

Community Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention Commission

Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2024

3:00 - 4:30 pm

Date of meeting: Thursday, February 8, 2024

Start time: 3:05 pm

End time: 4:15 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members participating		Vote 1*	Vote 2
1	Kiame Mahaniah – Executive Office of Health and Human Services (<i>chair</i>)	X	X
2	Nancy Allen Scannell – Mass. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children	X	X
3	Jen Barrelle – Department of Public Health (<i>designee of Commissioner Goldstein</i>)	-	-
4	Lisette Blondet – Mass. Association of Community Health Workers	-	-
5	Georgia Critsley – Trial Court (<i>designee of Chief Justice Brieger</i>)	X	-
6	Yaminette Diaz-Linhart – National Association of Social Workers – Mass.	X	X
7	Elizabeth Ganz – Association for Behavioral Healthcare	A	X
8	Margaret Hannah – Freedman Center at William James College	X	X
9	Jessica Larochelle – Mass. Association for Mental Health	-	-
10	Jennifer L'Heureux – Office of Representative Tram Nguyen (<i>designee of Rep. Nguyen</i>)	A	X
11	Adrian Madaro – Mass. House of Representatives	-	-
12	Danna Mauch – Mass. Association for Mental Health	X	X
13	Carlene Pavlos – Mass. Public Health Association	-	-
14	Pavel Payano / Tom Mahoney – Massachusetts Senate	X	X
15	Denise Pixley – Mass. Organization for Addiction Recovery	-	-
16	Myisha Rodrigues – National Alliance on Mental Illness – Mass.	-	-
17	Jocelyn Schafer – Office of Senator John Velis (<i>designee of Chair Velis</i>)	X	X
18	Emma Schlitzer – CHIA (<i>designee of Executive Director Peters</i>)	X	X
19	James Vetter – Social Emotional Learning Alliance for Mass.	X	X
20	Wanda Visnick – Justice Resource Institute	A	X
21	Charlene Zuffante – Department of Mental Health (<i>designee of Commissioner Doyle</i>)	-	-

* (X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

Proceedings

Undersecretary Mahaniah called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm. He invited members to briefly introduce themselves to the group, including Ben Thomas and Jim Cantwell from Senator Markey's office who were joining the meeting as guests.

Vote 1 to approve the 11/16/2023 minutes: Undersecretary Mahaniah called for a vote to approve the minutes from the Commission's previous meeting on 11/16/2023. Dr. Mauch introduced the motion, which was seconded by Professor Hannah and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Gabriel Cohen provided an overview of the draft annual report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting for members' feedback. He explained that the report was formatted as a letter, following a similar format to previous years' reports, that summarized the Commission's activities for the previous year (March 1, 2023 to March 1, 2024). He highlighted that the report included a summary of anticipated spending from the Community Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention Trust Fund. For additional details, refer to the draft version of the report on the Commission's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

Based on members' feedback on the draft report, Undersecretary Mahaniah agreed to revise the report to clarify that the decision to utilize a portion of the Trust Fund to staff the Office of Behavioral Health Promotion (OBHP) and establish an Interagency Review Team (IRT) within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) had not been proposed by the Commission. He noted that an updated draft of the report would be shared with members after the meeting, prior to its submission to the Legislature on March 1.

Undersecretary Mahaniah provided an update on the status of the Community Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention Trust Fund, highlighting the Trust Fund's current balance of approximately \$16.5 million. He explained that EOHHS anticipates an infusion of approximately \$4 million annually into the Trust Fund from vaping tax revenues. Based on members' feedback, Undersecretary Mahaniah agreed to provide the Commission with additional information on the proposal that Undersecretary of Human Services Mary McGeown had discussed at the group's previous meeting, which would set aside approximately half of the Trust Fund as a reserve to ensure sustained funding for any future initiatives. For additional details, refer to the meeting presentation on the Commission's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

Department of Mental Health (DMH) Commissioner Brooke Doyle shared an update on the hiring of the Assistant Commissioner for the OBHP. She noted that she was limited on what she could discuss publicly, but she explained that after two rounds of interviews, the hiring committee selected their top candidate and extended an offer. Commissioner Doyle was hopeful that the candidate would accept the offer promptly and be able to join the Commission's next meeting in April or June, at the latest.

Undersecretary Mahaniah facilitated a discussion of the proposals that members developed during the first few years after the Commission was formed. These proposals focused on a variety of topics (listed below):

- Supporting existing community coalitions and promoting cross-sector prevention work, through the formation of social emotional learning and mental health technical assistance resources to support the work of community coalitions and upstream prevention.
 - Members underscored the importance of focusing on the evidence base of social emotional learning and filling gaps where there might be undersupported social emotional learning initiatives.

- Integrated medical and behavioral health focusing on young children and families, addressing both generational and family stress, through the creation of a center for integrated pediatric practice transformation.
 - Members highlighted the importance of expanding programs, such as Team Up that focus on more upstream prevention and early intervention work with at-risk populations.
- Promoting social emotional competency among young adults within agencies and schools.
 - Members emphasized the importance of working with adults in particular to provide trainings and resources that would be part of existing integrated resource centers and initiatives, such as Network of Care. They explained that these types of initiatives would help build capacity among adults working with youth to promote evidence-based resources that promote the social emotional competency of children and young adults.
- Building resilience in populations with co-occurring substance use disorder, mental health needs, and history of trauma.

At 4:00 pm, Ms. Critsley left the meeting.

Ms. Allen Scannell expressed support for the proposals and encouraged the group to continue reviewing the proposals to ensure alignment with existing EOHHS initiatives, such as school-based behavioral health.

In response to a question from Professor Hannah regarding the advisory role of the Commission and its relationship with the newly-established OBHP, Commissioner Doyle explained that one of the first priorities of the new Assistant Commissioner of the OBHP would include a landscape review of existing behavioral health initiatives across the Commonwealth to identify opportunities to strengthen and build upon in the coming years.

Vote 2 to adjourn: Undersecretary Mahaniah requested a motion to adjourn. Ms. Allen Scannell introduced the motion, which was seconded by Dr. Mauch and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Meeting Materials

1. Commission presentation
2. Draft annual report