

**Florida Parishes Human Services Authority  
Governing Board Meeting  
July 25, 2014  
835 Pride Drive, Suite B  
Hammond, LA 70401  
9:30 A.M.**

Mary Pirosko, Chair, called the meeting of the Florida Parishes Human Services Authority (FPHSA) Governing Board to order at 9:30 a.m.

Varetta Spears conducted a roll call. A quorum was established.

**In attendance**

**Board Members:** David Cressy; Linda Deamer-Hart; Cheryl Klein; Mary Pirosko; Ligia Soileau; Thomas Zachary, Jr.

**FPHSA Staff / Guests:** Melanie Watkins, Executive Director; Trent Myers, Administrative Director; Tina B. Linder, HR Director; Dr. Schoener LaPrairie, MHS; Dr. Tra Ladner, MHS; Janise Monetta, DDS; Sue Hutti, ADS; Rachelle Sibley, FPHSA Administration; Rebecca Soley, FPHSA Administration; Amy Frierson, FPHSA Administration; Varetta Spears, FPHSA Administration; Sharon Delvisco, Louisiana Citizens for Action Now (LaCAN)/Northshore Families Helping Families (NFHF); Sue Ellen Stewart, NFHF

Prayer was offered by Ms. Deamer-Hart.

**Excused Absences:**

Ms. Klein made a motion to excuse the absence of: Ms. Rubby Douglas, Ms. Jan Robert, and Mr. Edward Ratcliff; seconded by Ms. Deamer-Hart.

Roll call vote unanimous; motion carried.

**Review/Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Soileau made a motion to accept the minutes of the previous meeting as presented; seconded by Mr. Zachary.

Voting Yes: Mr. Cressy, Ms. Deamer-Hart, Ms. Pirosko, Ms. Soileau, Mr. Zachary; Abstained: Ms. Klein; motion carried.

### **Questions and Comments from the audience:**

Ms. Pirosko welcomed all in attendance and extended an opportunity for public input.

Ms. Monetta welcomed Ms. Rona Burkett, new staff member, who will be serving as the DDS/Medicaid Waiver Supervisor. Ms. Monetta explained that Ms. Burkett brings a great deal of experience from a private support agency and she is pleased to have her join the FPHSA staff.

Dr. LaPrairie welcomed Amy Frierson, new staff member. She explained that Ms. Frierson will provide administrative support to FPHSA's Medical Director, as well as program directors for mental health, addictive disorders and developmental disabilities services. Dr. LaPrairie added that Ms. Frierson joins the agency with a wealth of experience and the staff is very pleased to have her much needed support aboard.

### **Executive Director's Report:**

Melanie Watkins submitted a copy of the Executive Director's Report for July to members of the governing board. She outlined the content which included:

- ❖ Update on the close of fiscal year 2014. Ms. Watkins said as reported last month, the fiscal staff has been diligently working to process final invoices to ensure payments for services received in fiscal year 2014 are submitted timely, as well as processing contracts and agreements for the new fiscal year, which began July 1, 2014.
- ❖ Report on the Strategic Planning Meeting. Ms. Watkins reported that the FPHSA Governing Board along with the Executive Administrative staff convened on July 18, 2014 for a Strategic Planning meeting. She said that they are waiting on the final report from Mr. Cory Sparks, consultant and facilitator, who is affiliated with Louisiana Association of Nonprofit Organizations (LANO). She said that as soon as the report is received it will be forwarded to the board for review.
- ❖ Update on the Same Day/Next Day Access. Ms. Watkins reported that the executive management team continues to actively plan toward the implementation of "Same Day/Next Day Access". She said that the staff have been assessing the needs of the agency in order to make this happen, as well as developing a timeline for implementation, with the goal date of October 1, 2014. Ms. Watkins emphasized that although October 1, 2014 is the goal date there are many variables involved for this service to be implemented. She said that the staff will be monitoring and adjusting the action plan and timeline as deemed necessary to ensure that the access model is set up for success. She said that the goal is to develop a fluid workflow, preparing and training the staff for the changes to come and informing the persons served by the agency of the upcoming changes so they will know what to expect as the agency moves forward with this endeavor. Ms. Watkins explained that as part of the action plan, additional doctor/prescribing time is needed to handle the influx of individuals

that are expected to seek services. She reported that she and Tina B. Linder, HR Director had to go to Civil Service to obtain approval to increase the number of unclassified positions for the agency to allow the hiring of three additional prescribing specialists, Medical Psychologists. Ms. Watkins reported that the agency was granted approval at the Civil Service Commission meeting on July 16, 2014 to proceed with the creation of the three new positions. She said as a result, staff is in the process of selecting and hiring candidates to fill the positions, which will assist the agency greatly in meeting the demand for services.

- ❖ Update on the National Council. Ms. Watkins reported that there are various work group committee meetings happening regarding the further development of the recommendations by the National Council consultants. The planning is a component of the work in progress with regards to improving the behavioral health services in St. Tammany Parish. She said through these various work group committees, she hopes to improve and strengthen the working relationships with all of the community partners toward the goal of an improved service delivery system.
- ❖ Ms. Watkins recognized and expressed appreciation on behalf of the agency to Dr. Tra Ladner, who has been working in the Bogalusa Mental Health Clinic (BMHC) over the course of the past several months on a part time basis providing direct care services and treatment in her role as a Medical Psychologist, as well as serving as the FPHSA Mental Health Services Director. She expressed gratitude to Dr. Ladner for her willingness to provide coverage in the clinic especially given the current doctor shortage at BMHC.
- ❖ Ms. Watkins announced that Ms. Sue Hutti, LCSW, the FPHSA Addictive Disorders (ADS) Director, has made the decision to retire in October. She said that Ms. Hutti will be missed in her role as the ADS Director. Ms. Watkins said that Ms. Hutti has been a dedicated employee and leader among the ADS staff, as well as the agency as a whole. She expressed gratitude for the opportunity to have her serve in her capacity during the early years as the agency began and evolved as FPHSA. Ms. Watkins said in order to ensure a smooth transition and fill that void promptly, with her upcoming departure; an announcement to hire for the vacancy will be announced in the near future.

Mr. Cressy requested that upon her retirement, Ms. Sue Hutti is recognized on behalf of the board for her dedication and work performed during her tenure as a dedicated employee of FPHSA.

- ❖ Update on the Human Services Interagency Council (HSIC) meeting. Ms. Watkins reported that she and Ms. Sibley were at the HSIC meeting on July 24, 2014. She said they spent the day-long meeting reviewing the proposed “contract” with the

Department of Health & Hospitals (DHH), which will be replacing the former Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DHH and the districts/authorities. Ms. Watkins said that because it is so involved and very detailed, it is taking longer than anticipated to review and finalize the agreement. She reported that a temporary letter of agreement has been signed on behalf of the agency, as discussed at last month's meeting, and the letter is now serving as an interim agreement until such time as the final version of the "contract" is completed. Ms. Watkins reported that another working meeting is scheduled in August to continue in these efforts. She reported that the agency's legal counsel will be involved in the review process, as well.

- ❖ Ms. Watkins reported that as mentioned previously, FPHSA staff is continuing to explore other possible electronic health records as viable alternatives to Clinical Advisor. She reported that the staff is scheduled to review 2 additional electronic health records next week as the staff continue to make plans to move forward in that direction rather soon. Ms. Watkins reported that Mr. Myers developed a survey to obtain suggestions regarding the agency's website to make it more user-friendly. The website was displayed for the boards' review. She said that changes to the website are forthcoming. Ms. Watkins also reported that Mr. Myers and his staff have been actively pursuing the changes to the agency's website, as well as migration of all IT services to FPHSA, splitting off from DHH to manage the agency's domain, which will expedite things for the agency. She said that DHH has been promoting these changes for the last 2 years. Ms. Watkins said that the IT staff have only 3 staff available agency wide and this project has required a lot of the staff's time.

Mr. Cressy requested that the minutes reflect that "all" information related to the agency is considered public record, except as otherwise prohibited by Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA).

Mr. Cressy made a motion to approve the Executive Director's Report for July; seconded by Mr. Zachary.

Mr. Cressy requested that a copy of the Executive Director's Report be sent to the board for review prior to the monthly meeting.

Roll call vote unanimous; motion carried.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Financial Report:**

Ms. Pirosko deferred to Ms. Sibley for the Financial Report for July. Ms. Sibley submitted the following reports: FPHSA Budget Allocation Fiscal Year 2014-2015-Summary by Means of

Financing and Comparison of Fiscal Year 2014 and 2015 Budget Amounts. She explained the details of data contained in each report. She explained that the complete expenditure and financial information for fiscal year 2014 will not be available until September.

Ms. Watkins introduced Ms. Sue Ellen Stewart, Executive Director of NFHF and Sharon Delvisco, NFHF. She expressed appreciation for their advocacy for additional funding on behalf of FPHSA's Developmental Disabilities Services.

Ms. Sibley reiterated that the agency currently faces a deficit; however, she is hopeful that the projected deficit amount will decrease by the close of the fiscal year.

Ms. Sibley said that she anticipates a better financial picture for the upcoming year, which began July 1, 2014.

Mr. Cressy made a motion to accept the Financial Report for the month of July; seconded by Ms. Deamer-Hart.

Roll call vote unanimous; motion carried.

Mr. Cressy requested that a copy of the Financial Report(s) be sent to the board for review prior to the monthly meeting.

**Old Business:**

None

**New Business:**

None

**Confirmation of the next meeting**

The next meeting was confirmed to be August 22, 2014.

Ms. Deamer-Hart made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Cressy.

Roll call vote unanimous; meeting adjourned.