

S. C. MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING
SCDMH Administration
2414 Bull Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201
July 14, 2023

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, July 14, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. 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. Commissioner Dr. Crystal Maxwell was absent, excused. Chaplain Kynan Robinson provided the invocation.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Chairman Pearce welcomed everyone. Visitors present virtually were: Gail Cordial, Director, Policy & Government Relations, Alkermes; Ashlei Hart, CMC Supervisor SC, GA, Genoa Healthcare; Bill Lindsay, Executive Director, NAMI SC; Kathleen Martin, Attorney, Disability Rights South Carolina; Wanda McMichael, Program Manager, Liberty Healthcare Corporation; and Susan von Schenk, Capital Information Affiliates (CIA).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the Agenda for today's Business Meeting.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

By motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the minutes from the Center Presentation of June 2, 2023 and the minutes from the Commission Business Meeting of June 2, 2023.

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

ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS

There was discussion about the process for the election of the officers of the Commission. A motion was made and seconded to defer the election of officers until such time that all Commission members would be present, which would be the September Commission meeting (Chairman Pearce noted that he would not be at the August 2023 Commission meeting due to a speaking engagement). Additionally, Chairman Pearce will continue to serve as the Chair until the election occurs. There was discussion. Chairman Pearce said that if it is the desire of the Commission to develop a process for the election of officers, Commission members should be prepared to present ideas at the September Commission meeting. Commission members agreed.

All voted in favor of the above motion; the motion carried.

MONTHLY/QUARTERLY INFORMATION REPORTS

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

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Ms. Hutto reported for the month of June 2023 a total of four pending investigations for the Office of Public Safety.

Ms. Hutto reported that as of yesterday there were 33 pending SLED investigations. Four cases were assigned to SLED, of which the oldest is from August 2022; 22 cases were assigned to Long-term Care Ombudsman Office, of which the oldest is from June 2022. She explained the increase is due to a delay that occurred with the ombudsman closing the report. Six cases were assigned to local law enforcement; and one case is with the DSS Adult Protective Services.

Ms. Hutto reported a closure of note concerning an incident in May 2023 at Patrick B. Harris Psychiatric Hospital. A patient was walking back to her room after dinner. She was accompanied by two BHAs. The patient raised her fist and took a fighting stance toward one of the BHAs. The other BHA tackled the patient. There were no injuries to the patient. The BHA who tackled the patient was terminated. The incident was reported to SLED, however SLED declined to prosecute.

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

- 76 calls to patient advocacy in May 2023; a total of 398 year to date.
- 72 complaints were resolved in May 2023; a total of 370 year to date.
- The number of complaints by category resolved is 83 (*complaints are broken out by category, a single patient complaint may have more than one category*).

ISSUE ACTION PAPER (IAP) – SLIGHS AVENUE PROPERTY

Ms. Hutto reported the Department received a Letter of Intent (LOI) dated June 19, 2023 from the University of South Carolina (USC) expressing its intent to purchase the approximately 15-acre Slighs Avenue tract adjacent to the C.M. Tucker, Jr., Nursing Care Center. She presented an IAP, a copy of which had been provided to the Commission, requesting Commission approval to authorize the Acting State Director and his staff to obtain an appraisal of the property and negotiate a draft contract of sale with the USC for review and approval by the Commission. If a contract for the sale of the Slighs Avenue tract from DMH to USC is ultimately approved by both the Mental Health Commission and the USC Board of Trustees, the Department will need to additionally seek the approval of the Circuit Court, as well as the State Fiscal Accountability Authority. There was discussion.

By motion duly made and seconded, the Commission approved the request as presented.

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

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Ms. Robin Crawford, Legislative Liaison, gave a legislative update. Following are highlights from the report:

- The FY24 State Budget was ratified by the General Assembly on June 14, 2023. DMH's budget includes funding for:
 - Critical staff retention for mental health professionals, law enforcement, and nurses;
 - The state's 988 call centers and the Office of Suicide Prevention;
 - Contracted community beds;
 - A program for mental health access for incarcerated individuals in Charleston and Berkeley counties;
 - Expansion of the alternative transportation program; and
 - Money towards purchasing a new building for Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Mental Health Center.
- State employees received salary increases: \$2,500 increase to employees making less than \$50,000 annually and a 5% increase for employees making over that amount.
- Ms. Crawford and Ms. Bonita Shropshire attended the 2023 Southern Legislative Conference July 8-12, 2023 in Charleston, S.C. The conference was hosted by Senate President Thomas Alexander. Legislators, staff, liaisons, and lobbyists from 15 southern state were in attendance.

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- Mental Health Centers are planning to reach out to county legislative delegations to offer tours at the centers and clinics.

Dr. Levy commented on how well the staff has worked to connect with the senators this past year and said that it really has made a difference.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Bank reported the following:

- The salary increases are proving to be of benefit in retaining MHPs as well as attracting quality candidates for those positions.
- The 988 call center in Charleston started taking calls in June. The goal is to keep as many South Carolina-based calls answered in the state as possible.
- Administrative Services continues to work closely with the Department of Administration (DOA) and the South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs (SCDVA) with the transfer of the veterans homes from DMH to SCDVA by the deadline date of June 30, 2024.
- Last year, the Department spent close to \$8 million which helped with 1,700+ admissions to community hospitals for patients who had no insurance.
- On June 29, 2023 the Department submitted its response to the DOA's May 2023 findings and recommendations regarding finance and budgeting functions at DMH. The Department has implemented changes to strengthen and expand infrastructure and operations in the finance and budget areas as recommended in the report. The Department is working on implementing the DOA's recommendations regarding human resources.
- Beginning next month, Dr. Ralph Pollock, Acting Medical Director, will give an update on the Division of Medical Services. Dr. Pollock is involved in recruiting doctors and nurse practitioners. He is currently tasked with establishing an interagency psychiatric consultation panel for psychiatric consultation services to the Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). The first consultation psychiatrist for the interagency psychiatric consultation panel is slated to start on July 24, 2023.

DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW AND UPDATE

Administrative Services & Financial Status Update

Ms. Debbie Calcote, Deputy Director, Administrative Services introduced Mr. Vincent Patterson. Mr. Patterson began his responsibilities as Financial Services Director on June 2, 2023.

Ms. Calcote presented the Administrative Services and monthly financial report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. As of May 31, 2023, the Department is projected to end FY23 with a balance of approximately \$13.7 million. Ms. Calcote noted this is an increase from April 2023 by approximately \$3.2 million and attributed to spending down the enhanced Medicaid funds received as part of the Medicaid continuous enrollment provision during COVID 19. She noted the Department has expended 90.22% of state appropriations as of May 31, 2023.

Major Construction/Renovations Update

Ms. Calcote gave an update on Bryan Hospital Hall Institute Lodges D & C:

- In early June, the contractor failed to provide the required documentation for change orders in the project scope. While change orders for construction projects are not common, the contractor's refusal to comply with the State Engineer's requirements is unusual.
- DMH Physical Plant Services will address the installation and painting of doors, cabinets, observation window and work with a floor covering vendor.
- The last completion date for Lodge D has been pushed to late August or early September.
- Because of the issues with the current contractor, the Lodge C renovation project will be re-bid.

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Update on transfer of VA Nursing Homes

Ms. Calcote gave an update on the transfer of the veterans homes from DMH to SCDVA. Leadership from DMH and SCDVA began meeting weekly the first part of June. Information is being shared about the scope of operations primarily as it relates to the financial and physical plant services. Secretary McCaffrey and members from his staff along with Dr. Bellamy and members of her staff have toured all the nursing homes. The Department of Administration is now facilitating the process. The contracted VA nursing homes are the initial focus.

Division of Inpatient Services (DIS)

Dr. Versie Bellamy, Deputy Director, Division of Inpatient Services, presented the Division of Inpatient Services report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. Dr. Bellamy reported that she and Dr. Rudd toured the VA nursing homes with Secretary McCaffrey and his leadership team during the month of June. She stated that she is confident that DMH leadership will continue to collaborate and support SCDVA and others in the transfer of the VA nursing homes. Following are highlights from her report:

- Forensics continues to serve patients by utilizing the jail-based restoration option and allocating additional civil beds for forensics admissions. Dr. Bellamy reported that through those efforts there has been a 40% reduction of the forensic waitlist over the past 2 ½ months. As of June 22, 2023, there was a total of 111 individuals on the Forensic Ready for Admission Waitlist.
- The Honorable Frank Addy, Jr., Circuit Court Judge for the Eighth Judicial Circuit in S.C., and Judicial Branch liaison to DMH, met with DMH leadership on June 22, 2023. Part of the discussion included the pain points with increased orders over the past several months. During the meeting, Dr. Bellamy and Dr. Gothard shared the recent forensics initiatives and the impact made on the forensics waitlist. Ms. Hutto commented that Judge Addy appreciated the information. He reached out a week or so later with follow-up questions. The ongoing communication with Judge Addy is positive and he understands all the efforts Forensics staff is undertaking to reduce the forensic waitlist.
- In response to Chairman Pearce's request at the June 2, 2023 Commission meeting, Dr. Bellamy distributed a list of charges by individual forensic patients in the facility on June 23, 2023 (the patients' names were not listed). A copy is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director.
- Dr. Bellamy presented the BPH and Harris Bed Turnover Report for October 2022 through June 2023, a copy of which is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director. From October 2022 through June 2023, Bryan Civil discharged 45 long-term patients and Harris Psychiatric Hospital discharged 35 long-term patients.
- Dr. Bellamy introduced Dr. Robert Breen, Psychiatrist at Bryan Psychiatric Hospital. She thanked Dr. Breen for his valiant efforts in leading the charge and chairing the Task force through the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Breen shared a success story about a patient who was at Bryan for 16 years and was discharged in March 2023. There was discussion about treatment plans, discharging patients from the hospital, and transition services.

Chairman Pearce thanked Dr. Breen for his service and commended him for his good work with the taskforce.

HR Report

On behalf of Ms. Eleanor Odom-Martin, Human Resources Director, Dr. Bank presented the HR report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. Below are highlights from the report:

- Calendar Year Comparison of Filled FTEs:
 - June 2021 – 3,797
 - June 2022 – 3,512
 - June 2023 – 3,578
- In FY22 the Department had a total of 800 FTE hires and 1,080 departures; thus far in FY23 the Department has 863 FTE hires and 803 departures.

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Dr. Bellamy said she has received emails from several staff members expressing much appreciation for the recent salary increase. She reported plans are to decrease the use of contract providers as part of their budget reduction strategies; she has a list of individuals wanting to convert to DMH employment.

Dr. Jones said it would be helpful to see what positions have the largest number of vacancies and what positions have the fewest number of vacancies.

Community Mental Health Services

Ms. Deborah Blalock, Deputy Director, Community Mental Health Services, presented the Community Mental Health Services (CMHS) report. Following are highlights from the report:

- Ms. Blalock thanked Ms. Angie Salley and the leadership at Coastal Empire Community Health Center for the presentation earlier today and expressed appreciation for their great work.
- School Mental Health – all the mental health centers have maintained their contracts with their various districts and schools with the exception of eight schools in the Greenville School District. The Greenville District has decided to pull out either schools from their district and have their own team serve their schools to see how they can perhaps move forward with doing mental health care for their entire district. We have notified the patients in those schools that we will no longer be in those schools, but those patients could certainly come to the mental health center to receive care.
- Since its launch on June 1, 2023, the 988 Call Center at Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center has received 432 calls; 323 of those calls were successful meaning that the call came through, the caller and the receiver could understand one another and have conversation; 109 were unsuccessful meaning the call dropped or the connection was garbled. In June, the South Carolina instate answer rate was 76%, compared to 67% in May 2023.
- The minimum salary for an unlicensed MHP in the Community is now a little over \$51,000 compared to \$36,000 just a little over a year ago; the minimum salary for a licensed MHP in the community is a little over \$56,000.
- Mental Health Centers posted vacancy rates: Aiken Barnwell Mental Health Center – 28; Beckman Center for Mental Health – 17; Berkeley Community Mental Health Center – 7; Columbia Area Mental Health Center – 9; Greater Greenville Mental Health Center – 25; Lexington Community Mental Health Center – 27; Orangeburg Area Mental Health Center – 4; Pee Dee Mental Health Center – 3; Spartanburg Area Mental Health Center – 52; Santee-Wateree Mental Health Center – 22; Waccamaw Center for Mental Health – 15; Tri-County Mental Health Center – 10; and Charleston Dorchester Mental Health Center – 119.
- Currently awaiting a report from the Office of State Engineer (OSE) and architect regarding DHEC's licensure requirements for the Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) at Morris Village.
- Ms. Blalock presented the SCHopes Treatment Line and Crisis Counseling Program (CCP) final data, a copy of which had been provided to the Commission. She noted that over the life of SCHopes, June 1, 2020 until May 31, 2023, a total of 8,244 south Carolinians received mental health services.
- H2H programs – all mental health centers have their RVs and are solidifying sites for where they will be parked.
- Charleston Dorchester MHC, Pee Dee MHC and Waccamaw MHC will end FY23 in deficit due to revenue generated received after June 30, 2023.
- All Intensive Community Treatment Teams (ICT) will be converted to Assertive Community Treatment Teams (ACT) over the next six to nine months. An ACT team consists of a community-based group of medical, behavioral health and rehabilitation professionals who use a team approach to meet the needs of an individual with severe and persistent mental illness. The team is considered the provider for the patient.
- Ms. Blalock presented the CMHS Trends and Transparency Monthly Indicators (TMI) spreadsheets, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

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ADJOURNMENT

At 12:05 p.m., by motion duly made and seconded, the Commission adjourned the Business Meeting and entered into Executive Session to discuss a legal matter. Upon convening in open session at 12:55 p.m., Chairman Pearce noted that only information was received; no votes or actions were taken.

At 12:55 p.m. by motion duly made and seconded, the Commission adjourned the business meeting.

ATTENDANCE

Commission Members

Mr. Greg Pearce, Chair

Dr. Elliott Levy, Vice Chair

Dr. Carl Jones

Mr. Bobby Mann

Dr. Crystal Maxwell, absent, excused

Visitors/Staff

Dr. Robert Bank

Dr. Versie Bellamy

Mark Binkley

Deborah Blalock

Debbie Calcote

Robin Crawford

Elizabeth Hutto

Vincent Patterson

Dr. Ralph Pollock

Tracy Richardson

Brett Williams

present virtually via Zoom

Janet Bell

Dr. Robert Breen

Pat Bresnan

Jackie Brown

Jennifer Butler

Gail Cordial

Matthew Dorman

Dr. Kelly Gothard

Jeffrey Greene

Jeffery Ham

Dr. Patricia Handley

Ashlei Hart

present virtually via Zoom

Dr. Maryjane Hicks

Joy Hodge

Kathy Hugg

Keith Jackson

Charice Jones

Tracy LaPointe

Bill Lindsay

Kathy Martin

Eleanor Odom Martin

Wanda McMichael

Chris Morgan

Denise Morgan

present virtually via Zoom

Valarie Perkins

Vickie Perry

Dr. Lynelle Reavis

Shawnta Reeder-Locks

Dr. Kimberly Rudd

Bonita Shropshire

Jessica Suber

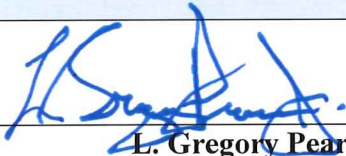
Susan von Schenk

Irene Thornley

Eric Turner

Lindsay Walker

APPROVALS



L. Gregory Pearce, Jr.
Chair



Kim Ballentine
Recording Secretary