that the limitation of only bringing up changes “as needed beginning in 2021” does not take into consideration the way the legislation works and the impact on the consumer advisory function and entity. She asked the “beginning in 2021” to be deleted so that if by-laws change is suggested and raises to the point of ratification and passes by the council, it could be adopted sooner
- Terry Gerratana shared the OHS rational for including the language.
- Ann Smith expressed appreciation for the understanding the rational. She does however want the CAC to have the flexibility to amend the by-laws.
- Ann Smith noted her concerns about the categories listed in Article III Section II- Categories of Membership. She asked how “non-elective community leaders” would that be defined and based on what criteria?
- Robert Krzys thought that he felt that this category came from not wanting elected officials to be represented on the CAC. He felt that having community leaders is important and their appropriateness to be on CAC would be determined through the membership committee.
- Robert Krzys noted that many new members will be joining the CAC and they will be reviewing the by-laws and have comments. As such, he is in favor of adopting the deletion suggested by Ann Smith. He also feels that language should be added that amendments must be filed with the By-laws committee at least 60 days prior to the annual meeting so that the committee has adequate time to review the proposed change and disseminate them among the CAC.
- Jason Prignoli brought up his concerns with how the CAC will hold themselves accountable towards having a representative CAC membership as stated in Article III Sec. II – Categories of Membership and how that will be operationalized? He does not feel that currently the CAC is a representative sample of the state. How will gaps be filled?
- Robert Krzys hopes that the membership committee would be the mechanisms to review membership composition.

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- Terry Nowakowski asked how CAC members would be prospected.
- Terry Gerratana stated that applications will be available at the CAC meetings, on the website and OHS will also formally post on their website. Also, CAC members can recommend people from their own networks and she would encourage them to do so.
- Jason Prignoli asked about the pool of applicants who had applied previously, noting that they were thoroughly vetted.
- Terry Gerratana noted that she will address Jason Prignoli's question during agenda point 5.
- Robert Krzys agreed with Jason, that it is one thing to have an aspirational goal and another to fulfill it. He brought attention to Article V section 3. Membership Committee and noted that will be the job of that committee and the CAC should be thoughtful about who chairs the committee and is on that committee.
- Jeffery Beadle noted that his concerns were already been brought up and is fine with the draft subject to the recommended changes proposed today.
- Terry Nowakowski asked if there could be a sentence that connects of what CAC is doing in relation to other groups, such as the health care cabinet, the State Health improvement plan (SHIP) or other health care reform entities in the state.
- Terry Gerratana replied that there is no formal connection between CAC and other entities in the state, whereas that was true under SIM. However, the CAC could invite and ask for input from those entities and nothing will preclude collaborating with other entities within OHS.
- Terry Nowakowski and Velandy Manohar applauded the efforts that put into the creation of the by-laws.
- Velandy Manohar asked about Article II Section I - Duties. He asked to whom the CAC is accountable?
- Robert Krzys noted that Terry Nowakowski's comment stemmed from the CAC's history of helping to place representation on other entities or reporting to a variety of entities this was the case with SIM CAB. In the current iteration, the CAC is within the OHS to report specific consumer needs to OHS and to help catalyze and inform action and track what is being done with consumer engagement. He referred to the meeting summary in the January 28th meeting, during the discussion of where the CAC fits within the OHS structure. It is important to know how CAC fits within other consumer engagement efforts that OHS is involved in. It is incumbent for OHS and the CAC to apprise each other of activities and what role the CAC could play.
- Terry Gerratana noted that there needs to be a balance between flexibility and structure. She wanted the reports and recommendations that come out to be useful. She affirmed that as the OHS liaison to the CAC she will be a part of the feedback loop. She hopes to administratively formalize the connection and information flow. Then the next step could be to take it back to the community in terms of telling them what is being done in response to those concerns.
- Velandy Manohar asked for clarification of revisions for Article III Section II – Categories of Membership. He did not want to eliminate the categories.
- Robert Krzys stated that none of the categories would be eliminated.
- Terry Gerratana confirmed that the deletion would be to Article III Section IIA. "and shall be persons etc."

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- Velandy Manohar also asked for clarification about Article III Section V. – Attendance and discussion ensued.
- Terry Gerratana responded that these would be unexcused absences noting that requesting a Leave of Absence is available to CAC members.
- Velandy Manohar also asked for further explanation of Article III Section IX – Termination of Members for Cause of Action and what is the course for legal representation and would happen if someone was to bring legal action. He was worried of having a lawyer present and the CAC wouldn't have legal representation.
- Terry Gerratana read the by-laws, which addresses this, and noted that the CAC is an entity of OHS, so she would consult with the OHS general council.
- Velandy Manohar also asked if communication among board subject to Freedom of Information Act? He shared that he has been on boards where members are forbidden to communicate with each other.
- Robert Krzys noted that in the past, the CAC has been held to standards of public meetings. Also, Robert Krzys asked if a few members of the CAC met for a disclosable public meeting, whether the email is disclosable as public information. He also asked whether the Freedom of Information Ombudsmen program is available for providing support.
- Ann Smith suggested that the CAC craft their questions and ask the FOI Commission to speak and address their questions. She felt that the only way to make people comfortable is to ask the people who would enforce those rules versus opinions of board. And the point that Robert Krzys made that the CAC in the past has been held to standards of public meetings and other times not. She suggests a formal request for information from the FOIA Commission.
- Ann Smith concurred with Robert Krzys suggestion. She noted that the Freedom of Information has issued ruling about the scenario that Robert Krzys has described and Velandy Manohar has alluded to.
- Terry Gerratana summarized the CAC discussion: What is subject to FOI and what is the culpability of members. She stated Article VI defines what is subject to FOI. She will also consult OHS in-house counsel.
- Robert Krzys asked the members to forward their questions to Terry so that she can question counsel. He will submit the following questions that were raised in this meeting: If a group of CAC members meet informally in between meeting without giving notice, and discusses business related to CAC, does that constitute a public meeting subject to FOIA? If members of CAC communicate in between scheduled council meetings, are those emails subject to FOIA?
- Ann Smith referred to Article 1 Section II A. "The CAC acts as an advisory to OHS to provide feedback on projects and work the OHS presents to the CAC". She read it as a one-way communication and asked if that language is limiting the function of the CAC? What happens if the CAC has issues that they want to present to the OHS?
- Terry Gerratana explained that the CAC can pursue interests that are related to the CAC mission beyond what OHS presents, but that OHS will ask the CAC for input.
- Ann Smith was also concerned about what the expectation is for councilmembers as it is being contemplated. The distinction was that in the prior iteration of the CAB, there was a scope that clearly defined what members will be doing. She feels that currently things are very open-ended. There are 10 meetings a month, and expectation that a member will also be in a

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standing and potentially ad-hoc meeting. Also, the fact that other units in OHS may be reaching out to CAC. Overall, it sounds that it is a very intense commitment and she is concerned given that the CAC is about to begin recruit. She is also concern because that it is not realistic to expect that everyone is able to commit that time given that there is no mechanism of time to compensate. And looking at the membership categories list, some people will be paid by virtue of employers supporting their time. But looking at disenfranchised populations, this council is not designed in a way the supports their full participation.

- Velandy Manohar noted that he does not want the CAC to be limited exclusively to the work that is presented by OHS and felt that the sentence Article 1 Section II A. read awkwardly.
- Terry Gerratana does not interpret the language that way and feels that the by-laws provides latitude. The CAC would work with OHS.
- Terry Nowakowski interpreted this as hopeful that OHS will provide things that the CAC can respond to.
- Robert Krzys noted that Article I Section II A., that Ann Smith pointed out. Accordingly, may read as though the CAC has no work unless OHS has activities that they present. He does not think that this is the case. The CAC on their own may decide to have a listening session on something that OHS has not asked. And this is tied to funds from OHS to support the engagement. He feels that CAC should have the ability to propose activities and that the language needs to be reviewed. He thinks that the CAC can come up with their own activities as well as those brought up by OHS.
- Robert Krzys also responded to Ann Smith's second point in that the CAC is asking a lot of the community in order to be members. A challenge of this Council to engage people who are most disenfranchised and due to jobs and other circumstances are unable to fully participate. He thinks that OHS will need to look at that. Unless there are funds to pay people to be a part of this Council, he is unsure how else to address this barrier.
- Ann Smith asked why there is not funds to support transportation of members or designate steps to incorporate other technology to have people participate beyond a phone dial-in. She feels that the by-laws should reflect lowering the barriers for participants
- Velandy Manohar asked that the participation of underserved populations and use of other media could bring in a whole different group of people.
- Ann Smith noted that the trends in corporate and non-profit boards, having a dedicated portal to which members have access to all materials and can weigh-in to polls and surveys and can remove barriers to participation and could mitigate barriers in participation and enable broader engagement of communities that they are seeking. She does not think that these by-laws do this, and she was hesitant to endorse by-laws that don't do this.
- Velandy Manohar noted that there could be a portal for texting.
- Terry Nowakowski wanted to take up Ann Smith's point for remuneration for consumer engagement. DCF Families First federal initiative have made a commitment to pay people for engagement. She does believe that it is important to bring in people at the grassroots level
- Robert Krzys notes that rather than think about the tactic of what can be done, whether that be a transportation stipend etc., he suggested that the membership committee role could be additionally charged to make recommendations for enhancing engagement for the CAC to the

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	<p>OHS. It should be added to the by-laws, which calls out the issue and provides work to do and recommendations to follow up on and present to the whole CAC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He noted Article V. Sec IIB. that the Chair and Vice-Chair could convene an Ad-Hoc committee to work on enhancing opportunities for members to participate in CAC. • Ann Smith appreciates the suggestion that the Chair has made. She would also not want this issue to be delegated to an Ad-Hoc committee as she feels that it is fundamental to the Council. She respectfully requests that in Article III Section II – Categories of Membership, language is included that “proactive steps will be taken to ensure or facilitate the broad representation possible. As opposed to Ad-Hoc committee, because that is indicative of a fleeting committee. • Robert Krzys suggest that to address Ann Smith’s comment that Article II Section I – Duties, that additional language is. • Ann Smith would want to see the language, but she concurs with the principle of Robert Krzys suggestion. • Robert Krzys noted that there is not pressing concern to approve the by-laws today. He will draft language that addresses this concern to enhance further participation on the CAC of certain persons that we feel necessary. Noting that these are just recommendations and that if these are related to budgetary items, that these recommendations may not be taken up. • Velandy Manohar moves to delete the remainder of the sentence of Article III Section IIA “of the CAC and shall be persons who, as a group etc.” Terry Nowakowski seconded. Motion carried. • Terry Nowakowski moves to delete “beginning in 2021” of Article V Section II A2 and Velandy Manohar seconds. Motion carried. • Terry Gerratana will work with OHS on the language. • Velandy Manohar moves to delete the word “non-elected” from Article III section II F. and Terry Nowakowski seconded. Motion carried. • Robert Krzys moved to approve the by-laws as amended conditioned upon completion of language amending Article II section I D. and Article V section II A2. Terry Nowakowski seconded. Motion carried. • Terry Gerratana will also consult with Demian Fontanella, and at the next meeting there will be language on those two points. 	
5.	Recruitment/Onboarding Activation	Robert Krzys
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robert Krzys noted that this will be put on the agenda for the next meeting. He and Terry have been in communication about the individuals who were in the existing applicant pool. • Terry Gerratana noted that Leslie Greer will put out a notice regarding CAC vacancies. 	
6.	Review of New Britain and New London Listening Session	Robert Krzys
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robert Krzys noted that this item will be tabled until March 10th. 	
7.	CAB Announcements	Robert Krzys
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robert Krzys stated that all members should provide agenda items to the Chair and Terry Gerratana because it is open to all members to suggest items for discussion. 	
8.	Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.
	Terry Nowakowski motioned to adjourn, and Velandy Manohar seconded. Motion carried.	