



MEETING MINUTES

MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

Thursday, March 14, 2019 7:00 PM

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

Members Present: J. Sales, S. Johnson, R. Feiler, I. Ziaya, H. Perkins, J. Haines, G. Carpenter, H. Perkins, K. Ruetzel

Members Absent: none

Staff: I. Perkins, J. Wingader

Presiding Member: J. Sales, Board Chair

Call to Order / Declaration of Quorum

Chair Sales declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

Approval of MHB Minutes of February 14, 2019

Ms. Johnson moved approval of the February 14, 2018 minutes, seconded by Ms. Feiler; a voice vote was taken and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comment

Kathy Honeywell of North Shore Senior Center announced upcoming events open to the community and provided fliers.

Panel Discussion: Community Needs

Chair Sales introduced panel participants: Pastor Michael Nabors of Second Baptist Church of Evanston, Ellen Cushing of the Housing & Homelessness Commission, Susan Cherco of Age-Friendly Evanston, and Indira Perkins, Human Services Manager for City of Evanston. Panel participants discussed the most pressing mental health issues. Ms. Cherco discussed challenges with the built environment and services available to seniors. She noted national trends of high depression in seniors and challenges to receiving treatment. Ms. Perkins noted long wait lists for mental health services, the challenge of accessing services without insurance, and a need to provide support to families of those with mental illness. Pastor Nabors discussed his previous experience working in Detroit and recognized that mental health issues are commonly connected to a host of other issues stemming from lack of care; he additionally cited challenges of the state budget. Ms. Cushing discussed her previous experiences and identified multiple challenges caused by lack of affordable housing and housing insecurity.

Chair Sales asked about under-served populations; Pastor Nabors identified people who may not have legal residency and those who had contact with the judicial system. He also noted the work of Dr. Henry Perkins, Staff Psychologist & Coordinator of the Stress Management Clinic of Northwestern University, who spoke about impacts of stress on marginalized groups. Ms. Cherco identified seniors as an underserved population and Ms. Cushing identified refugees and discussed the need for poverty prevention programs. There was additional discussion about ways to improve access to mental health services for underserved populations and the need for community education and advocacy to reduce stigma associated with mental health issues. National Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health America were identified as agencies providing education and advocacy in the community; ways to involve faith-based communities to advocate and educate was also discussed.

There was discussion about how mental health needs are assessed in the EPLAN. Members discussed whether to fund programs that provide advocacy and/or education in addition to direct services. Panel further discussed challenges populations may face to receiving services including agencies' ability to address specific needs of marginalized communities, the challenges of lengthy intake procedures, lack of people of color in senior positions within the agencies, and difficulty of assessing the collective impact of available services and programs.

There was additional discussion about the challenges to healthcare systems in Illinois and how boutique services compared in service delivery to community centers that offer multiple services at a single location. Panel and members discussed the benefits to having all services available at one location or within one organization. Participants shared thoughts about the way different boards, committees and commissions operate to support the community. Chair Sales stated the goal of panel discussions and how MHB priorities are created. There was further discussion about the role of MHB priorities, how often they can be reviewed, and how agencies can track success against them. Chair Sales thanked the panel.

Developing a Scoring Formula for Award Recommendations

Ms. Ruetzel and Ms. Ziaya provided strategies they used to determine past year funding recommendations and identified challenges to reviewing program applications. Discussion included strategies for scoring, weighting score questions, and tying recommendations to scores. It was agreed that any application would not be funded if it received three or more negative votes; if fewer than nine seated members, only two "no" votes would result in no funding. Recusals would not count as a vote. Members discussed how the guidelines might affect new applicants, whether funding amounts should be capped and, if so, whether the cap would be based on a dollar amount or percent of award. Members also discussed whether requests under \$10,000 should be considered, and how City funding should relate to total budget. It was agreed that applications that score above the median could be recommended for 100% of request while applications that score under the median could be eligible for a recommendation of 80-85% of request depending on allocation amount available.

Liaison Reports

Ms. Feiler reported on Center for Independent Futures and Books & Breakfast.

Chair Report

Chair Sales requested volunteers to form a working group to identify new officers. Ms. Johnson and Ms. Ruetzel volunteered. Chair Sales also recognized the resignation of Mr. Pierce, current Vice President. The Board voted unanimously to appoint Ms. Feiler Vice Chair.

Adjournment

Ms. Haimes moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Johnson. The meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Wingader
Grants and Compliance Specialist