

NORTHWESTERN COUNSELING & SUPPORT SERVICES
107 FISHER POND ROAD
ST. ALBANS VT 05478

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

MAY 2, 2018

Present: Sara Kittell, David MacCallum, Jeff Moreau, Jason Minor, Jesse Bugbee, Carl Rosenquist, Betty Charron, Ken Gagne, Anjanette Watson, Dan Thompson, Jim McMillan, Tony Treanor, Angela Poirer, Elaine Carpenter

Excused: David Hutchinson

Staff: Emily Richards, Todd Bauman, Tim Gallagan, Steve Broer, Joe Halko, Danielle Lindley, Kim McClellan, Stacey Remillard, Michael Bombard, Christie Moffett, Brad Messier, Jesse Leclair

Minutes received and meeting called to order by Jim McMillan at 5:55pm.

Motion was made to approve previous minutes by Dan Thompson. Second by Tony Treanor. All in favor.

Update/Presentation

Michael Bombard from SOAR learning center presented on the wonderful things that are happening at SOAR. They have scored perfect on the last 3 CARF evaluations, The Health Department just evaluated their kitchen at a 99%. SOAR is the only CARF approved school in the state. They serve students from Kindergarten thru 8th Grade. There are a total of 68 students right now. 4 different programs are offered to these students, elementary School, High School, LEAP and Transportation.

- LEAP is a program for students with Autism and Special Needs and focuses largely on social skills.
- The Transportation program is basically a door to door transportation system to get the students to school.

SOAR can offer students a diploma from SOAR or from the students referring school.

They also have a Sugar House, Garden and Ropes Course. These as well as the wonderful culinary program are great ways to get kids involved.

They also offer a summer program which starts the 1st Monday in July and ends the last Friday in July. There is an elementary program which picks a different topic each week and works in activities all around that topic, such as healthy eating. The High School program is broken down into a morning and afternoon session. In the morning they work on team building activities and in the afternoon they will transport students to job sites. The staff has great luck placing students within the community. They also like to put a strong focus on community service, it is important to give back to a community in order to feel a sense of community.

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It is important for the students to leave with a resume. The example that was given was a past student who really enjoyed welding, so they did what they could to help build that skill and he now currently works for Blodgett.

A few questions were asked.

- **How have the needs changed?** 10 years ago there was much less aggression, legal things and sexualized or violent behavior.
- **How has this impacted your staff?** The staff needs to be more creative in coming up with plans and asking for help, the solutions are more complex than before. Things are not as cut and dry as they use to be. It used to be a goal that all kids would transition back into their referring school, but now sometimes that is not what is best for the student. More kids need one on one support which means there is a lot of hiring. They have been considering over hiring, so when the need arising for a student they do not have to wait until they can find the right person. Mike feels we need to be building a more resilient classroom which help these students become more resilient themselves. They currently have a young man that hula hoops when he needs to calm his body down. They have found that it truly helps him and doesn't disturb the other students.
- **How many ACEs score would the average student have?** On average 4-6, in a lot of these situations there are no parents involved, abuse, substance abuse and no community involvement other than the school.
- **Can you serve all students that are referred?** For the most part yes, they did have 2 students this year that had to be released but we are working with their schools to help find the best program for them. They are also serving Chittenden and Lamoille County's.
- **Can Children only come if referred by a school, or can a parent refer them?** The district needs to refer the student, a parent can make the suggestion and if the school denies than the parent can appeal through the IEP program.

Graduation is June 8th at 10:30am. All are welcome and Dan says everyone should see at least one event that the school puts on they are amazing!

Executive Director Report

Todd diverted his presentation to Lynn Daudelin so she could present on the capital gains.

We have 8 residential sites.

- Sully's Way's only issue is the roof.
- Upper Weldon's has a few issues; this is a very old house. The main issue is the driving is falling apart. We will keep the barn a storage unit; the siding will need to be dealt with soon, a new ramp to make it ADA approved and new floors up stairs. We are trying to get rid of all the carpet.
- North Main St; is a leased property from Champlain Housing. It is going to need new windows upstairs.
- 2 Sites in Berkshire; no repairs are needed here.

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- French Hill; no repairs needed here
- Bayview Crisis Bed; this is in Fletcher and is leased. Our top priority is to purchase a place to replace this property with. We are currently working with a realtor.
- Richford is up and running, but no work is needed here.

We have 2 educational spaces

- Academy of Learning; this is a leased property and now needs nothing
- SOAR; this is where the biggest investment is needed. There are possible issues with the septic design. Phase 2 of windows needs to be done. We are thinking of changing the kitchen to be able to serve the students, but if we do that the kitchen will need a lot of work. The building has ascetics so it cost twice as much to do anything.

We have 8 Offices and Community Spaces

- 107; we own the building but lease the property. Would like to do a couple of renovations. 1st being the lobby so there is more privacy for clients. We would like to have better use of our nursing and med space including better security. We will turn a conference room into office space. Paving is being done in May and the roof needs to be resealed.
- 130; we need to work on some of the curbing; there are a lot of trip hazards. We so have some issues with the generators, we are looking into having our own cut off switch. We are also replacing the floors, looking at a product that is made from recycled water bottles.
- 12 Houghton St; this is leased and needs no work.
- 20 Mapleville Depot; New property, will need some landscaping and water mitigations. We are also keeping an eye on the AC unit.
- 27 Lower Newton; we are looking at up grading the lighting in the parking lot as well as re-marking it. The siding does need replacing and the roof top units are past their life expectance so we are watching those. We are also looking to make modifications to the kitchen because they are looking to expand their cooking programs.
- Suite 12; haven't moved in yet. We gave this about a \$20,000 renovation budget.
- We are completely out of the St. Albans House

Financials Report

- Fiscal Year 2018 stands at a \$1,464,030 gain through February 28, 2018, which is slightly ahead of most recent prior year performances. This includes setting aside funds for contingencies discussed at the March Board meeting.
- Proposed case rate bundles have been received from the State. This will be good for us. It is going to be service driving not quantity driven. IFS will not exist anymore, it will be combined with the Children's bundle.
- Tim will have the comparison numbers of other DA's that were requested at our next board meeting.
- The question was asked, is AR the averages of any given day? Yes it is a point in time calculation and we use the end of the month.

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- Why is cash on hand lower than in past years? It is low because of the bonus and we have held off on billing IFS, so really it artificially low.

Executive Committee Report

Jim reported that everything is pretty much the same as last month. There have been no significant changes in payment reform. We are still being looked at as the experts on this which is great. UEMR is still moving forward, still looking at what will be the best option for us and the ability to have interoperability. The wage action that was approved will be put into effect this week.

Behavioral Health Report

Steve reported that May is Mental Health Awareness Month. His team has been invited to present on having embedded officer to the Governor. This is very exciting. There is also a group of African Scholars that have asked to come to us and see what we do.

Children, Youth & Family

Danielle wanted to give an update on our involvement with the BFA student who died in the car accident a few weeks ago. One of our staff members went with the police to inform the parents. We also were at the school and held special times at the complex so we were available for those that needed us. 8 total staff who were involved with this. This was all under a non-billable code, but it will help to shine a light on what we do.

Community Relations Report

Joe also reported that is Mental Health Awareness Month. On his TV show with channel 15 Lance was on and they talked about Mental Health First Aid. The Autism walk is May 20th. NCSS is sponsoring the “Frankies” a High School sports award that the messenger does each week. We got a ton of advertising with this sponsorship; we are really hoping to reach some young people with this.

Human Resources Report

Last year we started an auto deferring into the 403B account for employees, it has worked very well. It has been about an 11% increase of those that are using the program to its full benefit. Only about 100 staff is not deferring. We match up to 4% based on longevity.

Board Business

Only thing that was mentioned was a compliment on how nice the printed material we handed out this evening was. We handed out the SOAR and Consumer Orientation Guide.

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Motion to adjourn made by Carl Rosenquist and Second by Sara Kittell at 7:54 pm. All in favor.

Minutes recorded by:
Emily Richards
Executive Coordinator