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|  | *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  *Executive Office of Health and Human Services*  *Department of Mental Health*  *25 Staniford Street*  *Boston, Massachusetts 02114-2575* | |  |
| **CHARLES D. BAKER**  ***Governor***  **KARYN E. POLITO**  ***Lieutenant Governor***  **KATHLEEN E. WALSH**  ***Secretary***  **BROOKE DOYLE**  ***Commissioner*** | | **(617) 626-8000**  **www.mass.gov/dmh** | |

*Statewide Mental Health Advisory Council*

*(Via Videoconference)*

*January 18, 2024*

PRESENT: Chuck Weinstein, Cynthia Piltch, Jean Giagrande, Joan Cho Sik, Ilya Ablavsky, Susan Martin, Vivian Nunez, Eno Mondesir, Karran Larson, Susan Martin

ABSENT: Dave Brown

STAFF: Commissioner Doyle, Stephen Cidlevich, Crystal Collier

GUESTS: Alan Burt, Heather Henderson, Autumn Versace, Steve LaMaster, Jill Gichuhi, Colby Mills

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**Call to Order –** 8:30a.m.

**Welcome by Chair**

* + Welcome Guests; Review of On-line Etiquette, Guest Policy, Open meeting policy,
  + Approval of the Minutes
* **Approval of Minutes**
  + November 16, 2023 minutes approved.

**New Member Application Status**

* Catherine Vuky, Heather Henderson, and Autumn Versace have cleared their background checks. Still waiting for their appointment letters issued by Secretary Walsh (as these appointments are by the Secretary of Health and Human Services with approval of the Governor).
* The Governor's Office is following up with Paul Alves and Chien-Chi Huang as they have not yet submitted their background check materials.
* The Governor’s office acknowledges Alan Burt’s many years of serving on various boards and commissions and has passed on putting Alan’s application forward. The new Administration’s focus is giving opportunities to serve on the various boards and councils to new people in diversified fields. The SAC welcomes Alan to join its meetings as a guest.

**Member Status Update**

* Vivian Nunez has moved to Western Mass and will represent that part of the state.

**Commissioner’s Update – Commissioner Doyle**

* This FY25 budget has some 9C cuts which is a reduction to the overall state budget. These were taken as a measure to balance last year’s budget. DMH did have a small reduction. DMH had a $5M cut which was for tuition remission. The Department hadn’t started yet this program yet.
* MassHealth had the biggest reduction - $200M. Services weren’t affected. MassHealth was doing redeterminations and had budgeted more money for services based on the additional enrollment that they had prior to redeterminations.
* FY25 budget will be released by Governor soon. It’s going to be a tight budget year. The Governor laid out her FY25 priorities in her State of the State address. She is proposing to make several new investments. The Governor is going forward with the Housing Bill, IT Capital Bill, requesting money for MBTA repairs, Requesting for money for early childhood access to care, Education. The Governor is looking to sustain behavioral health services.
* The Housing Bill is designed to support more affordability. It’s not being designed for any state agency.
* Assistance to migrants - the system is stressed. Many people are here to stay. There is an interest in MA to be a welcoming state. As a welcoming state, we want to offer what is both supported through existing coverage, meaning MassHealth for example. There is a complexity to the Mass Health coverage depending on the person’s status when they enter country. Some have full access and others have MassHealth limited. We need to pay attention to those with the limited so we can help with their healthcare needs, affordable housing, food, access to jobs, etcetera. The State is trying to act on all of these areas. Massachusetts did get permission from the federal government for earlier work authorization. It’s going to take time.
* There is an open procurement for providers to expand bed capacity. This is the third attempt to procure additional capacity. We are hoping for as many bidders as possible.
* If this is an area of interest of the Council, the Council should pay attention to the budget cycles to see if there’s information on this that they can be responsive to.

**Interagency Health Equity Team (IHET) – Commissioner Doyle, Crystal Collier, Chief of Staff**

* Not a lot of change from last update. There hasn’t been a large group meeting yet. DPH has been holding internal conversations to come up with next steps to move forward. There is information on maternal health.
* It was decided to split into a third workgroup focused on children’s mental health which is very exciting. The DMH CYF team has offered a lot of insights and thoughts on this. That group is meeting next week.
* There is a community engagement team that has started. This team is being chaired by The Director of Community Engagement at DPH. They are just starting to configure the committee. DMH has placed our Director of Community Engagement on this team. There is a meeting scheduled for next week. This will be the first meeting.
* Still no indication on what action or focus these workgroups will take. Conversations are occurring but still waiting for updates from DPH.

**Legislative Update – Stephen Cidlevich**

* The Governor is going to be testifying today on a housing bond bill - $4.1billion that will set the stage going forward for the Administration. Those housing bond funds allow local communities to expand housing. This is the first time in a while that it’s occurred.
* The Chairman of the Workforce Development Committee just left the legislature and has joined this Administration. Hopefully that will be beneficial for Administration going forward. Steve is not aware of any direct funding for workforce recruitment. He will keep the Council updated on this. Crystal Collier shares that this is a priority for this Administration and the Secretary. There is an interagency workgroup that has been developed to look at all the opportunities on how to recruit and retain. William James College has done a lot of work on this subject. IHET is community focused and driven to improve the community in the 3 areas of focus – cardiovascular, maternal health, children’s mental health. They are 2 separate committees with 2 different focuses. DMH will continue to think about tuition remission. As part of the ARPA money that DMH has, work is being done with several colleges to develop a paid intern program.

**State Mental Health Planning Council (SMHPC) - Steve LaMaster, Employment subcommittee Chair; Jill Gichuhi, Housing subcommittee Chair; Colby Mills, SYAC Chair**

**Steve LaMaster**

* Steve works for Vinfen and works with people who have mental health disabilities. He supports 7 clubhouses from northern Massachusetts to the Cape and oversees supportive employment services for Vinfen. The SMHPC is an advisory body to DMH in relation to a federal block grant that DMH receives. One of its subcommittees is an employment subcommittee. He has been chairing this subcommittee with Don Hughes for 6 years.
* The Committee’s mission is full and equitable integration of employment and career services. ([See attached slide presentation](file:///\\dmh-fp-bos-122.ehs.govt.state.ma.us\shared\Dept\CMNSR\SAC\Employment%20SMHPC%20Presentation%201-18-24.pdf))

**Jill Gichuhi**

* Jill is Co-chair of The Housing Subcommittee along with Adrienne Cassidy and Joe Finn.
* She is the Director of the Helpline at NAMI Mass.
* The Housing Subcommittee has 65 active members and 3 co-chairs.
* The Subcommittee has been working on eliminating barriers to utilizing DMH rental subsidy program.
* A video was created to educate people on what the rental subsidy program is. Main target was landlords.
* Membership is pretty spread across the state with the exception of southeast area. They are working on diversifying membership. ([See attached slide presentation](file:///\\dmh-fp-bos-122.ehs.govt.state.ma.us\shared\Dept\CMNSR\SAC\Housing%20Subcommittee%20-%20SAC%201.18.2024.pdf))

**Colby Mills**

* Colby is the Youth Coordinator for Youth Move Massachusetts and PPAL.
* Colby Co-chairs the Statewide Young Adult Council (SYAC) which is for ages 16-30. Colby has lived experience.
* SYAC is subcommittee and advisory board to the SMHPC and to DMH’s TAY initiative (Transition-Aged Youth).
* SYAC brings together youth, young adults and providers to give advice and feedback to DMH and other young adult service organizations. It is a safe space for young people to self-reflect. There are not many spaces like this for young people. ([See attached slide presentation](file:///\\dmh-fp-bos-122.ehs.govt.state.ma.us\shared\Dept\CMNSR\SAC\SYAC%20presentation%201.18.24.pdf))
* The Council is invited to reach out to any members of the SMHPC. The employment subcommittee is looking for guests and new members and welcomes anyone’s participation. [lamasters@vinfen.org](mailto:lamasters@vinfen.org) [jgichuhi@namimass.org](mailto:jgichuhi@namimass.org) [cmills@ppal.net](mailto:cmills@ppal.net)

**Old & New Business**

* Next meeting – invite members of the Clubhouse Coalition. Tom Coppinger is the new head of the Clubhouse Coalition.

**Next Meeting**

March 21, 2024 via Zoom.

**Future 2024 Meetings: Thursday’s 8:30-10:00am (virtual)**

May 16, September19, November 21

**Meeting adjourned 10:00am.**