



MEETING MINUTES

MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

Thursday, July 13, 2017 7:00 PM

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, room 2402

Members Present: S. Johnson, K. Ruetzel, R. Feiler, L. Murphy, J. Sales, J. Taylor, I. Ziaya

Members Absent: M. Pierce

Staff: P. Efiom, J. Wingader

Presiding Member: S. Johnson, Board Chair

Call to Order / Declaration of Quorum

Chair Johnson declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Approval of the June 8, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Johnson noted a correction and moved approval of the June 8, 2017 meeting minutes seconded by Ms. Ziaya; the minutes as corrected were unanimously approved.

CRADLE TO CAREER PRESENTATION

Sheila Merry, Executive Director of Evanston Cradle to Career began by defining the partnership of 40 organizations part of the collective impact approach to working with Evanston youth. She identified the shared goals and the process used to review data and community input to identify areas of inequity. She discussed how the agency would measure progress against outcomes and highlight system improvements.

Ms. Merry stated that the biggest challenge families face is affordable housing and that the issue is tied to lack of living wages. Funding available to assist is difficult to access and her agency is working with community partners like Connections for the Homeless to study this challenge. The second issue is access to available and affordable mental health services; especially for school aged children on medication who may not be monitored. She cited the challenge of addressing stigma; families are reluctant to find services or deeper treatment. She discussed the importance of trauma informed care and the importance of helping families and providers understand the impact of trauma. Ms. Merry stated a third area of need – early childhood education and support for parents; pointing out that parents lose childcare subsidies if household income increases. Agency found that no achievement gap is identified in 3rd grade if children are kindergarden ready. Agency has identified a need for family support systems; families with young children are isolated. She also noted the challenges around transportation if parents don't have cars.

Ms. Merry closed by reviewing the challenges social service agencies currently face including lack of stable funding for general operating. She also discussed the importance of a centralized resource that could provide information about all agencies, programs and services. She recognized the administrative challenge to managing and maintaining this information.

Several audience comments cited anecdotal solutions from other communities and school systems to address issues of transportation and community resources.

EQUITY & EMPOWERMENT UPDATE

Patricia Efiom, Equity and Empowerment Coordinator, explained the goals of her position and outlined work to date including five town hall meetings, an online survey distributed to residents, and meetings with various social service agencies and community partners. Evanston's long term goal is to create a three year strategic plan that will review effects of City policies on minority residents to ensure equity and create a wrap-around equity program in the City. Ms. Efiom addressed questions about funding and internal City programs; she closed by acknowledging the need to support affordable housing efforts and encouraged all to participate in upcoming town hall meetings and other City sponsored community engagement events.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES UPDATE

Health & Human Services Director, Evonda Thomas-Smith has been named a Health Equity Awakened Leadership Fellow. Ms. Thomas-Smith is participating in a year-long program evaluating strategies that advance racial and social justice in public health with other local health department leaders across the country.

LIAISON REPORTS

Members provided updates for Impact Behavioral Health Partners, Infant Welfare Society, Shore Community Services, Family Focus and Childcare Network of Evanston.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

OFFICE TERMS

Chair Taylor requested a volunteer to serve with her on the nominating committee to select a new Vice Chair. Ms. Johnson agreed to serve.

2017 MHB SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

Chair Taylor also asked the Board to review upcoming meeting dates. The Board agreed to cancel the August meeting. She also reported that Ald. Cicely Fleming would serve as the MHB liaison to City Council

Staff Report

Staff announced a ZoomGrants training on Friday, August 18.

Adjournment

Chair Taylor called for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Sales adjourned the meeting, seconded by Ms. Johnson. The meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Wingader
Grants and Compliance Specialist