

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

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

MAY 3, 2017

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**Present:** Betty Charron, Rob Hirss, Sara Kittell, David MacCallum, Jeff Moreau, Anjanette Watson (Jim McMillan), Jason Minor

**Excused:** Dan Thompson, Angela Poirer, Carl Rosenquist, Ken Gagne, Jesse Bugbee, Jeremy Read, Elaine Carpenter

**Absent :**

**Staff:** Meredith Vaughn, Ted Mable, Tim Gallagan, Kim McClellan, Todd Bauman, Kathy Brown, Stacey Remillard, Hillary Holmes, Joe Halko, Steve Broer, Kathy Brown, Danielle Lindley

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**Minutes received and meeting called to order by Rob Hirss at 5:47 pm.**

**Motion was made to approve previous minutes by Dave Hutchinson. Second Jason Minor. All in favor.**

### Presentation

Hillary Holmes and Stacey Remillard

Hillary Holmes and Stacey Remillard presented about the agency's current Diversity and Cultural Competence initiatives. In 2009, the Diversity Committee was formed, and since then there have been much progress toward a culture of inclusion, such as gender neutral bathroom signage, trauma informed care initiatives, and gender acceptance language on our forms. A welcome sign in multiple languages is on its way.

Prior to the Cultural Competence presentation, which was created in 2016, the board was asked to complete a survey that assesses their perception of how the agency currently addresses diversity and cultural competence. The hope is that after the presentation, their perceptions would change. The presentation covered the definition of culture; it is more than what is easily visible. Culture also encompasses beliefs, movements, traditions, language...etc.

The presentation addressed the varying levels of cultural competency. It is not a fixed scale, so while one day a person might not speak up about a diversity issue—and therefore inadvertently participate in a possibly negative or oppressive situation—other days, the opportunity to voice acceptance might present itself more readily. The decision to speak up in certain situations is often a response to how safe we feel, both physically and emotionally. The negative effects of targeting others is that the society misses out on what might have been created by the oppressed. During the presentation, Hillary reviewed some questions we can ask ourselves in self-reflection following an incident. What happened? Who did you feel? What did you learn? What will you do in the future?

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This training has been powerful for our nearly 100 new employees who have thus far received it. As an agency, we hold a great deal of power. By recognizing cultural differences, we maintain our power but allow others to feel safe in the process.

#### **Executive Committee Summary**

Executive Committee was canceled on May 3<sup>rd</sup> due to attendance; no update was provided.

#### **Executive Director Report**

- Agency Leadership and other key staff met with leadership from Northwestern Medical Center on April 10, 2017 to brainstorm about various community needs, areas of concern, and opportunities. Out of the meeting, the two leadership teams landed on three action steps and will work together to move forward. These initiatives align with both NMC's and NCSS's strategic plans:
  - Training and development with a focus on primary care relationships
  - Space utilization
  - Emergency Department data review
- The board had a discussion about the current Emergency Bed situation, which has really become a crisis across the state. The system needs to be addressed by those at the state level and not rest only on the shoulders of the mental health agencies. We can all take a part in making this a true priority by speaking about it openly, attending public meetings, and communicating with our reps.
  - Ted discussed some legislation that could have a positive impact on reimbursement for select staff. He also discussed Duty to Warn and its impact on mental health agencies.

#### **Behavioral Health Divisional Report**

Steve mentioned the fond remembrance of Jim Tomlinson in standing committee. Nothing has been heard regarding a service. Joe will reach out to find if any arrangements have been made.

#### **Children Youth and Family Divisional Report**

- Welcome Danielle Lindley-Mitchell! She enters the position with 13 years' experience in the human services field, primarily in the children's system of care. Since 2009, she has acted as the NCSS Parent Child Center Program Manager, a role in which she develops and oversees all programs and activities of the NCSS' Parent Child Center.
- She offers a focus on the future, specifically with population health
- Several NCSS staff has been supporting Highgate School with the recent para-educator incident- supporting staff and parents around sexual trauma and crisis. The Messenger will write an article about the NCSS staff support- keep an eye out. The group also developed a cohesive response for future incidents.

#### **Community Relations**

- May is Mental Health Awareness Month

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- CPC- June 16<sup>th</sup>!
- Autism Walk- May 21<sup>st</sup>!
- Kids Fest June 2<sup>nd</sup>- 3:00-6:00
- May 11- Tony's farewell, 5:00-7:00 at Twigg's in the backroom. Informal, come and go as you please.
- June 23<sup>rd</sup> (Friday), Ted's farewell on the Family Center Green, 5-7:00 pm. More details to follow.

### **Developmental Services**

- VT has received an award (Zero Project Award) for its outstanding work in the realm of Supported Employment. Each agency will be receiving a plaque to honor their hard work and dedication to this cause.
- Two new individuals from corrections are being served at our Berkshire site. Although the individuals present significant challenges, the highly skilled and trained staff continue to carve out ample opportunity for their success.
- DS PICNIC- Tentatively scheduled for the last Friday in June. Georgia Beach is scheduled to be under construction so alternative (local) sites are being looked into.

### **Financials**

- As of 03/31/17, the agency financials stand at YTD gain of \$1,197,947.
- Performance includes funds set aside for the \$900 net bonus paid to all staff on April 28th and anticipated one percent base rate increase on May 12th. The base rate increase will be retroactive to July 1, 2016.
- The Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Process continues. The budget will be presented at the June Board meeting.
- As of March 31st, NCSS is averaging claims & stop loss premium fees of about \$65,300 per week for Fiscal Year 2017. In our previously fully-insured world, the weekly average of premiums, adjusted for current marketplace, would be roughly \$77,000.

Revenue, along with expense, has ticked up for 2017 – a graph depicting these information was requested at the previous board meeting.

Rob questioned why total expenses had gone up nearly a million; raises of 2% and 1% bonuses; and hiring explain this number.

### **Unified EMR:**

So far, 16 RFPs have been reviewed. Kim will soon know who the five chosen vendors are. The plan is have a finalist by November.

### **Strategic Plan (SP):**

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Several SWOT analyses went into this document- the SWOT in the SP are a gathering of all the divisions' analyses.

Next steps—directors are looking at internal initiatives and what the agency is doing cross divisionally. The entire leadership team of nearly 60 people was all given the SP. The entire team will contribute to executing the internal milestones.

Client satisfaction and staff engagement will change soon on the score card, as new surveys are going out soon. Historically, our engagement rate is high and turnover rate is low. This year, all 16 agencies will ask the same questions to staff in the engagement survey, so it will allow for greater comparison.

The SP is on the website under About Us/Community Relations. It will also be mailed to community partners and state reps.

The SP is now for three years; it used to be for five.

The board discussed some staff retention tools- loan repayment and supervision reimbursement. Kudos for attempting for these initiatives.

Medicaid Next Generation is a great initiative as well. Hope NCSS will receive the due credit for this great work!

Rob Hirss requested a list of ongoing trainings/meeting...etc. They could attend and learn more about the organization. The board liked this idea.

**Motion to adjourn made by David Hutchinson at 7:10 pm. All in favor.**

Minutes recorded by:  
Meredith Vaughn  
Executive Coordinator