

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

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Nancy Carey; John W. Condrey; Patricia Franklin; Susan Hendrick (via phone); Minnie Jones; Abigail Karroubi; Michele Lawhern; G. Keith Parker; Mandy Stone; Ryan Whitson; Arthur C. Wilson, Jr.; and Steve Wyatt.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: William J. Cook, Jr.; Ricky McDevitt; Robert Ratcliffe; and Michael Talbert.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: Leslie Huntley, CFAC Co-Chair; Robert Huntley, NAMI; Nancy Baker, CFAC, Co-Chair; Dari Yanda; Dan Zorn, Families Together; Rodney Wesson, Rutherford Co. Child & Family; Leslie Boyd, Citizen Times; Carleigh Knight, Transylvania Times; Will Callison, NVML; Sandy Fetuz, NVML; Bill Parke, Rutherford Hospital; Sandy Padgett, Mental Heath Assoc. NC; Charles Gallupo; Scott Parrott, Times News; Mike Rhodes, RHA Behavioral Health; Gerald Travis, M.D., Copestone; Bill Bullington, State Liaison.

ALSO PRESENT: Arthur D. Carder, Jr., Chief Executive Officer; Sharon Lentz, Chief Financial Officer; Rhonda McKee, HR Director; Charlie Schoenheit, Director, Access & Services Management; Kathy Rubendall, Access & Services Management; Anne Doucette, Director, Provider & Consumer Relations; Lynn Trotter, Provider & Consumer Relations; Marsha Ring, Access & Services Management; Sonia Eldridge, Provider & Consumer Relations; 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, October 20, 2006, at 9:40 a.m. in the second-floor Conference Room (Room 312/315) of 356 Biltmore Avenue, Asheville, North Carolina. Mr. Wilson, presiding for Ms. Hendrick, called the meeting to order.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mr. Wesson distributed a letter from the Rutherford County Child & Family Collaborative. He then made comments relative to public statements made at the September 15 WHN Board meeting. Ms. Yanda made comments regarding services for clients in Yancey County. Mr. Rice made comments relative to children in schools, WHN board minutes, Personnel Committee meeting, and monthly management report. Mr. Zorn made comments relative to NVML IPRS funds, and the good work being done by private providers. Mr. Callison made comments with respect to the storage of, and access to, the medical records of New Vistas-Mountain Laurel, Inc.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Parker made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Whitson seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote. (A copy of the agenda is included in the minute book with these minutes.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: After a discussion, Mr. Parker made a motion to approve the minutes for the:

- August 18, 2006, Regular Meeting;
- September 15, 2006, Regular Meeting;
- September 15, 2006, Closed Session;
- September 18, 2006, Special Meeting (as amended to state that, instead of Mr. Wilson, it was Mr. Whitson who made the motion to approve the agenda);
- September 18, 2006, Closed Session; and
- October 5, 2006, Special Meeting;

and to seal and withhold the minutes of such closed sessions from public inspection so long as public inspection would frustrate the purposes thereof. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lawhern. Mr. Wyatt asked to be excused from voting on this motion since he was not a Board Member when the above regular and special meetings and closed sessions were held. Ms. Carey thereupon moved to excuse him from voting, and Mr. Parker seconded the motion, which carried by a unanimous vote. Mr. Parker's original motion was then carried, with Mr. Wyatt being excused from voting and with the other Board Members voting for the motion.

PRESENTATION: Mr. Wilson announced that Justin Hembree is leaving Henderson County. Mr. Wilson presented a plaque in appreciation of his dedicated service as a member of the Western Highlands Area Board. Mr. Hembree thanked the board and stated that 2003-2006 does not seem like a long time but he had realized how far the process has come from just a group of county managers meeting to expanding into the Western Highlands Board.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT: Mr. Carder stated that the crisis at hand is the closing of NVML and its impact on consumers, their families and the community. However, the current crisis should not overshadow the good work being done by the staff of the Western Highlands. Much more has occurred than just the issues associated with NVML. The LME serves a greater purpose than just managing a crisis. He stated that in the midst of a crisis, a lot of information is dispensed and this information changes daily. Sometimes in an attempt to move quickly in order to deal with the issues, some people or groups are left out. Mr. Carder stated that he appreciates Curtis Venable for his role in bringing folks together and providing focus particularly in regards to the interactions with ValueOptions. Mr. Carder stated that he believes that the system will improve over the next year and half as providers help develop a new system.

Mr. Carder reported that all Doc's have been contacted and offered the opportunity to work with Western Highlands; to date there are three psychiatrist interested which constitute less than 1.3 FTE's.

Mr. Carder distributed a grid relative to services provided by county identifying the primary provider delivering a specific service in particular counties. The information on this grid relates only to the issues associated with NVML.

Mr. Carder then discussed the medical records issue, which Mr. Callison mentioned in his public comments. Mr. Carder stated that this issue has been a struggle and there has been dialogue with the Division. The State has said that the records are not the responsibility of Western Highlands. The retention of the records is the responsibility of New Vistas/Mountain Laurel. Western Highlands will continue working with New Vistas coordinating the transfer of records for the next 60 days. The core information of the client record will need to be copied. New Vistas will need a lot of resources in order to get the information copied. After much discussion, Ms. Carey asked that the medical records issue be on the agenda for the next Human Rights Committee meeting.

Mr. Carder next discussed the 6th Avenue property. He reported that he had requested that the clubhouse property be pledged to Western Highlands for the \$350,000. He reported that after all the discussions there is no resolution. The feedback from New Vistas is that they need most of \$1 million dollars approved by Western Highlands along with all of the funds from all of the sale of their current assets in order to make it through this process. New Vistas, therefore, cannot pledge this property to Western Highlands. He reported that folks in Henderson County are very concerned about this particular program not being available if the property is not retained. Mr. Wyatt stated that in spite of efforts involving the community, Senator Doyle and Congressman Taylor's office there is no resolution at this time. Mr. Wyatt stated that the clubhouse is very important to the community and he and others are working to see that the clubhouse is preserved.

At this point, Mr. Whitson made a motion to cease further payments to New Vistas and schedule a special meeting of the Western Highlands board on Tuesday, October 31, 2006 to review any payments requested by New Vistas as well as to review what security if any Western Highlands has received. Ms. Lawhern seconded the motion. After discussion, the following Board Members voted for the motion: Ms. Hendrick (via phone); Ms. Lawhern; Mr. Wyatt; Mr. Wilson; Ms. Franklin; Ms. Jones; Ms. Karroubi; Ms. Stone; and Mr. Whitson. Ms. Carey; Mr. Condrey; and Mr. Parker voting against.

Mr. Carder stated that as soon as there are confirmed commitments from providers, he is planning public service announcements to be sent to newspapers, radio stations, etc. identifying the providers in each county.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT: Ms. Lentz presented the financial report for July and August 2006, after which Mr. Parker made a motion to approve the financial reports as presented. Mr. Wyatt 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.)

Ms. Lentz requested approval of Budget Amendment #2. These changes reflect an increase of \$3,518,773 making the new FY 07 budget \$41,915,125. Mr. Whitson made a motion to approve the Budget Amendment as presented. Ms. Karroubi seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Lentz then presented start-up funding in the amount of \$150,000 for Providence, d/b/a Family Preservation, which comes from a percentage of Rutherford Polk Area Authority dissolution funds attributable to Rutherford County. Mr. Condrey made a motion to authorize payment of \$150,000 for start-up of Family Preservation. Mr. Wyatt seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Mr. Wilson reported that the Nominating Committee met and presented the slate of officers as indicated in item #5. The slate of officers will be voted on at the November meeting. Mr. Whitson reported that the Personnel Committee met October 18, 2006 to discuss several issues. (1) Amendment of the Western Highlands Salary Plan to include the classification of Physician IV-B, Grade 98 to allow for the potential hiring of psychiatrists, (2) the addition of an Accounting Specialist I, Grade 67, Maximum hiring rate \$39,489+ fringe, and (3) an addition of a Community Relations Specialist, Grade 63, Maximum hiring rate \$32,991+ fringe.

Mr. Whitson stated the Personnel Committee recommends approval. Mr. Wyatt made a motion to approve modifying the Western Highlands salary plan to include Grade 98. Mr. Parker seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Wyatt made a motion to approve the Accounting Specialist I position Grade 67. Ms. Stone seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote. Ms. Carey made a motion to approve the Community Relations Specialist position Grade 63. Ms. Karroubi seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Carey reported that the Human Rights Committee will be meeting on November 7, 2006 at 4:30 p.m. Ms. Carey requested that at the November meeting she be given time to present a thorough Human Rights Report. Ms. Carey reported that the Rules Commission has passed new procedures allowing for those who do not have Medicaid to appeal.

Ms. Karroubi reported that Quality Improvement Advisory Council will be meeting following the board meeting.

CFAC: Ms. Huntley distributed a written report along with a copy of a letter of support for 6th Avenue Clubhouse. She reminded board members of the Legislative Candidate Breakfast scheduled for October 23, 2006, 8-9:30 a.m. in Rutherford County at the Rutherford Cooperative Extension Building, in Spindale and October 26, 2006 in Henderson County 8-9:30 a.m. at Grace Lutheran Church.

BOARD COMMENTS: Mr. Wyatt suggested that Secretary Hooker-Odom come to Western North Carolina and provide an update to the citizens, stakeholders, and consumers needing services about what is happening and to answer questions. Mr. Wyatt made a motion that Secretary Hooker-Odom be asked to come to Western North Carolina to conduct a public forum on the status of mental health reform. Ms. Carey seconded the motion, and it carried by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Wilson asked Mr. Carder if the board could do anything to help to get resources from the state. Mr. Carder stated that he anticipates that as the new providers are in place and services are delivered, he believes that

services will be delivered at a higher level in terms of more units of service being generated. There might be a point, perhaps April or May, when Western Highlands will need more money to pay for the services being delivered. This will need to be monitored closely. Mr. Carder reported that he will be meeting with representative of the state in a couple of weeks to discuss what might happen with respect to unutilized IPRS funds.

Mr. Wilson asked that the agenda be amended to provide that the board would hold a closed session in order to consult with Legal Counsel.

CLOSED SESSION: A motion was made at 11:42 a.m. by Mr. Wyatt, seconded by Mr. Parker, and carried by a unanimous vote to amend the agenda for this meeting to provide that the Board would hold a closed session to consult with Legal Counsel, and to go into closed session pursuant to Section 143-318.11(a)(3) of the General Statutes of North Carolina, in order to consult with the Authority's Legal Counsel.

The open session resumed at 11:52 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT: Mr. Parker made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Wyatt seconded the motion, which carried by a unanimous vote; and the meeting adjourned at 11:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Atkins
Clerk to the Board