

**WESTERN HIGHLANDS AREA AUTHORITY  
JANUARY 20, 2006, REGULAR MEETING**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Hendrick, Chair, Presiding; Nancy Carey; John W. Condrey; William J. Cook, Jr.; Minnie Jones; Abigail Karroubi; Rick McDevitt; Robert Ratcliffe; Mandy Stone; Michael Talbert; Ryan Whitson; and Arthur C. Wilson, Jr.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Patricia Franklin; Justin B. Hembree; Michele Lawhern; and G. Keith Parker.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: Bill Bullington; Bob Carey; Jerry Rice; Bob Huntley; and Dan Zorn.

ALSO PRESENT: Arthur D. Carder, Jr., Chief Executive Officer; Dan Gerber, Chief Operating Officer; Rhonda R. McKee, Human Resources Director; Lynn Trotter, Consumer Relations Team Leader; Kristeen Booker, Director, Quality Management; Sharon Lentz, Controller; Lawrence E. Thompson, III, CEO Emeritus; Victor W. Buchanan, Legal Counsel; and Beverly Atkins, Clerk to the Board.

CALL TO ORDER: The area board ("Board") of the Western Highlands Area Authority met on Friday, January 20, 2006, at 9:35 a.m. in the second-floor Conference Room (Room 312/315) of its Administrative Offices, 356 Biltmore Avenue, Asheville, North Carolina. The Chair called the meeting to order.

Ms. Hendrick welcomed Ryan Whitson back from his Army Reserve deployment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Ms. Hendrick asked that the agenda be revised to add item (b) under the Chief Financial Officer Report the ratification of Finance Officer and authority to change finance officers. Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the agenda as revised. Mr. Talbert seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote. (A copy of the revised agenda is included in the minute book with these minutes.)

PRESENTATION: Ms. Hendrick presented a gift of appreciation to Mr. Wilson for his service as Board Chair since 2003. Mr. Wilson presented a gift of appreciation to Mr. Parsons for his 20 years as Chief Financial Officer for Blue Ridge and Western Highlands.

OATH OF OFFICE: Ms. Stone introduced Ms. Minnie Jones who was appointed by the Buncombe County Commissioners at their meeting on Tuesday. Ms. Hendrick asked that the board ratify the appointment of Ms. Jones. Dr. Ratcliffe made a motion to ratify the appointment of Ms. Jones to represent Buncombe County. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Ms. Rae Carr made comments regarding services received at New Vistas. Ms. Patty Street commented about the services provided by New Vistas in Mitchell County. Mr. Rice distributed information "Sustaining Organizational Leadership" he received at the North Carolina Council Conference in Pinehurst.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Condrey made a motion to approve the minutes for November 18, 2005 meeting. Ms. Carey seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT: Mr. Carder presented the CEO reports for December and January. He discussed the need for the establishment of standardized training and orientation for board members. Mr. Carder announced that the proposal to provide UR, After Hours Screening, Crisis and Triage for the eight county region has been sent to the Secretary. Notification is due by the end of the month and he is hoping to receive a favorable response. Mr. Carder reported that the new Service Definitions approved by Medicaid have been received. One issue that Western Highlands staff is working on is getting providers endorsed. Mr. Carder asked Dr. Doucette to discuss Western Highlands endorsement process. Dr. Doucette

distributed information with regards to the new service definitions and the endorsement process. She went over the Service Endorsement Progress Report required by the NC Division. Mr. Carder stated at one of the earlier board meetings, that a request was made for a monthly report. Item #4 is the result of that request. Mr. Carder asked Ms. Booker to give an overview of the report. Ms. Booker stated that this report gives a brief look in what each department is involved. Mr. Carder asked that this reporting process be tried for three or four months to see if this is something that the board wants to continue. Mr. Carder introduced Mr. Don Herring, Director, Access/Emergency Services who gave a brief history of his experience. Mr. Herring presented a Crisis Stabilization Services summary which was distributed to the board. Mr. Herring reported that last year there were 28,277 calls. These were informational calls which represent 6,600 hours and include crisis calls received during the day. Mr. Herring reported that admissions to Broughton Hospital and to the Julian Keith ADATC unit are down. Regarding crisis system development, Cannon Hospital in Banner Elk has closed its psychiatric and substance abuse beds so there is a potential of overflow into Mitchell, Yancey, as well as St. Joseph's and Broughton. Mr. Herring reported that the mobile crisis management definitions and federal Medicaid definitions have been approved. He is hoping to have discussion with Mission regarding a possible crisis unit in the future. Pardee Hospital will open an 8 bed Detox unit in July. Mr. Carder reported that he and Larry will complete the process of making presentations to the eight County Commissions by mid February. Mr. Carder stated that, he will check with staff and follow-up on the issues mentioned during the public comment portion of the meeting. He will report findings to the board chair. Ms. Stone asked that Vince Newton report on the Western Highlands appeal/grievance process at a future board meeting.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: Mr. Parsons reported that the Finance Committee met prior to the board meeting and confirmed that their regular meeting time will continue to be 8:30 a.m. on the day of the board meeting. Also, the committee asked to add a telephone conference committee meeting the second Friday of each month. Mr. Parsons reported that the committee reviewed the financial report for December 2005. Mr. Parsons introduced Ms. Sharon Lentz who has been appointed as the new Chief Financial Officer. The requirement of NC General Statute 159 is a ratification by the board members to allow Ms. Lentz to perform the duties of finance officer with the appropriate bank signature changes. Mr. Talbert made a motion to adopt the December finance report, ratify Ms. Sharon Lentz as the new Chief Financial Officer and approve bank signature changes. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote. (A copy of the financial report is included in the minute book with these minutes.) Mr. Parsons thanked the board again for the gift.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: The Chair made a report relative to the special meeting of the Executive Committee on December 12, 2005. The committee met to discuss the proposal to be presented to Secretary Odom. Dr. Gerber presented a brief overview after which Dr. Ratcliffe made a motion to ratify the Executive Committee decision. Ms. Carey seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote. Ms. Hendrick discussed that the board could use board training to decide what model of governance they want. Ms. Hendrick reported that Ms. Carol Duncan Clayton, Executive Director, NC Council of Community Programs would be willing to do such a training at no cost. Ms. Hendrick suggested that the training be an additional Friday meeting including lunch and a session afterward. She also stated that there needs to be a separate orientation for new board members. Mr. Wilson presented the Personnel Committee report. Mr. Wilson reported that the Committee met on December 7, 2005 as directed by the board to compare other areas before recommending a cost of living for staff. Mr. Wilson stated that the Personnel Committee voted unanimously to recommend utilizing the average CPI for the entire South Urban area over a twelve month period, (November -October), which is 3.4% Mr. Wilson asked that the board approve a 3.4% cost of living effective January 1, 2006. Mr. Wilson stated that this comes as a recommendation from the Personnel Committee. Mr. Condrey seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote. Mr. Wilson reported that the Personnel Committee met on January 12, 2006 to develop a process and tool for a six month evaluation for Mr. Carder and to propose a process for an annual evaluation after that period. The Personnel Committee feels that the six month evaluation should be performed by the Executive Committee. Mr. Wilson stated that the annual evaluation would be conducted by the Personnel Committee. Each Board member will be given an opportunity to evaluate the CEO in specific categories with a rating scale. Staff and/or management team will be given an

opportunity to evaluate the CEO. The Committee thought it would be good for the CEO to preform a self-assessment as part of the annual evaluation process. Ms. Stone suggested that the Committee have a way to get feed back from comsumers and stakeholders. Mr. Wilson stated that the Personnel Committee recommends approval of the six month evaluation process. Ms. Karroubi seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote. Ms. Carey made the Human Rights Committee report. Mr. Carey stated that the Committee will be meeting on February 28, 2006. Mr. Hendrick made a report with respect to the Quality Improvement Advisory Council. Ms. Hendrick read a resolution which was approved by the Council at its November meeting. *"While none of us are apposed to increasing efficiencies in the current system and saving money this should not come at the cost of compromising the quality of services. Furthermore, we ask that any efficiencies realized by further reform be placed back into service provision funds."* Quality Improvement Advisory Council continues to meet 12-2 following each board meeting.

CFAC: Ms. Huntley introduced two CFAC members Rose Mary Williams from Rutherford County and Steven House from Buncombe County. Ms. Huntley distributed a written report. CFAC will start attending more board meetings. Ms. Huntley stated that CFAC needs members to represent Transylvania and Yancey Counties.

NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Hendrick presented the revised committee structure report. There are several changes based on board member requests. Contact Ms. Hendrick to make additional changes.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: Dr. Ratcliffe asked whether or not Arthur had gotten information about New Vistas medication policy. Mr. Carder stated he would report at the February meeting. Ms. Carey encouraged counties to be generous Ms. Hendrick stated that she hopes that Ms. Greene and Mr. Castro can attend the February meeting so the board can honor them for their service.

ADJOURNMENT: Dr. Ratcliffe made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Carey seconded the motion, which carried by a unanimous vote; and the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Atkins  
Clerk to the Board