

**WESTERN HIGHLANDS AREA AUTHORITY
JULY 20, 2007, REGULAR MEETING**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Nancy Carey; Phil Castro; John W. Condrey; William J. Cook, Jr.; Patricia Franklin; Steve Garrison; Susan Hendrick; Minnie Jones; Abigail Karroubi; Michele Lawhern; Mandy Stone; Ryan Whitson; Arthur C. Wilson, Jr.; and Steve Wyatt.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Robert Ratcliffe; and Steve Smith.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: Leslie Boyd, Asheville Citizen Times; Bob Carey; Mechelle Holt; Jim Pitts, NAMI WC; Jerry Rice; Molly Sprengelmeyer; Liz Smith, NAMI WC; Jayne St. Clair; Paul Tax, ARP Phoenix; and Dan Zorn, Families Together.

ALSO PRESENT: Arthur D. Carder, Jr., Chief Executive Officer; Dr. Alice Lin, Consultant; Sharon Lentz, Chief Financial Officer; Rhonda McKee, HR Director; Lynn Trotter, Provider & Consumer Relations; Charlie Schoenheit, Chief Operations Officer; 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, July 20, 2007, at 9:35 a.m. in the second-floor Conference Room (Room 312/315) of 356 Biltmore Avenue, Asheville, North Carolina. The Chair called the meeting to order.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (extended for one hour): Ms. Mechelle Holt made comments supporting the mental illness position regarding the proposed board policies. Ms. Jayne St. Clair encouraged the board to leave the proposed board policies as well as the comments on the web until the policies are approved at the September meeting. She then made comments regarding the representation of the board. She suggested that the board develop a provider committee with the same restrictions as CFAC. Ms. Molly Sprengelmeyer applauded the board members for all their hard work. She made comments relative to equal representation on the board. Ms. Liz Smith, Co-President, NAMI, Western Carolina encouraged the board to restore the language that was originally in the board policies which allowed only one county employee or commissioner to serve on the board with the second member meeting the membership requirement presented in the General Statute. Mr. Jerry Rice advocated for consumer representation on the board. He believes because of the limited authority of LMEs allowed by the state, consumers will have their best impact through CFAC. He made comments regarding the monthly management report. Mr. Jim Pitts, President -Elect of NAMI North Carolina stated that he feels that democracy at the local level is very important to cause change at the State level. Having the LME and LME Board speak for local citizens at the State level without listening to local advocates is not democracy.. The listening function may be more important than talking.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Ms. Hendrick asked that the agenda be revised to include introduction of new board members. Ms. Lawhern made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion, and it carried. (A copy of the agenda is included in the minute book with these minutes.)

BOARD MEMBER INTRODUCTION: Ms. Franklin introduced Mr. Steve Garrison as the new County Manager for Madison County. Previously Mr. Garrison was Director of Child Support Program in Buncombe County Mr. Whitson made a motion to approve the appointment of Mr. Steve Garrison as a board member for Madison County. Ms. Jones seconded the motion, and it carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Jones made a motion to approve the minutes for the June 15, 2007, Regular Meeting and for the June 15, 2007, Closed Session; and seal and withhold the minutes for such Closed Session from public inspection so long as public inspection would frustrate the purpose thereof. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote. (A copy of the June 15, 2007 minutes is included in the minute book with these minutes.)

BOARD CHAIR REPORT: Ms. Hendrick made a report with respect to the following:

(a) Alternative Board meeting date:

Ms. Hendrick commended Mr. Carder for being selected by the eight (8) LMEs to represent the Western Region on the NC Council of Community Programs. Because the NC Council Board meets the third Friday of the month, this appointment makes it necessary to change the day the Board meets. The options being considered are reflected in item #3. Mr. Whitson made a motion to reschedule the Board meeting for the first (1st) Friday of the month beginning with the September meeting. Mr. Wyatt seconded the motion, and it carried.

(b) Attendance, State Liaison:

Ms. Hendrick stated that at the May meeting there was a request for an accounting of the attendance of the State Liaison at WHN Board meetings in FY 2007. Western Highlands Board met a total of fifteen times in FY 2007 with the State Liaison attending six meetings. Mr. Carder reported that he had spoken with folks in Raleigh about this issue. Their response was that the LME Liaison should do whatever the Board requests. If the Board wants more or something different than what is being provided, the Board needs to be specific about its request. Mr. Bullington stated that LME Directors will be receiving a letter from Mr. Dick Oliver to advise of the role change occurring with all of the LME Liaisons. His attendance at the Board meeting the first Friday of the month will depend on the nature of his new role. He stays in contact with WHN staff by email as well as working directly with LME staff. Mr. Whitson requested that this issue is on the September agenda to discuss the letter from Mr. Oliver. Mr. Bullington reported that the DHHS LME contract has not yet been published as there are some issues regarding the Local Business Plan. The NC Council addressed the issues with respect to the submission of STR, (screening, triage, and referral), corrective action plans. At the request of the NC Council an extension of 60 days was granted for both the Performance Agreement and Local Business Plan effective at the time the Performance Agreement is published. Mr. Carder reported that WHN after hours STR corrective plan has been mailed.

CFAC REPORT: Ms. Huntley thanked the Board for having extended time for public comments. She reported that Thursday, July 19, CFAC representatives met with Dr. Lin. CFAC met on July 9, 2007 and welcomed a new member, Kelly Rodriguez, from Buncombe County. She invited Board members to attend the September CFAC meeting which will be held at the Club House in Hendersonville. CFAC will be holding a retreat beginning at 5:00 p.m. today with several LME Board members attending. (a written report was distributed).

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT: Mr. Carder made a report with respect to the following:

- Core Provider proposal was delayed because of changes that have been made. Provider response is due in today.
- Staff Retreat June 27 and 28 was a good event and from that two campaigns were developed Internal Redesign Campaign – to look at communication and training issues specific to WHN and External Redesign Campaign – to look at communication and training issues related to providers, community stakeholders consumers, etc.
- There are five strategic objectives that must be covered in the Local Business Plan. All LMEs must verify that these five objectives are covered. They must also create objectives in the Plan to correct any areas in which WHN was below the State average on the quarterly performance rating sheets. The plan of correction will be submitted to the Board, CFAC, and posted on the web to obtain feedback. After the plan receives board approval, it will be submitted to Raleigh.
- In discussion with Legislators about dollars in the budget, he is trying to make it clear that all crisis services dollars allocated in the budget should remain with the LMEs without contracting directly with hospitals to deliver crisis service in the community.
- Crisis Facility hopefully will open in September. They are currently trying to hire staff. The County and ARP Phoenix will coordinate to hold an open house that will protect client confidentiality.
- Mr. Carder met with the Foothills CEO and there has been not further actions.

- He will be requesting that the State allocate 75% of any new SA dollars in non-UCR methodology which will allow more flexibility in the use of those SA dollars. Next year, 1% of SA dollars can be used for incentives. He will be asking that 100% of all the crisis dollars be allocated in non-UCR.
- Horizon Recovery will no longer provide services. Current contract will be terminated effective August 9, 2007. WHN is in the process of transitioning consumers to other providers.

Mr. Carder introduced Dr. Alice Lin, Independent Health and Human Services Consultant, contracted by the State to evaluate the state reform. This is a positive step on the part of the State. He stated that Dr. Lin has met with staff as well as with Ms. Hendrick and Ms. Stone. Dr. Lin reported that she met with seven LMEs. She applauded the Board for having open meetings. Dr. Lin stated that she has been asked to do two things by the NC Division. (1) to look at the overall implementation experience from the LME perspective, and to identify some of the accomplishments and problems (2) To bring examples from other States to enable North Carolina to learn from States that have tried this type of large scale reform. She reported that her report will be published in early August and will go to the NC Division, the General Assembly and the Governor's office. She has urged the Division to make the report an open document. Ms. Hendrick announced that Dr. Lin will be meeting with QIAC, DD Providers, and NAMI Stakeholders following the Board meeting.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: Ms. Lentz reported that she was asked to prepare a final presentation of MOE and Dissolution Funds and the status of each. Item #7 is a detailed narrative. All MOE funds for fiscal 2007 have been received from the eight counties. The spreadsheet attached delineates how and to whom these funds were expended. The dissolution funds from each county are addressed separately on the spreadsheet showing the dissolution funds received with how much of the funds have been expended.

Ms. Lentz then presented the May 2007 financial report. Ms. Lentz stated the financial statements continue the same trend as the previous several months. Income statement shows a surplus of \$4,355,862 which represents MOE funds and dissolution funds received but not yet expended and LME system management funds which continue to be under spent. (A copy of the May, 2007 financial report is included in the minute book with these minutes.)

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Ms. Hendrick reported that WHN Executive Committee will be meeting with CFAC Executive Committee on July 27, 2007. Ms. Carey reported that the Human Rights Committee will be meeting in August. Ms. Hendrick presented Item #8. The Quality Improvement Advisory Council fully supports and endorses the current proposal for development of "core providers". The issues of access to services and timeliness of service provision are most important to the quality of the LME and assurance of positive outcomes for those served.

BOARD COMMENTS: Ms. Hendrick reported that Ed Moseley, Director, Rutherford Hospital's Psychiatric Unit died suddenly about three weeks ago. She stated that this was a great loss to them. Ms. Hendrick stated that with respect to Board membership she wants to get some clarification about non-county representation. Arthur suggested a survey be sent to each non-county representative. Completed survey should be sent to Ms. Atkins to be placed in a report. Ms. Hendrick also stated that there needs to be a process by which Western Highlands coordinates with County Commissioner Boards on member appointments. WHN needs to let them know the slots that are open for them to consider when making appointments. This coordination should be through the Executive Committee.

Mr. Wilson suggested having Board members report on what is happening in their counties. He reported that with respect to Transylvania County, Steve Smith who is the chairman of their advisory committee just received a \$75,000 grant for mental health and there is almost \$100,000 of MOE funds. Their Advisory Committee will be meeting to begin working on how these funds will be spent. With the closing of Horizon Transylvania County will work to keep Families Together and Appalachian Counseling, the remaining providers, healthy.

Ms. Karroubi speaking for Henderson County stated that in addition to being a nurse at Pardee Hospital she also volunteers at the Psychiatric free clinic every Tuesday night. The Psychiatric free clinic is the busiest clinic in the whole State. It was conceived after the closure of New Vistas/Mountain Laurel. They saw 24 patients on Tuesday, July 10. Nine or ten of them came as a result of the closing of Horizon as they did not have access to their medications. The Emergency Room is seeing between 150-160 psychiatric and substance abuse evaluations on a monthly basis and that is almost double what they had prior to the New Vistas/Mountain Laurel closure.

Mr. Condrey reported that Ms. Hendrick will be chairing a Committee that will decide the use of the dissolution funds. Ms. Hendrick stated that the Committee is called the Rutherford County Behavioral Coalition which meets the 4th Friday of the month. The Coalition is made up of providers, advocates, and local governmental and school agencies.

Ms. Carey reported that she is very happy that Yancey County has re-instituted the Task Force which will begin meeting next month.

Ms. Franklin reported that in Madison County Mr. Thompson had met with her and Mr. Garrison to give Mr. Garrison an overview and history of the LME. Their community groups will be starting to meet again.

Ms. Stone stated that Buncombe County has been working with Mr. Schoenheit on a crisis continuum as well as a crisis stabilization piece. She feels that progress has been made in conversations with the hospital. A group has visited an assessment center in Memphis, to help determine Buncombe County's capacity to build that kind of assessment center locally.

Mr. Cook reported that he has begun to attend the meeting with the Yancey County Mental Health Association in order to look at models for Mitchell County. He has been discussing this with County staff. Together Mitchell and Yancey are looking at the possibility of a crisis center in the Northern Counties.

Mr. Whitson stated that he appreciates Ms. Huntley for her CFAC report. He reported that Polk County has paid all of its dissolution funds to the LME. He stated that Polk County will be using \$233,000 for emergency services and crisis intervention. The \$233,000 is for mental health providers to come up with a way to better serve the citizens of Polk County. The only requirement by the County Commissioners is that there be a four year plan for use of the funds.

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Jones made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. seconded the motion, which carried by a unanimous vote; and the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Atkins
Clerk to the Board