

*On March 9, 2016, the Board of Directors of the Central Louisiana Human Services District held its annual retreat. These notes reflect the highlights of the retreat, as well as guidance offered by the facilitator.*

**AGENDA:**

- Review of Policy Governance, board responsibilities and our current “Ends” and Strategic Priorities
- Challenges and Opportunities
- Defining our Future
- Next steps

*At the beginning of the retreat, the mission, Global Ends Statement and current strategic priorities were reviewed, as well as a quick review of Policy Governance, the model of governance adopted by this Board. For the reader’s convenience, the mission, Global Ends and strategic priorities are provided here.*

**MISSION:** Our mission is to increase public awareness and provide access for individuals with behavioral health and developmental disabilities to integrated community based services while promoting wellness, recovery and independence through education and the choice of a broad range of programmatic and community resources.

**GLOBAL ENDS STATEMENT:** Building on the concept that the District will become the provider of last resort, and will work toward building provider capacity to meet all local needs:

- 1) Citizens in need of mental health, addictive disorders and developmental disabilities services residing in the parishes of Avoyelles, Catahoula, Concordia, Grant, LaSalle, Rapides, Vernon and Winn will be informed of services which are available through CLHSD or other appropriate providers, based on their eligibility for specific services.
- 2) CLHSD will monitor services provided in its parishes to ensure they are provided in a responsive and integrated manner supportive of assisting clients to reach their optimum functioning.
- 3) Services delivered by and through the District will observe the fiscal confines set forth, initially by DHH and ultimately by the CLHSD Board.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

Individuals and families in CLHSD affected by mental illness, addictive disorders or developmental disabilities shall live full, independent and productive lives to the greatest extent possible within available resources.

To accomplish this, CLHSD shall allocate its resources as follows:

**FIRST PRIORITY:** Persons and families in crisis related to mental illness, addictive disorders or developmental disabilities shall have their crisis resolved and a safe environment restored.

**SECOND PRIORITY:** Persons not yet identified with specific serious or moderate mental illness, addictive disorders or developmental disabilities who are at significant risk of such disorders due to the presence of proven risk factors or the absence of proven protective factors.

THIRD PRIORITY: People with serious or disabling mental illness, addictive disorders or developmental disabilities shall be made aware and have access to the use of natural supports and community resources and shall participate in the community.

FOURTH PRIORITY: Persons with mild to moderate needs related to mental illness, addictive disorders or developmental disabilities shall be made aware and have access to the use of natural supports and community resources and shall participate in the community.

*Board members talked briefly about their personal connections to the mission, and were reminded of the focus on Policy Governance. Next, board members discussed current challenges facing the organization, as well as opportunities. Notes from this discussion are shown below.*

#### **ISSUES/CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO DISCUSS:**

- 1) How do we measure success?
- 2) Board changes
- 3) Executive Director retirement and search for replacement
- 4) Fiscal issues

#### **HOW DO WE MEASURE SUCCESS?**

*Board members agreed that they should be aware of the following information if they are to be effective advocates for the District and the people that the District serves. Senior staff indicated that this information is available and will provide this information to the Board and update the Board periodically. Members of the board need to provide meaningful feedback to the Executive Director about their information needs and whether reports that are provided meet their information needs.*

- 1) What services are available in each parish?
  - a. Services provided directly by CLHSD personnel
  - b. Services provided by other providers – some of whom have contracts with CLHSD to provide some or all of their services.
  - c. Services provided to indigent clients within the District's boundaries
  - d. Services provided to Medicaid-eligible clients
  - e. Services provided to clients who carry health insurance
  - f. Services provided to Medicare-eligible clients
- 2) What percentage of the populations we serve are served directly and indirectly by the District?
- 3) What percentage are served by other providers?
- 4) What percentage of each of the populations we serve can be expected NOT to seek assistance or take advantage of the services provided?

NOTE: A comprehensive survey of service providers within the District's geographic boundaries was conducted in 2012. Nancy will provide the results of this survey to current board members, and each parish representative will canvas their parish to determine which of these providers are still in business, which are no longer providing services, and if there are new providers within that parish.

**BOARD CHANGES:** *There will be significant turnover within the Board this year because of terms limits established in the enabling legislation that created the District. While this creates some risk, board members felt that they had this appropriately addressed at this time.*

- Each board member continues to seek someone who can ultimately replace them when their terms expire.
- Setting a standard start/end date for board terms will make record-keeping much easier, and make it easier for board members to know exactly when their board service begins and ends. This was originally intended with the enabling legislation that created the CLHSD. However, in practice, individual board members have terms that begin on various dates, because the letters that appoint them to the board (from each Police Jury and the Governor's Office)
- Recommendation: When new board members are selected by each parish's Police Jury, the Police Jury should be asked to state in their appointment letter, a standard start date (such as the first day of the fiscal year, July 1) and end dates – and to specifically state is someone is being appointed for a full term or to fulfill the unexpired term of a retiring board member.
- There is a significant "turn-over" in the board this year, as defined by the enabling legislation. However, this turnover is healthy and should be seen as such. However, with nearly ½ of the board changing this year as a result of the terms defined in the enabling legislation, there is a potential for loss of institutional knowledge within the board. This need not occur, but board members who continue to serve that were inaugural board members should recognize the role they can play in ensuring that institutional knowledge is not lost during this time of significant turnover.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH:** *Egan Jones, the current Executive Director, has announced his intention to retire later this year. The Board has established an Executive Director Search Committee and will be following the procedures defined when the District was first established. The Committee will revise these procedures, as appropriate, as they proceed.*

- The current timeline for hiring a new Executive Director should allow us to have someone in place in advance of Egan's scheduled retirement date. If, for some reason, our timeline changes, there is already a succession plan in place, which allows for continued operation of the District until a suitable replacement can be named.
- The ED Search Committee presented several documents: 1) the announcement of the job opening, 2) the current job description and minimum qualifications, and 3) the timeline for hiring. These were presented, during the board meeting, for full board approval, creating the ability to post the job opening by March 11, beginning the formal search process.
- A national-wide search will be conducted, seeking the best possible candidate. However, there are no existing funds to support transportation or a move for any prospective candidates for the Executive Director position. Some investigation should take place to identify potential funds, should these become issues barriers to hiring the best candidate.

**FISCAL ISSUES:** *The current Louisiana fiscal crisis will certainly impact the District's budget for the coming year. Continued fiscal pressures have resulted in program closures, despite creative efforts to actually increase access to services across the District. The need for self-generated funds (through grants, etc.) remains. Continued challenges with collecting fees through the various managed care organizations and the disincentive created by the current practice of reducing State General Funds in an amount equal to anything over the budgeted amount of self-generated funds both serve as continued barriers to increasing funding to deliver needed services. A discussion about current funding and anticipated cuts included the following key points:*

- Budget gaps
  - o \$2.4 Million in General Fund cuts are anticipated
  - o \$1.5 Million in self-generated funds are an assumed part of our budget (we anticipate reaching approximately \$1 Million in self-generated funds).
- Medicaid cuts looming
- Central Hospital closure
- Federal block grant and matching state funds
- Current budget:
  - o 2/3 of budget (about \$10 Million) comes from State General Funds
  - o Federal Block grants that flow through DHH (About \$3 Million)
  - o Statutorily defined funding (about \$300,000)
  - o Self-generated funds assigned at \$2 Million (\$1 Million can be actually anticipated)

*Following this discussion, a suggestion was offered that might provide a means for creating a more stable funding environment: creating a "foundation" or "friends" organization that is a 501(c)(3) organization, under IRS rules, or identifying an appropriate partner that could serve as a fiscal agent - either solution which could allow for the receipt of funds to deliver services in the geographic area served by the District that could be used to underwrite either contracted services or directly delivered services. Identifying ways to assure a more stable source of funding that being dependent on State General Funds may be essential to the continued ability to deliver quality services within and through the District.*

**FOUNDATION/FRIENDS CONCEPT:**

- What do we need to know, as board members, to determine whether this is a viable approach to developing funding sources that can provide for the financial future of the District?
  - o Look at our policy regarding non-appropriated funds to assure adequate protections.
  - o What models exist that we could learn from?
    - Friends of the Alexandria Zoo
    - Friends of the Alexandria Museum of Art
    - Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation
    - Human Services examples?
      - Cabrini Foundation
    - Central Louisiana Community Foundation
    - Sondra, Edwina, and Dawn will investigate models for board consideration.

- Jim will talk with David Britt about his thoughts about this approach.
- Roles of a “fiscal agent”, “fiduciary agent”, advisory board or panel

*Following this discussion, board members were ask to think about what they would like to be able to say is true within five years, as it relates to the District and the people it serves. The notes below reflect the results of this discussion.*

#### **IN FIVE YEARS:**

- We need to develop parish-level funding (mileage, tax, dedicated funds) to provide services within each parish.
  - Observation: This may be a tough sell: who pays for the services versus who receives services (need to define what this might look like in more detail).
  - Need to articulate what is today’s true cost (hospital and emergency room costs, justice system costs), with less effective results that meeting the needs – particularly crisis-related needs – of those we serve
    - How are services paid for today?
    - What other costs are involved?
    - Economic impact of ineffective supports
- We need to create corporate / individual sponsors of some District services.
- We need a fully implemented marketing/PR campaign.
  - Increased education and awareness of the needs, how to address those needs and services that are available
    - The Chamber of Commerce could be a key contact in this effort
- We need to create an annual fundraising event to increase awareness.
  - Example: a walk for the cause
- Staff needs to be housed at new facilities – a most necessitated by the pending closure and re-development of the Central Hospital campus.
- Political leadership needs to understand the needs we address and adequately fund necessary services throughout the District.
  - Education about the needs
  - Educate about the current dis-incentive to create self-generated funds (impact on General Funds)
- A higher percentage of people in need should receive services.
- We need to be able to restore services that have been cut as a result of state budget cuts.

*Following the above discussion, board members discussed what actions THEY can take, as a board and as individual board members to impact awareness of the District and what it does within their communities and throughout the District. It was agreed that the staff, through Egan Jones, would provide “talking points” and appropriate support material to aid the board members in delivering a consistent message, and that board members have a specific role to play in increasing awareness and visibility of the District and the work it does meeting the needs of vulnerable populations. Notes from this final discussion are on the following page.*

**WHAT CAN THE BOARD AND INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS DO?**

- Initiate discussions to increase awareness
  - o Within the community
  - o With lawmakers and local authorities
- May need talking points provided by staff
  - o What is the real cost today to provide ineffective solutions?
  - o Cost justification for Crisis Intervention Teams

*Several topics were addressed during the course of the day that are significant, but not specific to this retreat. These are noted below. The continuing issue of transportation as a barrier to the delivery of service needs a creative solution, particularly in the more rural areas of the District. Each parish may need to find a resolution that works in that territory, as Grant Parish has. The Crisis Receiving Center concept received positive initial feedback from Avoyelles Parish, and the need still exists throughout the District. However, a solution will require a long-term partnership within each parish that includes the medical community and the justice system. The solution is expensive, but may be affordable when the total cost of the current system is considered.*

**QUESTIONS/ISSUES:**

- We need a Crisis Receiving Center within the District
  - o Initial efforts within Avoyelles Parish
  - o No real progress
  - o Very expensive – will need active partnership beyond grants
    - Hospitals and Justice System need to articulate the current cost of Emergency Room and Police/Court/Prison as “solution”
- Transportation is a significant barrier for some to receive services (rural nature of the District)
  - o Grant Parish has a model that may be replicable in other parishes
  - o Families Helping Families model may be helpful, too
- Do we have District media or public relations resources?
  - o Chauncey Hardy is the District Public Relations contact.

*This concludes the notes from the 2016 board retreat for the Central Louisiana Human Services District.*

*Respectfully submitted by Nancy Burris Perret (facilitator/consultant)*