**LCMH Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

Date: 4/19/23

Start time: 5:09 pm

Adjourned: 6:55 pm

Board Members: Luke Jandreau, Cindy Morin, Susan Kimmerly, Mary Anne Lewis, Mike Feulner, Saudia Lamont,

Absent: Chip Troiano, Zach Williams, Fred Ober, Stacey Madden,

Staff: Michael Hartman, Jim Heath, Jennifer Stratton, Robyn Daley, Bryanne Castle

Guests: Katina Idol, Christina Glowac

Notes: Emily Roemer

Meeting called to order at 5:09 pm by Luke Jandreau Jandreau

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| Topic | Discussion | Action | Person Responsible |
| **Introductions** |  |  |  |
| Children’s | School Based Services Presentation – Christina Glowac and Katina Idol. Presentation slides are attached. Christina has been at LCMHS 16 years, Katina Idol has been here 6 years. School based serves students from pre-school through 12th grade. Most services are 1 to 1, sometimes children meet with providers 2 to 1 when they have lesser needs. During the summertime, programing is available to students in school-based programs or at LCMHS via Redwood if the school doesn’t have summer programming. Redwood is physically based in the children’s wing of LCMHS.  Redwood BI’s (behavioral interventionists) are year-round employees, School Based Clinicians follow the school schedule and are off during the summer.  AWARE’s goal was to integrate mental health awareness in schools. The plan was interrupted by COVID but overall went well. They are coming up on the end of their 5-year grant. AWARE was in Orleans’s South Supervisory.  Redwood’s mini contracts are meant to serve children who don’t meet the need of a BI but are struggling.  Satisfaction surveys are sent out to each school every year. The feedback on the COVID question was that it was confusing this year because school was in person all year, which led to the lower score than the other questions. Open ended questions were also asked, and all results were reviewed with the schools. The school-based children served does not include children served by mini contracts or children on the waitlist. Had there been more staff, there would have been more children served and less on the waitlist.  School based LCMHS staff also provides support to children for short term needs, separate from children who need long term services. Some of the schools using mini contracts had not had in school services in many years. LCMHS staff has worked with schools to simplify and clarify the referral process to ensure the children have the best access to the level of services they need.  LCMHS staff works with the child protective team to brainstorm problem solving for children and families needing services. Most children receiving services are on Medicaid and have 504/IEP plans.  Due to open positions for BI’s, staff is collaborating with schools to provide referrals and resources for children LCMHS is unable to serve.  The staffing struggles are similar across the state of Vermont. Until staffing improves, it will not be possible to provide mini contracts. Few resumes are being received for these positions and much of that is related to salary offered. Benefits are not the reason for declining job offers. Schools are offering a much higher salary than non-school based agencies. Schools are also struggling to hire paraprofessionals to serve the needs as outlined in IEP’s. Education requirements have been lessened to include people without bachelor’s degrees to serve some positions, but there are still less staff than needed. With training, the staff without degree’s are as successful as those with degrees.  Lamoille Valley is also served by the Backpack Program through Washington county. Private services are available but are not as well connected to additional resources outside of BI. Different agencies have different rates in contracts with the schools. Private services cost much more. LCMHS has been working hard to increase contract amounts for LCMHS services. Mosaic has been providing similar services to children and has recently closed.  School based staff are not shared with EPIC. No current children in Redwood are in full DCF Custody. Many children with school-based clinicians are in DCF care. Any child in Lamoille Valley can use the EPIC program.  8–14-year-olds have had the most increase in anxiety/depression. Younger children have had an increase in dis-regulation. Staff has recommended schools use UMatter and Mental Health First Aid training. LCMHS staff have been unable to provide training to schools as requested due to staff responsibilities as supervisors, etc.  Luke Jandreau thanked staff for providing the services that they do and continuing to work at and advocate for LCMHS. |  |  |
| Approval of Minutes | Edits – Clarify that Cindy Morin approved as chair of nominating committee. | Mary Anne Lewis – motion to approve after edits.  Cindy Morin - Seconded  Unanimously approved. |  |
| CEO Report | Staff from programs that have had significant staff shortages are providing a record high number of services to a record high number of consumers. Salary increases are being considered as staff are earning more money for the agency. This will be easier to address once the deficit is addressed. In the meantime, staff are being surveyed on how to change their schedules to improve their work/life balance until salaries can be increased. This will be considered if the quantity/quality of services are maintained. Employment studies support this; however, many studies were not conducted in 24/7 health care agencies.  LCMHS is reviewing which services are bringing in the most money to streamline offerings. Health care costs for LCMHS have exceeded what was budgeted.  Judy Rex is working hard on grants, and we have received funding for one year for a staff to evaluate/improve zero suicide. Filling the mental health provider position with law enforcement has been a struggle due to the salary being offered.  Remaining COVID dollars are being used on building repairs. Repairing the roof is a high priority.  We are continuing to work with the food shelf and community programs to use the wellness center for vocational and personal use.  The residential programs have not been at full capacity through covid and have been filling any open beds. Copley doesn’t have the same building improvement funding as Johnson due to Johnson being supported by HUD. Johnsons needs a commercial washer/dryer set, which are very costly. They are costing as much to repair as it is to replace them. Copley improvements are funded mostly by grants.  There are currently 233 employees, the most in 2 years. In March we gained more employees than we lost. Emergency/crisis service demand has increased in the community and in schools. Adult/Developmental services have had 2 unique consumer needs that have occupied staff in terms of treatment planning and discussions with the state. |  |  |
| **Finance Updates** | Received a large payment from children’s services that were re-billed. LCMHS has put a 2 week hold on billing submissions to allow time to correct/update any information that would cause a payment from Medicaid to be rejected. If Medicaid rejects a service, it is difficult to correct. It is more efficient to hold the billing request until the service is documented correctly. Sending correct billing information has cut the deficit in almost half.  Billing for a high need client has also been received for the previous 2 months which improved the deficit. There has been an increase in SLP payments due to cost-of-living increase for that programming.  Draft of FY 2024 budget has been submitted to Michael Hartman for review. There have been many changes compared to last year due to changes in funding from the state. There is an effort across the DAs to improve equity in payment received for services.  There may be additional funding through new emergency services in community settings. These services/staff cannot provide services in a hospital setting.  There is also a piece of this funding to improve peer groups and services. Tara Miller has been a great addition to the agency and has been assisting Judy Rex in writing grants.  Michael Hartman praised staff for having unique skills that are really being well utilized to improve services for LCMHS.  Alan House is reviewing financial policies and procedures. He is also reviewing software usage to ensure we are utilizing resources as efficiently as possible.  Jim Heath, Jennifer Stratton, and Michael Hartman have been authorized to sign checks. Jim Heath asked board to approve Amy Fitzgerald, HR director, to serve as an approved signer for checks requiring two signatures. Michael Hartman noted Amy Fitzgerald’s work history and that she is fiscally responsible.  Deficit last month was $1.2 million, current deficit is $600,000. Mike Feulner requested to start the report with that information for next month. Luke Jandreau would like to see last month vs current month. He would also like to see a chart of the deficit month to month for the past fiscal year. Draft of FFY 2024 should be ready for board review by the next board meeting. | Mary Anne Lewis -motion to approve Amy Fitzgerald as a check signer.  Susan Kimmerly – seconded.  Motion approved unanimously |  |
| **Committee Reports** | Robyn Daley with children’s – system of care plan was reviewed at the previous meeting, and they have been successful in completed the goals as outlined. They have also been working on plans for mental health month in May.  Adult behavior health had to change the meeting schedule and did not have one this month.  DS – Mary Anne Lewis was unable to attend and there were no notes provided.  Mike Feulner and Michael Hartman presented to Copley board of trustees. Michael Hartman received praise from the trustees.  Nominating committee has been struggling to recruit new members and requested Michael Hartman’s help.  Susan Kimmerly reviewed Robert’s Rules of order and noted that the governance and nominating committee are combined, but that may not fit with our current bylaws. Robert’s Rules recommended that the governance committee does the CEO review, which our bylaws state that the board president does that so it would need to be reviewed. |  |  |
| **New/Old Business** | Bryanne Castle – residential programs are currently fully staffed, and all beds are occupied by consumers.  Robyn Daley – EPIC and Redwood have been providing excellent service.  Michael Hartman – One Care VT has provided feedback that the adolescents are currently overwhelming available services at physician offices. There are about 48 children on LCMHS’s waitlist. There has been an increase in prescriptions of anti-anxiety/anti-depressants that could be creating additional concerns with side effects. EPIC has been very successfully in avoiding children needed to be admitted to the ED. EPIC consumers still need additional services after the emergency that staffing struggles make it difficult to meet.  Saudia Lamont – has been advocating for people in the legislature to work outside of their “silos” to allow more efficiency. Allowances have been made for therapists to work across state lines in an effort to alleviate some need. Education, housing and labor are all focused on equality. On S36, she has concerns for allowing easier access for officers to arrest people in hospital for threats to medical providers. On the balance, many other things have been de-criminalized. It doesn’t seem to be aligned in overarching priorities. There have been some gains and some lack of progress on improving zero suicide and access to mental health service. There has been some misalignment in how legislation is labeling bills as relating to mental health but are really not addressing that area directly. Michael Hartman added that agencies have been working to testify their concerns about S36 and H171 and the effects of these bills on ability to provide and maintain services. Saudia Lamont offered assistance as needed and will meet anyone who can visit her. She has been spending a lot of time meeting with and advocating for children/young people in the community.  Kudos to Caroline Mallon for her efforts in increasing social media presence. | Emily Roemer to review agreements and ensure that all are signed and the correct version |  |
| **Agenda for Next Meeting** |  |  |  |
| **Closing** | See side note | Susan Kimmerly – motion to adjourn meeting.  Cindy Morin – seconded.  Unanimously approved. |  |

By unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm