

**S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING**  
**SCDMH Administration**  
**2414 Bull Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201**  
**October 2, 2020**

A Business Meeting of the S.C. Mental Health Commission was held in Room 320 at the S.C. Department of Mental Health Administration Building on Friday, October 2, 2020, at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Greg Pearce, Chair, was present in person. Other Commission members were present virtually via Zoom. The meeting notice and agenda were posted prior to the meeting and notice made to all individuals and news media who requested information in accordance with State law.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Pearce called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Stewart Cooner provided the invocation.

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

Chairman Pearce welcomed everyone. Visitors present virtually via Zoom were: Beth Franco, Protection & Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc., and Jocelyn Piccone, Liberty Healthcare.

On behalf of the Commission, Chairman Pearce expressed heartfelt condolences to the family of Mrs. Shirley Bannister upon the passing of Mrs. Bannister on September 27, 2020. Mrs. Bannister began her work with DMH at Dowdy Gardner Nursing Care Center as an LPN in 1986 and in 2010 became the Director of Nursing at Tucker. She retired from the Department of Mental Health in 2013 and went on to teach nursing at Midlands Technical College.

On behalf of the Commission, Chairman Pearce expressed heartfelt condolences to the family of Ms. Sarah Hendrix upon the passing of Ms. Hendrix on September 28, 2020. Ms. Hendrix worked in financial services at DMH from 1968 until 2006. She retired with 38 years of service. She was the mother of current employee Jennifer Rucker who works in Medical Affairs, mother-in-law of current employee Mike Rucker who works in Physical Plant Services, and a granddaughter, Jessica Rucker, who works in Finance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

***On a motion by Mrs. Louise Haynes, seconded by Dr. Alison Evans, the Commission approved the Agenda for today's Business Meeting.***

***All voted in favor to the above motion; the motion carried.***

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

***On a motion by Dr. Evans, and seconded by Ms. Haynes, the Commission approved the minutes from the Business Meeting of September 9, 2020***

***All voted in favor to the above motion; the motion carried.***

**APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 2020 AND 2021 COMMISSION MEETINGS**

Chairman Pearce recognized Mark Binkley. Mr. Binkley said the Commission at its September 4, 2020 meeting requested Agency leadership provide a recommendation to the Commission regarding how Center and Facility presentations could be included in future Commission meetings. Mr. Binkley presented a recommendation that every other month, commencing with the December 4, 2020 Commission meeting through December 2021, the designated Center or Facility provide the Commission a virtual presentation of up to 45 minutes in length prior to the commencement of the Commission's virtual business meeting. It was further recommended that the Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Mental Health Center provide the first virtual presentation at the December 4, 2020 Commission meeting.

*On a motion by Dr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Hiott, the Commission approved the recommendation as presented.*

*All voted in favor to the above motion; the motion carried.*

### **MONTHLY/QUARTERLY INFORMATION REPORTS**

Ms. Elizabeth Hutto presented the items listed under Monthly/Quarterly Informational Reports, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

Ms. Hutto reported for the month of September a total of three pending investigations by the Office of Public Safety.

Ms. Hutto reported that as of Wednesday September 30, 2020 there were 15 pending SLED investigations. One case had been assigned to SLED, of which the oldest is from May 2020; six cases were assigned to Long-term Care Ombudsman Office of which the oldest is from September 2019; four were assigned to local law enforcement, of which the oldest is from 2019; and four were assigned to the Attorney General's Office (AGO). She noted that one of the cases assigned to the AGO goes back to 2017. She explained the case will remain open until the defendant is located or until the AGO decides not to pursue any longer.

Ms. Hutto highlighted the following from the Patient Advocacy Report:

- 52 calls to patient advocacy in August 2020; a total of 368 year to date.
- 74 complaints were resolved in August 2020.
- 515 complaints have been resolved year-to-date.
- The number of complaints by category resolved year to date is 645 (*complaints are broken out by category, a single patient complaint may have more than one category*).

### **DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW AND UPDATE**

#### **Coronavirus Response**

##### **Community Mental Health Services**

Ms. Deborah Blalock presented the Community Mental Health Services Trends and Transparency Monthly Indicators (TMI) spreadsheets, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. Ms. Blalock noted the absence of productivity data is due to the change made in August 2020 in the workweek schedule for CMHS staff from a 37.5 workweek to a 40 hour workweek. The productivity data will be available upon final testing of the reporting system.

Ms. Blalock reported as of October 1, 2020 .25% of the patients in the community had not been seen by the Centers, down from .45% on September 3, 2020.

Ms. Blalock reported the SC Hopes call center has received 527 calls since June 1, 2020.

##### **SAMHSA Disaster Response Grant**

Ms. Blalock reported that on September 28, 2020 the Department was awarded a SAMHSA grant of \$6.4 million to address mental health issues of individuals who were affected by Hurricane Florence in the counties of Chesterfield, Marlboro, Dillon, Darlington, Florence, Marion, Horry, Georgetown and Williamsburg. The funds will be used to supply recreational vehicles (RVs) for the mental health centers in those counties: Waccamaw Mental Health Center, Tri-County Mental Health Center, and Pee Dee Mental Health Center. The RVs will be staffed with nurses, child serving clinicians, adult serving clinicians, MHPs and primary care staff. She commended Allison Farrell and Stacey Gardner for their spectacular efforts in writing the grant in six days. Mr. Hiott said he understands the difficulty of writing a SAMHSA grant and expressed appreciation for the hard work. Chairman Pearce requested a virtual tour of one of the RVs at a future Commission meeting.



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Ms. Blalock announced effective October 1, 2020 the Community Crisis Response & Intervention call line will no longer be manned by the Greenville Mental Health America and will be housed at the Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center. Master's level clinicians will answer the calls.

Ms. Blalock announced the Charleston County Consolidated 9-1-1 Center is utilizing the Department of Mental Health as a resource to deal with mental health related calls. The 911 center has a mental health counselor in-house. During their live broadcast on October 1, 2020, *Live 5 News* in Charleston aired a report about the partnership.

Office of Suicide Prevention – Governor's Challenge

Jennifer Butler, Director of Office of Suicide Prevention, gave a presentation on the 2020 Governor's Challenge. SAMHSA has partnered with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to bring the Governor's Challenge to prevent suicide among service members, veterans, and their families. A copy of the presentation is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director.

Dr. Rogers expressed appreciation to Ms. Butler for her hard work and for her efforts in promoting Suicide Prevention Awareness Month during September.

Division of Inpatient Services (DIS)

Dr. Versie Bellamy presented the Division of Inpatient Services report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

Dr. Bellamy recognized Allyson Sipes, Psy.D., Director of Clinical Initiatives for DIS. Dr. Sipes said DIS participated in the Zero Suicide Academy in October 2019 with representation from each DIS facility and executive leadership. The following are some of the Zero Suicide initiatives DIS has implemented over the past year:

- Zero Suicide Implementation Team meetings are held monthly for executive leadership and suicide champions from the facilities.
- Conducted a zero suicide workforce survey with an 80-90% response rate.
- In consultation with the Office of Suicide Prevention, developed a suicide safer care pathway.
- Inpatient psychiatric facilities use the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) at admission and at discharge for assessing suicidal ideation and behavior.
- Safety planning and caring contacts interventions were mandated.
- Within the inpatient psychiatric hospitals, staff have been trained in suicide specific care evidence based models of treatment.
- Eighty staff have received the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).
- Continue to promote required virtual training such as Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM), C-SSRS, and training on Safety Planning Intervention.

Dr. Sipes announced that in September the Ensor Committee awarded Ensor grant funds to conduct a study entitled "Effectiveness of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Program in Comorbid Population."

Dr. Bellamy expressed appreciation to Dr. Sipes and said she has been a champion in keeping things going and staff focused.

Dr. Bellamy presented the following highlights from her report:

- The DIS Covid-19 Task Force continues to add practices to mitigate risks stemming from the challenges of the pandemic.
- DHEC has conducted multiple long-term care surveys focused on multiple areas to include infection control at the nursing homes and long-term care facilities.
- DIS long-term care leadership are constantly reviewing the CDC guidelines and addressing requirements as provided by CDC.

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Dr. Rudd talked about the CDC/DHEC guidelines on nursing homes. The required testing for nursing homes is based on the level of prevalence of Covid-19 positivity rates in the county where the facility is located. Reporting of all positive and negative cases within 24 hours is required.

Forensic Waiting List Update

Dr. Kelly Gothard reported that during the month of September, the forensic COVID-19 cases have stabilized with no patients remaining on isolation protocols. Admissions have been resumed on a normal schedule. The forensic waitlist remains stable. A reduction in the waitlist is anticipated by early October.

Dr. Gothard reported the Forensic Alternate Care Site received final approval by DHEC on September 15, 2020 and opened for admissions on September 21, 2020.

Dr. Gothard announced a family practice medical provider, Dr. Monica Moore, was hired in Forensics and began her responsibilities in September 2020. Also two Forensic Psychology Postdoctoral Fellows, Dr. Jacqueline Dye and Dr. Victoria Hauth, began working in the forensic evaluation service in September 2020.

Dr. Gothard announced the South Carolina courts reopened on September 21, 2020, and it is anticipated that the number of Orders for evaluation and treatment will be increasing.

Administrative Services

Ms. Debbie Calcote presented the Administrative Services Report. Ms. Calcote said Administrative Services continues to provide support in all areas of the organization. She reported that as of September 21, 2020 Physical Plant Services (PPS) is working their normal work schedule. PPS has also been supportive of nutritional services during the pandemic by assisting with food delivery. The Procurement Department continues to respond to needs very efficiently.

**Issue Action Paper (IAP) Requests**

Ms. Calcote presented an IAP requesting the Commission approve accepting the offer of a quitclaim deed from the South Carolina Research Authority (SCRA) for the property known as Pisgah Church Road Cemetery, Richland County, S.C., containing 26.35 acres of land. The property was originally part of a tract of land deeded to DMH in 1910. In 1983 DMH transferred a large portion of the property to the South Carolina Research Authority for development of a technology industrial park with the property to revert to DMH in the event it was not used for such. The Pisgah Church Road Cemetery was not included in the 1983 conveyance. The SCRA does not believe it owns the cemetery and DMH has maintained the cemetery. However, the SCRA wants to convey any possible legal interest it has in the cemetery back to DMH by quitclaim deed so there is no question as to the ownership of the cemetery.

*On a motion by Ms. Haynes, and seconded by Mr. Hiott, the Commission approved the recommendation as presented.*

**Financial Status Update**

Ms. Calcote presented the monthly financial report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. As of August 31, 2020 the Department is projected to end FY21 with a small surplus.

Ms. Calcote reported the Department has submitted \$2.1 million of expenses to be reimbursed through the state's Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). She explained the state of South Carolina retained Guidehouse, Inc. to manage the CARES Grant Management Program, which is a statewide recovery program for the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRT). The Department is waiting to receive a status of those submissions.

Ms. Calcote presented a proposed amendment to the FY22 budget request. Each of the agency's FY22 budget requests relate to one of the Agency's three statutorily required missions: (1) Forensic Services; (2) Sexually Violent Predator



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Treatment Program; and (3) State Veterans Nursing Homes. Given the adverse financial impact resulting from the pandemic, the Department is limiting its requests to those amounts needed to fully fund its mandatory services. The total proposed amended budget request for FY22, which includes recurring funds and capital budget requests, is \$73,196,610. She said DMH has prepared a supplemental document which lists other financial needs of the Department beyond its formal request to sustain, at current levels, its civil psychiatric hospital services and community mental health services, and to meet the anticipated increasing demand for public mental health services due to the emotional and economic impacts of the pandemic. The other financial needs total \$38,671,723.

*On a motion by Dr. Evans, seconded by Ms. Hayes, the Commission approved the proposed amendment to the FY22 budget request.*

*All voted in favor to the above motion; motion carried.*

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dr. Rogers stated that today is his six-month anniversary as State Director. He thanked the Commission and Senior Management for the wonderful support he has received over the past six months.

Dr. Rogers reported the following:

- Ms. Janet Bell was selected to fill the new Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (CDIO) position. Ms. Bell will begin her responsibilities with DMH effective October 17, 2020.
- Dr. Rogers is reaching out to the faith-based communities to talk about moving toward the idea of surviving post-Covid. He has met with pastors and spoken at church events. He also met with leadership at Columbia International University to discuss how to begin to advocate this to the faith community.
- As reported earlier, the Department was awarded a SAMHSA grant that will provide funds to supply RVs for mental health centers. This provides opportunity to expand integrated care services throughout the state. The Department is having discussions with PRISMA and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), as well as other healthcare providers, about how to engage multiple entities in providing integrated care.
- On behalf of the Department, Dr. Rogers wished Chairman Pearce a happy birthday!

#### **OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

Chairman Pearce commended Ms. Janie Simpson for her leadership and great work with the South Carolina Mental Health State Planning Council. He expressed appreciation to Ms. Maria Beth Smith for her presentation at the September 16, 2020 Planning Council. Every story of mental illness and recovery is important. He said Ms. Smith's story of recovery made a profound impact on him.

Chairman Pearce extended congratulations to the Mental Illness Recovery Center, Inc., (MIRCI) upon their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

*At 11:40 a.m. on a motion by Mr. Hiott, seconded by Dr. Evans, the Commission adjourned the Business Meeting and entered into Executive Session to receive legal advice concerning a pending contract. Upon convening in open session at 12:06 p.m., it was noted that only information was received; no votes or actions were taken.*

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***ATTENDANCE***

***Commission Members***

L. Gregory Pearce, Jr. Chair     *(Commission members present virtually via Zoom)*  
Dr. Louise Haynes, Vice Chair  
Dr. Alison Evans  
Mr. Bob Hiott

***Visitors/Staff***

Dr. Robert Bank	Kelly Gothard	<u><i>present virtually via Zoom</i></u>	<u><i>present virtually via Zoom</i></u>
Christian Barnes-Young	Dr. Patricia Handley	Jennifer Alleyne	Allen McEniry
Dr. Versie Bellamy	Elizabeth Hutto	Algie Bryant	Jocelyn Piccone
Deborah Blalock	Eleanor Odom	Melanie Ferretti	Lynelle Reavis
Jennifer Butler	Valarie Perkins	Beth Franco	Stuart Shields
Mark Binkley	Dr. Kenneth Rogers	Melanie Gambrell	Natasha Smith
Debbie Calcote	Dr. Kimberly Rudd	Maryjane Hicks	Noelle Wriston
Stewart Cooner		Kevin Hoyle	Brett Williams

***APPROVALS***

  
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L. Gregory Pearce, Jr.  
Chair

  
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Kim Ballentine  
Recording Secretary