

**WESTERN HIGHLANDS AREA AUTHORITY
SEPTEMBER 07, 2007, REGULAR MEETING**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Nancy Carey; William J. Cook, Jr.; Steve Garrison; Susan Hendrick; Minnie Jones; Abigail Karroubi; Mandy Stone; Ryan Whitson (via conference call); Robert Ratcliffe; Steve Smith; Arthur C. Wilson, Jr.; and Steve Wyatt (via conference call).

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Patricia Franklin; John W. Condrey; and Michele Lawhern.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: Nancy Baker; Leslie Boyd, Asheville Citizen Times; Bob Carey; Leslie Huntley, CFAC; Jerry Rice; Judy Dunn, Families Together; and Dan Zorn, Families Together.

ALSO PRESENT: Arthur D. Carder, Jr., Chief Executive Officer; Bill Bullington, LME Liaison; Kris Booker, Quality Management; Sharon Lentz, Chief Financial Officer; Don Herring, Director, Access & Services Management; 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, September 7, 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.

BOARD MEMBER INTRODUCTION: Mr. Cook introduced Mr. Charles Vines, the new County Manager for Mitchell County. Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the appointment of and appoint new Mr. Vines as board member for Mitchell County. Mr. Whitson seconded the motion, and it carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mr. Dan Zorn reported that Families Together has turned the corner and had a good week. He stated that he appreciates the work of Western Highlands Board and staff. The endorsement process has improved and Families Together can move into delivering other services. He made comments relative to Dr. Lin's report. Finally he stated that counties who have looked at providers carefully, asked them to show their books, performance, and make projections for 2-3 years. If you access providers who take your state funded clients you will build a good client and core base over time. Mr. Jerry Rice made comments relative to school issues saying there are serious school issues in the rural counties that cannot get the providers that are needed. Mr. Rice also commented on the proposed new positions discussed in this morning's Finance Committee meeting. He is hoping that these new staff will be to help the rural Counties. Mr. Bob Carey made comments relative to the Board Policies concerning membership of the Board. He asked the County Managers to review G.S. 122c which states that boards of county commissioners in a multicounty area authority shall indicate in the business plan each board's method of appointment of the area board members in accordance with G.S. 122C-115.2(b). He complimented Ms. Stone and Buncombe County for their development of substance abuse beds.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Stone seconded the motion, and it carried. (A copy of the agenda is included in the minute book with these minutes.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Jones made a motion to approve the minutes for the July 20, 2007, Regular Meeting. Ms. Stone seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote. (A copy of the July 20, 2007 minutes is included in the minute book with these minutes.)

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

- **Board Retreat**

Ms. Hendrick reported that there was a meeting of the Board Retreat Committee. Present at the meeting Ms. Atkins, Ms. McKee, Mr. Carder, Ms. Stone, Ms. Karroubi, and Ms. Hendrick. The

Committee decided to have the retreat on Friday, October 5 which is the regular board meeting date. The retreat will take place at Highland Lake Inn in Hendersonville. The plan is to have the retreat from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Mr. Carder stated that a small portion of the retreat will focus on clarifying the role and responsibility of the board and spend most of the time looking at the Local Business Plan as it has identified a number of objectives and strategies that WHN is to be engaged in this next year. The Ad-hoc committee will meet again and information will be sent out.

- **Annual Board Meeting**

Proposed dates for the annual board meeting are Tuesday, November 6th or Thursday November 8th. Ms. McKee and Ms. Atkins are working on securing a meeting place. Because November 6th is Election Day, another option will be provided when Ms. Atkins polls membership about attendance. Mr. Carder stated that the annual meeting will be a time for review of what has been accomplished over the past year and the direction for next year. Staff will be invited which will give the Board an opportunity to interact with them. An annual meeting should be a time to stop and reflect on where the LME has gone and where it will be going.

- **Nominating Committee**

Ms. Hendrick asked that the following members serve on the nominating committee:

John Condrey, Chair
Pat Franklin
Steve Smith
Steve Wyatt

The committee is asked to give a progress report at the Board retreat October 5, 2007. The vote for new officers will take place at the annual meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: There was a discussion concerning the proposed Board Policies, during which Mr. Whitson moved to leave the current policy about Board membership as is, with no changes. After a further discussion, Ms. Hendrick announced that the motion was not seconded. As part of this discussion, two provisions of the proposed Board Policies were considered. The first provision stated that: "Each county shall have two representatives on the Board as appointed by the Boards of County Commissioners in each county." The second provision stated that: "When a vacancy occurs on the Board, the Board of County Commissioners of the county of the vacant position of the Board will be sent a statement which outlines the general requirements of membership to include pertinent General Statutes and this policy." Dr. Ratcliffe moved to retain these two provisions in the proposed Board Policies, and Ms. Stone seconded the motion. After a further discussion, the motion carried by a unanimous vote.

After a further discussion, Mr. Wilson made a motion to have the Chairperson write a letter to the Board of County Commissioners of each of the eight counties asking it to adopt a plan for the selection of Members to the area board and asking that its plan be submitted to the Western Highlands Area Authority by February 2008. Mr. Whitson seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote.

During a further discussion, the Board considered the following proposed policy:

A Board Member shall not hold, or be employed in, a management, executive, or other decision-making position, if any of the duties or responsibilities of such position involves negotiating, approving, executing, or administering any contract to which the Western Highlands Area Authority is the other party or one of the other parties. Likewise, a Board Member shall not be the spouse, parent, stepparent, child, or stepchild of an individual holding, or employed in, such a position.

A Board Member shall not be an officer or member of the board of directors, board of trustees, or other governing body of a business, agency, association, or other entity that receives money or financial support

from, or is negotiating or has a contract with, the Western Highlands Area Authority.

During the Board's discussion about this proposed policy, concerns were raised about its potential application to such situations as the negotiation of contracts involving county funds. Mr. Wyatt thereafter moved as follows: First, the Administrative Staff (with the assistance of Legal Counsel) is to revise this proposed policy, in order to clarify that it will not apply to any Board Member who negotiates, for or on behalf of a county that is a part of the Authority, a contract or contracts involving the county's funds (including, but not limited to, its maintenance-of-effort funds); and second, after making this revision, the Administrative Staff is to provide a "clean copy" of the proposed Board Policies to each Board Member. Ms. Karroubi seconded the motion, and after a further discussion, it carried by a unanimous vote. There was a further discussion.

CFAC REPORT: Ms. Huntley reported that one thing that was discussed at the CFAC retreat was expanding the quality relationship between CFAC and the Western Highlands Board. Ms. Huntley distributed a written CFAC report. (A copy of the CFAC report is included in the minute book with these minutes.)

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

- ⇒ A special allocation for First Step Farms was passed by the Legislature. The Division requested that funds pass through WHN thus requiring a motion from the board. Dr. Ratcliffe made a motion to approve Western Highlands Area accepting funds from the NC Division for First Step Farms as identified by the NC Legislature. Mr. Wyatt seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote.
- ⇒ Clarified the news article regarding Broughton Hospital's decertification for Medicare & Medicaid services. They have agreed to continue to serve all consumers. By September 14 the Division will have a plan in place to deal with corrective action to be submitted to Atlanta.
- ⇒ WHN currently putting together a proposal to respond to a Legislative opportunity which is to be involved in pilot project to reduce State Psychiatric Hospital use and increase local services. Proposal is due by October 15, 2007.
- ⇒ Discussion taking place about developing more uniform statewide standards. One currently being looked at is a standardized claims process for all LEM's.
- ⇒ Core Providers: Alpha-Omega, Appalachian Counseling, Families Together, ARP/Phoenix, Family Preservation, RHA, and Parkway Behavioral Health. Also negotiating with October Road to take on a number of slots. These core providers will help stabilize the network. Problem getting professionals to provide services to dual diagnosis clients particularly in Buncombe and Rutherford counties.
- ⇒ Along with the Monthly Management Report, Mr. Carder distributed a report showing trends of requests for services and level of need based on June data. This new report is a work in progress with hopes of providing more information in ways more useful in evaluating data and services.
- ⇒ Reported on Dr. Lin's draft report. A final report will be sent to board members when it is received.
- ⇒ Shared a map(created by Ms. Atkins) of LMEs in the state. Mr. Carder pointed out that Smoky Mountain is to WHN's west and New River is now part of Smoky to the northeast. Burke County is now part of Catawba. With the loss of Burke County, Foothills is currently looking at options and have put a committee together of board and CFAC members. Mr. Carder and Mr. Schoenheit met with the committee on September 6, 2007. Mr. Carder requested that members of the Executive Committee work with him along with CFAC members and staff on this process.
Mr. Wyatt made a motion to authorize members of the Executive Committee to work with Mr. Carder, CFAC members and staff on examining the potential. Mr. Smith seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Stone stated that she appreciates what Mr. Carder is doing with the Core Providers. She asked that he give a monthly update on whether or not this effort improves access.

Mr. Schoenheit reported that construction on the Crisis Facility is almost complete with the possibility of opening around October 15, 2007. Staff are being hired to provide services. Copestone psychiatrists from

Mission have agreed to provide psychiatric services. Mr. Schoenheit also reported that he is in the final stages of negotiating contract with Rutherford Hospital to provide 72 hour stabilization.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: Ms. Lentz presented the preliminary unaudited financial statements for June, 2007. She reported the annual audit is in process with auditors on site. (A copy of the June, 2007 financial report is included in the minute book with these minutes.)

Ms. Lentz presented a report of the disposal of surplus property during fiscal year ending June 30, 2007. This is an annual report required by Western Highland's policy. Disposals consisted of a few file cabinets which were sold to provider agencies at a yard sale. Also, an old federal surplus desk was donated to Alpha Omega.

Ms. Lentz presented the request for approval for the addition of 6 FTE's added to Western Highlands staff roster. This issue was given careful consideration in the Finance Committee meeting prior to this morning's board meeting. The new positions consist of staff working in core positions. None of the staff are business related at this time. She stated that she advised the Finance Committee that there are administration dollars available for these new positions. This will take the FTE level from 72 up to 78 which is under the 83 positions which are allowed in the cost model. Mr. Whitson made a motion to approve the 6 new positions as requested. Mr. Cook seconded the motion, and it carried with Mr. Wyatt and Ms. Jones voting no.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Mr. Wilson reported that the Personnel Committee met prior to the board meeting to discuss the addition of new staff but did not have a quorum. Ms. Carey reported that the Human Rights Committee met on August 8, 2008. Item #6 distributed includes important information. Ms. Carey stated that she is concerned about the following: the number of deaths, that the Human Rights Committee only meets four times a year. Ms. Hendrick reported that QIAC will meet following the board meeting.

STATE LIAISON REPORT: Mr. Bullington reported that the state is going to go forward with the monitoring process of the LMEs. A standardized monitoring tool has been developed. The state is currently in the process of recruiting additional positions for Western North Carolina. This is a result of revisions made to the Performance Agreement. There will be regional teams for liaison positions. This means that no particular person will be assigned to an LME. It will be a team process. Mr. Carder reported that the NC Council supports the standardized monitoring plan. Ms. Carey requested that board members receive a copy of the performance agreement.

LOC REPORT: Mr. Thompson's report was included in the board mailing as he could not attend.

BOARD COMMENTS: Mr. Cook asked Mr. Greer to report on the activities of Mountain Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence. Mr. Greer reported that there be an outing on Saturday, September 8, 2007 from 11-4 at Martin Luther King Park, called "Recovery Rocks the Mountains". There will be 40 providers providing treatment information. It will end at the Courthouse with a gospel choir and a speech by the Mayor. Mr. Greer stated that the organizers received very good support from Western Highlands and its CFAC.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Cook made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion, which carried by a unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Atkins
Clerk to the Board