

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 7, 2024

Present: Elaine Carpenter, David MacCallum, Meg Marshall, Dan Thompson, Rob Hirss, Ken Gange, Angela Poirier, Anjanette Watson, Jason Minor

Excused: David Hutchinson, Casey Toof, Andrea Patrick-Baudet,

Staff: Stacey Remillard, Joe Halko, April Mathieu, Belinda Bessette, Emily Richards, Todd Bauman, Kim McClellan, Sam Thomas, Derek Hoy, Matt Habedank

Presenters: Jessica Branon, Tric Rogati, Ron Stankevich, and Casey Carpenter

Minutes received and meeting called to order by Angela Poirier at 5:39pm.

Motion was made to approve January minutes as presented by Dan Thompson. Second by Meg Marshall. All in favor.

Discussion about minutes – Rob Hirss wanted to make sure that folks knew he was not talk about the staff when he was talking about PCB's at Soar. He was talking about how the situation is not great and we are being forced in a way that is not wonderful. Angela also wanted to thank everyone for working on the acronyms. The report and minutes were so much better.

Presentation:

Agency Overview - The question was asked - The out of state residential programs, we do not use them much? No, but when we do the state, they go to take over the care. We would participate in the care because we hold the history of the client. The question was asked – What are we doing to help grandparents who are raising their grandchildren? We have run groups in the past, but COVID put a stop to that. There is a lot of energy around this and we market all our classes and programs to caregivers because everyone who cares for children are welcome.

Executive Director Report

Redesign Presentation – Todd shared the presentation that he gave to the leadership team. This will have the biggest effect on 4 teams and about 60 staff. They will not see big changes when it comes to workflows and processes. This change is biggest behind the senses. The question was asked – What effect will this have on clients? There will be no effect on our clients, the services they receive will not change. This has mostly to do with the funding structures. Dan Thompson likes the ideas behind the improvements and encourages us to keep moving forward with this process. One thing that was mentioned was the caseworker turnover, but Elaine Carpenter feels that trouble is not the turnover because change will always happen but the education that families should get when they enter the system of care is lacking. If we figure out how to let clients know that we are here for them even during change, we will help them a lot. With the funding of the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) we should be able to do a market rate study on wages. Stacey has done one and we are reviewing the results. We are hoping these

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changes will give our clients better care with cross divisional support. Part of the CCBHC is doing a community needs assessment. We are bringing an outside party in to help us with that.

Financial Report

Everyone received the 990 and audited financials. We do need a vote from the full board to be able to submit this to the state. There is a section that defines our highest paid contractors. We do contract with Green State Psychiatry, so they are not the highest on this list.

A motion was made to approve the 990 as presented by Dan Thompson. Second by Elaine Carpenter. All in favor.

We did receive a management letter from Kittell Branagan & Sargent (KBS). It does state that the things noted have already been corrected. We switched accounting system in April which is where the trouble came from. We did send letters out to our state partners to let them know this was happening. KBS noted that we did all the right things. The financials were sent to the board with the board packet. Derek included as closed and amended to actual close for the board PL. There was a change in practice in the Developmental Services division, so we needed to book two months of the wavier in January. We are about at a break even for the halfway point of the year and are on a good path. It was bought up that it will be hard to show a trend analysis due to COVID but if you go to prior to those years we are in a good place. We do have board designated funds in our books that were put in place to help the agency with strategic planning. KBS did bring up the importance of using those funds to help us grow so we can show the state we are not just sitting on funds. We are hoping to have a vote tonight to help us with that. In the executive committee meeting we did talk about our strategic planning, we as an agency are not growing, we are not shrinking, but we need to start thinking of ways we can increase the help we are offering our community. The question asked – Do we have a commitment from Derek that he and his team will do everything in their power to make the adjustments that are needed to correct the management letter? Yes absolutely, there is a plan in place, things have been corrected but the team will stay on top of it.

A motion was made to move to executive session by Ken Gagne. Second by Dan Thompson. All in favor.

All staff stayed expect Derek Hoy and Stacey Remillard who have a conflict of interest. Angela Poirier will stay present but will abstain from the conversation.

A motion was made to move out of executive session by Dan Thompson. Second by Meg Marshall. All in Favor.

A motion was made to give Todd Bauman authority in the manor discussed in executive session around the purchase of 3 Home Health Circle, using the board designated capital funds by Dan Thompson. Second Elaine Carpenter. All in Favor. Angela Poirier Abstained.

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Other Business

Belinda would like to thank the board for the vote to approve the purchase of 3 home health circle. We have a large need amount our clients and this is really going to be a benefit to our community. She also wanted to comment on the redesign, the teams are very excited about this transition, Matt and Belind have been doing a lot of group supervision and working with teams. It is a change to be supervised but different people and it is important to give them a space to give their thoughts. And this process is really showing how we are innovated and moving forward. Angela would like to point out that the leadership team is really moving us in the right direction. They really give that feeling of how great the agency is. Stacey wanted to share the HR monthly newsletter, please take one. We will include it in the board packet next month. The Question was asked – Are we applying for the best place to work again this year. We decided not to in 2024 but will for 2025. We didn't feel like we had an opportunity to celebrate the win before it was to go through the process again.

Motion to adjourn was made by Dan Thompson. Seconded by Ken Gagne. All in Favor.

Meeting adjourn at 7:29pm

Minutes recorded by:

Emily Richards

Executive Coordinator