**LCMH Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

Date: 6/21/23

Start time: 5:04 pm

Adjourned: 7:17 pm

Board Members: Luke Jandreau, Mike Feulner, Stacey Madden, Cindy Morin, Susan Kimmerly, Fred Ober, Saudia Lamont,

Absent: Chip Troiano, Zach Williams, Mary Anne Lewis

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

Guests: Auburn Watersong

Notes: Emily Roemer

Meeting called to order at 5:04 pm by Luke Jandreau

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| Topic | Discussion | Action | Person Responsible |
|  | Potential new board member - Geoffrey Lindemer |  |  |
| DEIB Consultant Year End Report – Auburn Watersong | Auburn Watersong reviewed report included in the board packet. Auburn noted that Washington’s county racial trauma training will benefit clinical staff in particular. The connection between DEIB members and board members is great. Adding quick demonstration of DEIB commitment to website near Michael’s letter. This will make it obvious to the community, potential clients and potential employees that LCMHS supports DEIB initiatives/environment. Human kind agreements are meant to be a communication framework. Kudos to LCMHS and board for their work and support of DEIB initiatives.  Michael – During the 2nd interview with the Director of Quality candidate, he used the language of inclusion, peer support and ability to discuss these topics with people. He commented that he noticed the information on LCMHS’ website and felt good about the agency. There has been other feedback that Michael’s letter, though aged, has been noticed positively. The inclusion of DEIB at a time when depression, anxiety and isolation is affecting so many. Thanks to Auburn for her work in this area. She has fit in well with the other efforts LCMHS has done to improve DEIB practices.  Luke Jandreau asked about adoption of other policies – The DEIB committee has to finalize some policy info, will present the changes to SLT, then to the board. |  |  |
| Approval of Minutes | Michael noted that MCT is working 80 extra hours. May notes updated to reflect that. | Motion to approve – Susan Kimmerly  Second – Fred Ober  Unanimous approval |  |
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| CEO Report | Maintaining higher number services than previous history. This is contributing to stress and challenges with consumers and staff. Most staff is handling more services per day that usual. We have dropped from 270 staff to around 230. Staff is seeing the same or more clients. Crisis services have been handling more cases, MCT, ACCESS, **and EPIC** than previous. Hiring is basically stagnant, as many people are leaving as we are hiring. A national report discovered that for someone to take a new job is a 30% salary increase if they are engaged in their current job. If they are minimally engaged, it takes a 20% increase. The remainder doesn’t need much of an increase to leave their current job. Recently an LCMHS employee received an offer of 66% raise and was conflicted because she likes working at LCMHS, but the raise was too much to pass up. For some potentially employees, LCMHS cannot compete with other agencies. Efforts are being made to improve benefits beyond pay increases. Amy Fitzgerald and HR has completed a survey (with a 54% response rate) on what changes could be made to improve their satisfaction at work. Many of the responses mentioned varying forms of stress, the nature of the job, staffing shortage, perception that some staff are not pulling their weight because everyone is exhausted. Other agencies are reporting similar issues with staffing and moral. There is a need in the community for services, which is leading to a waitlist, especially with therapy, but not enough staff to serve them. In some cases, consumers are entering services through psychiatry as they are waiting for therapists. While school services are currently staffed, there are additional contracts with schools that we could get, but there is not enough staff. We have recently doubled the number of school staff and still have not met the community need. Children’s is struggling more because Adult services can manage consumer needs with case management. Many therapists have left to Lamoille Health Partners.  The legislature has approved the state budget. The 5% increase was included in the approved budget. There are still challenges with DAIL and DMH in how to divide those dollars. 2% is going to the agencies who are currently reimbursed at a lower rate with 3% to the remaining agencies. A final determination from DAIL and DMH should arrive in the next few weeks.  The school contracts have included a payment increase, with the goal of obtaining more staff.  The union requires an annual increase of 1%, which is due in July. It is being discussed if that required 1% should be allotted with the first July pay period and adjust as more information is received from DAIL/DMH.  The DOJ has contacted us about budget numbers for a grant we applied for, which usually indicates that they are interested in our proposal. It is a large grant that includes a position within the Morrisville Police. Judy and Michael Hartman sent in a letter of interest regarding services for community members who have been part of the motel program. We would use the former ASAP space (as that contract has ended) to provide respite, beds, showers, meals, for any unhoused people who need a break for people living outside. They had a positive meeting with **Sarah Phillips from Dept. of Children and Families Office of Economic Opportunity**.???. Extra support for managing the ending of the motel program has been included in the approved state budget.  Staffing in the group homes are going well, though there are concerns for the ITS house staffing as a staff is out with an injury. ITS management is a difficult situation as LCMHS is a part of a lawsuit that includes WCMHS and DMH. A single lawyer is serving all 3 agencies.  Currently hiring is going well for the group home. There is a good candidate for Director of Quality. Finding a CFO has been difficult as the system and knowledge needed has been difficult. There is a candidate being interviewed next week who has experience with EMRs and SAGE. Should that position not be filled in a few weeks, we are looking into a headhunter. The salary range for the position has also been raised, which would increase the cost of a head hunter. Susan Kimmerly asked if that position could be done remotely. Michael – the current policy is 60% in person. He is flexible should a candidate want to discuss being fully remote. The Gallup study noted that the challenges employees are reporting are similar regardless if they are remote, hybrid or in person. Luke Jandreau asked about a shared CFO with another DA. Michael Hartman as asked other agencies for assistance after a CFO would be hired for training purposes. Alan House also recommended a shared CFO. All possibilities are being considered.  A policy change regarding disbursement was recommended by Alan House. He recommended that double signatures are required for checks over $5000. Currently ours is $200. Susan Kimmerly noted that $200 seemed low. Other staff discussions with Michael suggested $2500. The bank does not have a policy that we must follow. $2500 would cover many of the checks that we write. Susan Kimmerly would like to know what the number of checks would be at $2500 versus of $3000. Current process is that staff makes the request, Michael and Jim Heath review, Cindy Morin double checks that the amount is appropriate depending on the circumstances. Cindy Lacoss Morin creates the check, which is then signed by 1 or 2 of the 4 approved signers. Luke Jandreau noted that statistically there is a lot of embezzlement in Vermont and its good to be cautious. Luke Jandreau suggested approving $2500 tonight and then receiving additional information on how the frequency of checks being over/under $2500. Should the information support a higher limit, it can be voted on later. Stacey Madden asked for additional information about the process. Michael clarified that Cindy Lacoss Morin verifies the checks are signed correctly before sending them. Susan Kimmerly would like to know how many are written total. Michael noted that many checks are now dispersed electronically and do require 2 signatures. Mileage is also approved electronically. Luke Jandreau clarified that paper and electronic checks require the same approval process. | Motion to approve the change of the disbursement policy to $2500 - Susan Kimmerly  Second – Cindy Morin  Unanimous approval |  |
| **Finance Updates** | Revenue was slightly down, but still strong. Billing department is still having problems with first party payments. Those $0 on the spreadsheets have been cleared up and new invoices have been sent out. Payments on premiums have increased fringe expenditures. Telehealth is still providing significant savings. General administrative expenses are down. This is due to Marshfield reimbursements becoming more consistent. More is being spent on advertising open positions for recruitment/hiring. The Wellness Center is fully supplied now and their expenses have stabilized. Travel/transportation is up. More staff is working in the community and the reimbursement is the federal rate per the union contract. As the federal rate changes, Company Mileage (software) is programmed to update.  The payroll coordinator declined the position due to salary. It has been reposted.  Kristi Lane property was sold for $90,000, which netted us $82,000. That was deposited to the money market account. It can be used in place of the line of credit if needed.  The finance committee reviewed the revised budget. The committee felt the new budget was more accurate and met break even status. This budget is being presented to the board tonight so it can be submitted to the state. Luke Jandreau requested that Michael Hartman and Jim Heath enumerate the assumptions made to arrive at this budget. Michael Hartman – the BI program is a big area of change. The contracts reflect hiring a certain number of people by the time school starts in September. The related positions have had pay increases. ASAP was losing around $120,000 per year. Closing that program will remove that deficit. Adult Developmental Services has changed to a per service/per month model. The COVID allowances for services have expired so the bar for what is considered a service for DS clients is now higher. We do need therapists for DS, but hiring case managers has gone well. Robyn Daley – ACCESS is fully staffed, which it hasn’t been for 3 years. We are not going to be a child placing agency anymore, DCF will assume that roll. We need 14 BIs, 3 School based clinicians. No one who has been interviewed has accepted the position. An intake clinician has been hired, and we need 2 more intake positions. Luke Jandreau – does the current budget really reflect what we can hire for? What happens if we can’t hire the assumed positions, especially with the BIs. Michael Hartman - we are prepared to make $350,000 worth of cuts in October to make up differences if necessary. There is no room for vacancy savings anymore. We are moving the vacancy number we are looking to hire from 50 to 20. Mike Feulner – the finance committee was looking to reduce a $400,000 deficit to a break even budget. Luke Jandreau – presented concerns with the budget not painting the real picture concerning the ability to hire and keep the employees needed to maintain the budget as presented. Should we lose more employees, the ability to generate income is reduced. Mike Feulner – is there a plan to reduce the $700,000 deficit to $0. Luke Jandreau – the budget is the plan. Contingency plans and exploring each line item are actively being discussed in finance committee. Mike H – the challenges with billing and case rate have been discussed with the state and noted that the payments have not been stable and therefore it is difficult to make predictions. The payment for the consumer in Marshfield have also been consistent. Fee for service was more stable, but the current value based system does not allow for easy predictions and prompt payment. Mental health payments allow for outlier situations where DS does not. Susan Kimmerly – who can we advocate to? Michael Hartman – We have made comments and the Secretary’s office sees us as bothersome. Susan Kimmerly – what would happen should LCMHS disappear? Michael – we could switch to private pay, but it could end similarly to Mosaic closing. GMTCC’s issues also show the possibilities when agencies close. DAIL has seen major turnover. Jennifer Stratton– several meetings have been held to modify the payment for the Marshfield consumer and were unsuccessful. Fred Ober – Our plan is to submit a balanced budget for next year and to address any concerns as the year goes on. Luke Jandreau – the memo included with the budget will note that this is an optimistic budget. For Mike Feulner – Michael Hartman clarified that most agencies are in a similar situation, especially with fee for service models. There seems to be less understanding and collaboration with DAs and state agencies (AHS) than were seen in previous decades. The state requested that DAs just provide services for people in the hotel program with no plan for payment. The DAs noted that they cannot absorb 3000 consumers. The state auditor has been involved. The secretary’s office is expecting DAs to provide services as instructed. We are performing as best we can with what we are given. In terms of the people in the homeless program, many of the 3000 do not meet our standards for treatment for Medicaid reimbursement. They don’t have the mental health/substance abuse needs that we provide services for. Many agencies are paring down services that there isn’t consistent funding for. Demand for services is high than ever and nothing is being done to support that need financially. Luke Jandreau – we are all dedicated to the cause. | Motion to approve budget – Fred Ober  Second – Mike Feulner  Unanimously approved. |  |
| **Committee Reports** | Notes from committee meetings are included in the board packet. |  |  |
| **New/Old Business** | Potential New Board Member – Cindy Morin met with Geoffrey Lindemer. He has a strong financial background. He lives in Stowe but has family in Lamoille and is familiar with LCMHS. Felt he has a genuine interest in LCMHS. He is on another board, but the scheduling of meetings does not create a conflict. Luke Jandreau met with Geoffrey Lindemer via zoom and echoes Cindy Morin’s feelings. Zach Williams’s term is coming to an end and Geoffrey Lindemer is willing to accept Zach Williams’s Treasurer role on the board. He seems to be a good fit. Michael Hartman endorses Geoffrey Lindemer as well. Served with him on the chamber of commerce briefly. Geoffrey Lindemer interviewed for CFO and thought he wasn’t a good fit but asked to join the board. Cindy Morin noted that Mary Anne Lewis also met with Geoffrey Lindemer and endorses him as well. Luke Jandreau – succession planning is needed on the board as well, for Zach Williams and Fred Ober (vice president).  Michael Hartman – He has decided it is time for him to move on from his position of CEO. He appreciates his time at LCMHS and his work with the board. He has “overshot” his time as interim CEO that was planned to be 6 months, it has been 3 + years. Luke Jandreau will be notified of his resignation with a plan of leaving by January 31, 2024. He has a fluid plan and will be available throughout the transition. The board has done a great job historically of choosing interim CEOs that transition to CEO. If possible, he would like to stay on with the agency and do direct service. Luke Jandreau – Michael Hartman’s made the boards work easy, despite internal and external challenges. Michael’s dedication to the Agency is appreciated.  Revamp the internet for the board – additional access to documents, policies, procedures. Need meeting with Emily, Luke Jandreau, Asa. Remove old members from zoom calendar and add Geoffrey Lindemer.  Staff Development – The day starts at wherever. Maria Avila and whoever will be speaking with an intro from Luke Jandreau. The Hardwick taco truck will be serving lunch. Activities in the afternoon including trivia from HR.  Jennifer Stratton – We all have a heavy heart hearing of Michael’s departure. We needed his leadership and the balance he brought to the agency, especially through COVID. He has brought a focus on to staff and consumer needs as well as the financial aspects of business. He has done a great job preparing senior leadership team.  Robyn Daley– Michael Hartman has been a support through all of the stuff and we are all better leaders because of him. | Motion to nominate Geoffrey Lindemer – Stacey Madden  Second – Fred Ober  Unanimously approved. | Geoffrey Lindemer will be notified of his position on the board. |
| **Agenda for Next Meeting** |  |  |  |
| **Closing** |  | Motion to adjourn meeting – Cindy Morin  Second – Susan Kimmerly  Unanimously approved. |  |

By unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at 7:17pm