

April 4, 2025 Commission Minutes

Prior to the regularly scheduled May 2, 2025 Commission meeting, when the April 2025 minutes would have normally been approved, the Commission was abolished pursuant to the passing of S2, which was signed by the Governor on April 28, 2025. No Commission meeting was conducted whereby the April 4, 2025 minutes would have been approved, therefore, the minutes remain marked as draft.

Kim Ballentine
Recording Secretary
Executive Assistant to the State Director
S.C. Department of Mental Health
2414 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201
803-898-8319
kim.ballentine@scdmh.org
www.scdmh.net



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

April 4, 2025

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, April 4, 2025, 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 Levy called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Chaplain Kynan Robinson provided the invocation.

On behalf of the Commission, Chairman Levy extended condolences to Dr. Versie Bellamy and her family upon the passing of her mother, Mrs. Clara B. Jones, on March 26, 2025.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Bank recognized Ms. Debbie Calcote, Deputy Director of Administrative Services. As of April 1, 2025, Ms. Calcote's tenure of service with DMH is 41 years, 9 months, and 20 days. Dr. Bank presented her with a 40-year service pin. He noted that the Commission presented Ms. Calcote a resolution on April 9, 2021 in appreciation of her dedicated service to those living with mental illness and her invaluable service to the Agency as well as recognized her retirement from the Department. Ms. Calcote returned to DMH in November 2022 as Acting Deputy Director of Administrative Services. She became the permanent Deputy Director of Administrative Services in February 2023. She is leaving DMH and her role as Deputy Director of Administrative Services at the end of April 2025.

On behalf of the Department of Mental Health and the Commission, Dr. Bank presented a resolution to Mr. Charles "Keith" Jackson honoring him for his service to the Department and congratulated him on his upcoming retirement. Mr. Jackson's resolution read as follows:

Whereas: The South Carolina Mental Health Commission and the State Director of the South Carolina Department of Mental Health recognize the retirement of Charles "Keith" Jackson; and

Whereas: Mental health is critical to the well-being and vitality of all South Carolinians; and

Whereas: Mr. Jackson has improved the lives of individuals living with mental illness, serving as Division of Inpatient Services (DIS) Chief Operations Officer and Facility Director of Bryan Psychiatric Hospital. He has led multiple collaborative efforts, including increasing functional bed capacity at all SCDMH inpatient facilities and furthering development of the roles of DIS's Chief Operations Officer, Bryan Hospital's Chief Executive Officer, and Bryan Hospital-Civil's Interim Director; and

Whereas: Mr. Jackson has been dedicated to improving the lives of people with mental illness, via his work in strategic planning, operational management, training, recruitment, retention, productivity standards, safety, and various executive business roles, ensuring the best quality of services for patients; and

Whereas: Mr. Jackson has shown outstanding leadership in advancing inpatient services for patients in South Carolina through positive engagement and support; and

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Whereas:

Mr. Jackson has been recognized for his dedication and skill as a leader in mental health care. His talent for collaborating with others allowed for many improvements to the Agency's inpatient services; and

Whereas:

The South Carolina Mental Health Commission and the State Director of the South Carolina Department of Mental Health recognize and thank Mr. Jackson for his devoted service to the South Carolina Department of Mental Health; and

Now, therefore:

We express our profound appreciation to Mr. Jackson for his steadfast service to the mentally ill and his invaluable service to the South Carolina Department of Mental Health; offer him our sincere gratitude and best wishes in his retirement; and order that a copy of this Resolution be made a part of the Commission's permanent records. – Keith – honored to service – exciting challenging and leaving the facility in better hands, and will do exciting things.

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APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There being no amendments or corrections to the agenda, the agenda was approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There being no amendments or corrections to the minutes of the Commission meeting of March 7, 2025, the minutes were approved as presented.

MONTHLY/QUARTERLY INFORMATION REPORTS

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

Mr. Royals reported there was one pending investigation for the month of March 2025 for the Office of Public Safety.

Mr. Royals reported that as of this morning there were 16 pending SLED investigations. Two cases were assigned to SLED, of which the oldest case is from November 2024; 12 cases were assigned to Long-term Care Ombudsman Office of which the oldest case is from May 2024; and two cases were assigned to local law enforcement.

Mr. Royals highlighted the following from the Patient Advocacy Report:

- 46 calls to patient advocacy in February 2025; a total of 286 year to date
- 100 complaints were resolved in February 2025: a total of 163 year to date
- The number of complaints by category resolved in February 2025 is 116 (*complaints are broken out by category, a single patient complaint may have more than one category*).

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Dr. Bank reported on behalf of Ms. Robin Crawford, Director, Governmental Affairs. The following are highlights from the report.

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- Dr. Bank presented the DMH FY26 budget request to the Senate Finance Health & Human Services Subcommittee on March 27, 2025. The subcommittee will take its budget recommendations to the full Senate Finance Committee next week.
- S2, a Senate bill that would create a new agency called the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, was passed out of the House Medical, Military and Municipal Affairs Committee and will be set for consideration and debate on the House floor next week. There were some amendments to the bill. After the bill passes its third reading in the House, it will be sent back to the Senate.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Bank said the relocation of Central Administration from Bull Street to Otarre Parkway in Cayce, S.C. has become a reality as things are being packed and removed off shelves and walls. The relocation will take place the week of May 12, 2025.

DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW AND UPDATE

Community Mental Health Services

Ms. Deborah Blalock, Deputy Director, Community Mental Health Services (CMHS), presented the CMHS report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. The following are highlights from the report:

- Ms. Blalock gave an update on the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds. ARPA is an economic stimulus package signed into law in March 2021 to aid public health and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. DMH was allocated over \$22 million. A little over \$21 million was to be used for programing and \$739,000 was for COVID mitigation. On March 24, 2025, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued termination notices to state and local public health agencies, including those related to SAMHSA grants, ending the federal funding, effective immediately. Ms. Blalock reported approximately \$5 million out of the \$21 million and approximately \$450,000 of the \$739,000 has not been spent. There are expenditures that can be applied that were obligated prior to March 24, 2025. This morning there was a temporary block from terminating some of the funds. Ms. Blalock said DMH is in good shape and should not experience any programmatic loss.
- Ms. Blalock, Dr. Bank, and other DMH leadership attended the open house for the new Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Mental Health Center clinic on March 28, 2025. Ms. Blalock said AOP went from having the worst clinic building out of 58 plus clinics to now having one of the best!
- Ms. Blalock announced that Mr. Joel Mensonides, System Executive Director of Behavioral Health Network for Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), wrote a business plan for the proposed DMH Transitional Housing and Therapeutic Farm project. She will forward a copy of the business plan to the Commissioners. She requested the Commissioners to share the business plan with individuals who might be interested in helping fund the project.
- Ms. Blalock announced that effective March 17, 2025, Ms. Cathy Lance-Timmons assumed the role of interim executive director of the Pee Dee Mental Health Center. Ms. Lance-Timmons will continue serving in her role as the director of the Center's Community Integration Program, a position she has held since 2008.
- Ms. Blalock announced that May is Mental Health Awareness Month. All the mental health centers are planning multiple events to increase awareness of the importance of mental health and the impact it has on individuals, families, and communities. There will be a public education campaign about how to get and where to go for mental health services.
- Ms. Blalock announced DMH will host a Sequential Intercept Mapping (SIM) Summit Workshop on Thursday, September 25-26, 2025. The SIM Summit will take place at the Phillips Market Center, West Columbia, S.C. The SIM Summit will be facilitated by Policy Research Associates, Inc. (PRA). PRA is known internationally for its work regarding adults with mental and substance use disorders who are involved or at risk for involvement in the criminal justice system. The SIM Summit will bring together key criminal justice, behavioral health, and

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community stakeholders and result in the development of strategies for identifying and diverting individuals with behavioral health diagnoses out of the criminal justice system and connecting them with community-based treatment providers and support services. The workshop will focus on competency/restoration and how agencies can work together to deflect individuals from entering the criminal justice system and offer diversion opportunities once involved.

- Ms. Blalock announced the 2025 Lowcountry Mental Health Conference will be held July 30 through August 1 at the Gaillard Performance Center, Charleston, S.C.
- Stacey Rowell, Director of Mobile Crisis, has created a way to safely assess individuals when responding to a crisis without having law enforcement present. The call center, when determining the appropriate level of response to a crisis, may opt for telehealth support. By linking mobile crisis with a telehealth platform, this ensures that individuals in crisis receive timely and effective support/services without law enforcement.
- Seven of 13 mental health centers have ACT (Assertive Community Treatment) teams in active operation.
- Ms. Blalock presented the CMHS Trends and Transparency Monthly Indicators (TMI) spreadsheets, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

Commissioner Jones commended Ms. Stacey Rowell for her role at the 2025 Cross Cultural Conference, which was held February 20-23. Ms. Rowell served on a panel with Sheriff Leon Lott and other individuals.

Commissioner Jones referred to the TMI report and noted there are three out of 16 community mental health centers where the counties are not appropriating any funds for mental health. Ms. Blalock said local legislative delegations are aware of their county's millage appropriations, if any, for mental health.

Administrative Services & Financial Status

Ms. Debbie Calcote, Deputy Director, Administrative Services, presented the Administrative Services and monthly financial report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

Ms. Calcote introduced Mr. Pat Bresnan, the new Deputy Director of Administrative Services. Mr. Bresnan began his new role on March 17, 2025, overlapping with Ms. Calcote's departure, for a smooth transition of duties.

The February 28, 2025 budget report reflects a projected deficit balance of approximately \$5.4 million, a decrease of approximately \$456,000 from the previous month.

Otarre Parkway Presentation

Ms. Calcote announced Central Administration will relocate from Bull Street to Otarre Parkway, Cayce, S.C. May 12-16, 2025. She gave a PowerPoint presentation on the facility's landscape and floor plan. DMH will be in Building A. A copy of the presentation is filed with the minutes in the Office of the State Director.

Psychiatric Inpatient Services & Medical Affairs Update

Dr. Chad Pollock, Deputy Director, Psychiatric Inpatient Services & Medical Affairs, presented the Inpatient Services report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission.

Quarterly Olmstead Fund Update

Dr. Pollock gave an update on the Olmstead Fund.

- Olmstead spending December 17, 2024 – March 3, 2025
 - Amount paid to Community Residential Care Facilities (CRCF) on behalf of the patients: \$20,316.20
 - Amount reimbursed back to SCDMH: \$0
 - Number of patients assisted: 6

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Transition Specialists Program

- Total number of patients discharged through February 2025: 208 patients
 - 29.81% of patients discharged to CRCFs
 - 45.19% of patients discharged back home with families
 - 10.58% of patients discharged to independent living or supervised apartments
 - Average length of stay: 6 months, 26 days
- DMH CRCFs
 - Total number of admissions FY25: 8
 - Total number of discharges FY25: 25
 - DMH CRCFs have 71 patients in seven facilities
 - Average length of stay for residents who are currently living in DMH CRCF at discharge: 4.151 years

Morris Village Alcohol & Drug Addiction Center Update

Mr. George McConnell, Director, Morris Village Alcohol & Drug Addiction Center report, was absent due to illness. Dr. Bank referred everyone to the DMH Inpatient Services report, Morris Village census and admissions data for February 2025.

Long-Term Care

Dr. Versie Bellamy, Deputy Director, Division of Long-Term Care (LTC), was absent due to a death in her family. Dr. Bank recognized Ms. Ashley Lloyd, Administrator, Roddey Pavillion. Ms. Lloyd presented the LTC report, copies of which had been provided to the Commission. The following are highlights from her report.

- As of today, Roddey's daily census is at 81 out of 84 functional beds.
- The current daily census at Stone is 53.
- Efforts are ongoing to facilitate a smooth transition of Stone to the South Carolina Department of Veteran's Affairs (SCDVA). HR and budget staff continue to work with nursing home administrators to balance the vacancies, budget, and staffing placement needs.

OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr. Bank gave an update on the United States Department of Justice's (DOJ) lawsuit filed against South Carolina regarding South Carolina's Use of Community Residential Care Facilities to serve adults with serious mental illness. As reported last month, there was a motion to dismiss (MTD) before the judge. On April 1, 2025, DMH received notice that the judge denied the MTD. A meeting will be held next week with the Attorney General's Office to discuss the next steps.

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11:32 a.m. by motion duly made and seconded, the Commission adjourned the business meeting and entered into Executive Session to select the 2025 Hassenplug Outstanding Clinician. Upon convening in open session at 11:40 a.m., Chairman Levy announced the Commission selected the recipient of the 2025 Louise R. Hassenplug Outstanding Clinician Award. A motion was made and duly seconded to approve as discussed in Executive Session the selected recipient of the 2025 Louise R. Hassenplug Outstanding Clinician Award. All voted in favor of the motion. The Commission will recognize the recipient and present the award at the June 6, 2025 Commission business meeting. There was no other action taken.

At 11:41 a.m. by motion duly made and seconded, the Commission adjourned the business meeting.

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

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ATTENDANCE

Commission Members
Dr. Elliott Levy, Chair,
Dr. Carl Jones, Vice Chair

Mr. Bobby Mann
Dr. Crystal Maxwell (virtually via Zoom)

Visitors/Staff

Dr. Robert Bank
Deborah Blalock
Pat Bresnan
Debbie Calcote
Keith Jackson
Ashley Lloyd
Dr. Chad Pollock
Dr. Lynelle Reavis
Logan Royals
Jessica Suber
Brett Williams

present virtually via Zoom

Lee Bodie
Leigh Ann Chmura
Dr. Jennifer Cobb-Hayes
Starla Fowler
Beth Franco
Dr. Kelly Gothard
Dr. Patricia Handley
Joy Hodge
Alan Hovorka
Kathy Hugg

Present virtually via Zoom

Charice Jones
Tracy LaPointe
Erin Laughter
Bill Lindsey
Sarah Main
Kathleen Martin
Tacey Perillo
Valarie Perkins
Sylvett Porter
Jay Ragin

Present virtually via Zoom

Vicki Redding
Rochelle Reeder
Niosha Robinson
Robyn Rubio
Angie Salley
Kellie Silveira
Bridget Stewart
Eric Turner
Lindsay Walker
Gwen Watson

Visitors: Visitors present were: Beth Franco, Executive Director, Disability Rights South Carolina; Alan Hovorka; and Bill Lindsey, Executive Director, NAMI SC.

APPROVALS

Dr. Elliott Levy
Chair

Kim Ballentine

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Recording Secretary