



**Middlesex County Restoration Center
Monday, March 22, 2021
10:00 am – 11:00 pm
Zoom**

MINUTES

Attendees: Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian; Danna Mauch, Massachusetts Association for Mental Health, co-chair; Senator Cindy Friedman; Representative Ken Gordon; Chief Robert Bongiorno, Bedford Police Department; Nancy Connolly, Department of Mental Health; Deirdre Calvert, Bureau of Substance Addiction Services; Scott Taberner, MassHealth; Marisa Hebble, MA Trial Court; Lydia Conley, Association for Behavioral Healthcare; Tim Burton, National Alliance for Mental Illness Massachusetts; Karin Orr, DMH; Dave Ryan, MSO; David Swanson, Office of Senator Cindy Friedman; Catia Sharp, MAMH; Katharine London, Commonwealth Medicine; June Binney, member of the public; Richard Sheola, member of the public.

10:00 AM: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Sheriff Koutoujian called the meeting to order.

10:05 AM: LEGISLATIVE AND BUDGET UPDATE

Senator Friedman mentioned that the big things of interest to the Commission right now are the state budget process and the EOHHS Roadmap to Reform, where she is looking at the budget for the Roadmap and trying to best align the Restoration Center with that. She also talked about getting the Restoration Center plugged into the discussions on the opioid settlement trust fund and ensuring that the language of the trust fund allows for things like the Restoration Center to be funded.

Chief Bongiorno asked about cannabis tax revenue and whether it can go toward a Restoration Center.

Sheriff Koutoujian asked where we stand on the opioid settlement which the Attorney General is pursuing, and whether there are any specific settlement agreements yet.

Senator Friedman responded that the marijuana tax revenue is mostly spoken for with strict guidelines for how it is spent, but that the opioid settlement revenues are certainly something the Restoration Center Commission should be able to tap into because it is treating similar problems.

Sheriff Koutoujian added that Arnold Ventures is looking across the country at how similar monies are getting utilized. He also mentioned Sheriff Gleason who was just elected in Williamson County, Texas, and is doing interesting, similar work, and he might be an interesting speaker at our Commission. It would be good to reconnect on national models and how they are going. Also, it might be good to partner with the Massachusetts Hospital Association.

Senator Friedman mentioned that the hospitals are very busy right now with COVID.

Representative Gordon let the Commission know that the House is preparing for the budget in the next month, and he will be requesting full funding for the Restoration Center for launching services next year. He is working to socialize the Restoration Center Commission work with Ways and Means Chairman Michlewitz to support this.

Senator Friedman asked to clarify whether full funding is still the \$250,000 or if it is more than that and requested to have a meeting with co-chair Mauch and Representative Gordon to discuss the funding amount.

10:10 AM: APPROVING THE MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING

Sheriff Koutoujian moved to adopt the minutes from the last meeting. Danna Mauch seconded.

10:15 AM: PROCUREMENT SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

Sheriff Koutoujian asked Catia Sharp to report to the Commission on the findings of the procurement subcommittee.

Catia Sharp thanked the members of the procurement subcommittee for their diligent work, letting the Commission know that the following individuals participated: Tim Burton from NAMI Mass, Chief Bongiorno, Scott Taberner, Marisa Hebble, Dave Ryan, and Karin Orr. Catia Sharp introduced Karin Orr to

the Commission members; she represents Nancy Connolly on the subcommittee and is an Area Director of Forensic Services at the Department of Mental Health.

Catia Sharp also introduced Katharine London from Commonwealth Medicine, who will be supporting the Commission's work due to the shift of funds into the EOHHS budget in fiscal year 2021.

Katharine London introduced herself, having a long career working on issues related to behavioral health and criminal justice.

Catia Sharp shared that the document the procurement subcommittee had created would provide recommendations for components of a scope of work and evaluation criteria to Commonwealth Medicine for the procurement.

Scott Taberner asked whether the Commission needed to enter Executive Session to protect materials supporting the development of a procurement from improper public view.

Sheriff Koutoujian thought this was a good suggestion and recommended wrapping up the rest of the Commission's agenda prior to entering Executive Session where the Commission members could more extensively review the procurement recommendations.

Sheriff Koutoujian brought up the idea of reaching out to the federal delegation about obtaining an earmark or other funding for the Restoration Center.

Senator Friedman asked about the Roadmap to Reform.

Danna Mauch shared a staff-level meeting between EOHHS staff and Commission staffers to learn more about the Roadmap. Throughout the Commission's deliberations, it has been clear that the Restoration Center would need to be integrated into the behavioral health system of care in order to function well. When earlier reports came out, the Commission did not have the benefit of knowing what was in the Roadmap, and thus analyzed the fit of the planned center in the existing system of care.

Senator Friedan asked who was present at the meeting.

Danna Mauch responded that the meeting included Commonwealth Medicine team members, Commissioner Doyle of the Department of Mental Health, Director Deirdre Calvert of the Department of Public Health BSAS, Behavioral Health Director Christie Hager of MassHealth, and staff of the Commission including Dave Ryan and Catia Sharp.

Scott Taberner added that it was a helpful discussion of the CBHC model and where areas of alignment may exist between CBHCs and the Restoration Center.

Deirdre Calvert added that areas of alignment include induction to MAT, for example.

Sheriff Koutoujian referenced the plan in the Roadmap to select community behavioral health centers (CBHCs) along county lines and noted while it might not make any more sense than EOHHS service areas, at least using county lines aligns CBHCs with the Restoration Center and with diversion from the justice system.

Senator Friedman expressed concern that the legislative leaders are not fully aware what is in the Roadmap, and finds it challenging to support the Roadmap in the budget process and in legislation without that level of detail.

Scott Taberner shared that the administration is expecting to brief key stakeholders on the contents of the Roadmap, including the co-chairs and legislative members of the Restoration Center Commission. They are working on scheduling that meeting now.

10:45 AM: NEXT STEPS AND CLOSING

Sheriff Koutoujian adjourned the meeting.