

WSAA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes January 18, 2006

Directors present: (8) Tom Bartlett, Royalee Bishop, Boyd Roth, Brenda Desmond, Charles Baker, Paul Meyer, Leslie Nyman, and Jane Tremper East.

Alternates present: (2) Marty Onishuk and Mike Smith

Ex Officio: (2) Alexandra Volkerts and Dan Ladd

Guests: (9) Larry Lowry, Maureen Pollard, Lori Holley, Kathleen Driscoll, Linda Roth, Deb Matteucci, Abby Sabol, Denelle Pappier, Julia Schooler

Total Present: 21

Chairman Tom Bartlett called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM. Proper Notice of this meeting was given by email or telephone to all directors. A quorum of 8 directors and 2 alternates were present.

1. Opening comments: The Chair noted that Alyce Anderson is concerned about missing two meetings as winter weather has made it very difficult for her driving from Libby. After discussion and review of the Bylaws, it was determined that removal for lack of attendance is discretionary, not mandatory. The Board has the option of determining that the reasons a director misses meetings are valid. The consensus of the meeting was that inclement weather was a valid reason to miss meetings.

2. Approval of Prior Minutes from December 12, 2005. After discussion regarding issues that one Director wanted identified, but that had not been discussed at the previous meeting:

It was moved, seconded and passed to accept the Minutes as presented.

3. Treasurers Report: The Treasurer reported that expenses have been low and of those many have been inadvertently sent to Missoula Youth Homes. Paul Meyer and Geoff Birnbaum have worked this out so Paul will be getting the bills for the last 3 months. Current balance as of 1/1/06 is \$11,367.38. Paul also reported that \$150.00 is being mailed to 5 LACs today. These 5 have submitted an EIN and name of their treasurer. The State has signed a new contract with the WSAA and Paul Meyer of Western Montana Mental Health Center serving as Treasurer. Therefore, he anticipates receiving \$5000 for January 2006, another \$5000 for June 30 fiscal year end, and an additional \$5000 for the next fiscal year on July 1, 2006. Tom noted that the \$1,910.24 reflected in the report as travel expenses for October covered 3 months.

It was moved, seconded and passed to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.

In March, the WSAA is hosting the next SAA Summit and will provide lunch for all attendees, expected to be 35-40. Each SAA will pay its own travel and accommodations expenses. The next Board meeting and Congress will be held March 15, 2006, which will incur additional expenses.

The Directors discussed using Telemed or a similar system to reduce travel costs and risks during inclement weather. Libby could go to Kalispell as Telemed is available at the hospital. Tom agreed to check with Julie Walker, St. Patrick coordinator, to determine if St. Pats has Telemed and what it would take to make it available to the WSAA.

4. LAC Treasurers: The director from Hamilton reported that the new Hamilton LAC treasurer is Shirley Butler. Previously identified:

Libby LAC, Treasurer - Alyce Anderson,
Missoula LAC Treasurer - Jane Tremper East,
Butte LAC Treasurer - Michelle Lewis
Kalispell Treasurer - Tom Bartlett

Other organized and operating LACs in the western region may receive support from the WSAA upon obtaining an EIN and submitting it together with the name of the LAC's duly elected treasurer.

5. Medicare Part D: Paul Meyer, from Western Montana Mental Health Center, reported the current status of Medicare Part D implementation. Currently Montana has 42 plans to choose from and each offers different formularies of authorized prescriptions, co-pays, deductibles and prior authorizations. It is important to match the consumer's prescriptions with the offerings from the various plans. Paul wanted to make sure that people transitioning to Medicare Part D because they were eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare (Dual Eligibles) were aware that their prescriptions should not cost more than they paid under Medicaid. Some of the plans have been slow to implement comparable Medicaid co-pays, and are charging too much. Due to the problems people are experiencing, Montana has agreed to pick up the costs in the interim, while the State and the federal government sort out costs and problems. Paul handed out a letter to consumers to take to their pharmacies issued by the DPHHS explaining the correct way to resolve problems. Full benefit Dual Eligibles should not have to pay a premium, nor should they have to make a co-pay of more than they paid previously. They are also exempt from the donut (see below). Deb Matteucci of the Mental Health Association handed out a book on the appeal process. CMS also has a website to assist people analyze the prescription plans. The problems are particularly acute for people without case managers to assist them.

People on the Mental Health Services Plan will have different issues including partial benefits, partial or complete payment of their premiums by the State, enrollment obligations, etc. The State has indicated it will help people using the MHSP enroll in a plan, but is not allowed to recommend a plan for the person. The discussion reviewed the donut, i.e. no prescription coverage after reaching \$2,250 in true out of pocket costs, until reach \$5,100, then Medicare Part D will provide 100% coverage.

6. Bylaws: The Bylaws have been finalized. The Secretary has signed them and had them notarized. They are now final. A copy will be sent to Tom Morrison to proceed with the IRS letter on “Instrumentality of State Government” status.

7. Business/Strategic Planning Committee: Boyd Roth reported that a draft of the first 5 sections has been completed by Jennifer Robohm from the various contributions of the members. The members are awaiting information and data from AMDD and DPHHS regarding existing services and identified needs. Members continue to work on other parts such as the relationship between the LACs, SAAs, and MHOAC, the LAC Handbook and other sections.

8. Website Committee: Jane Tremper East reported on the current status of the WSAA website development. An initial website has been designed and a disk transmitting the design has been sent to Marion Thompson, who has offered to host the website for free on his server in Helena. Jane’s colleague Ellen Simmons has started a new job, so is currently less available to assist her. The website is not up and running yet. The Committee has not reserved the domain names yet. CSAA would like to coordinate with WSAA on a website. Jane expects to discuss collaborating at the next Summit. WSAA will cover Jane’s costs to the Summit and any costs in obtaining the domain names. Charles Baker and Jane will work on registering the domain names. Denelle Pappier will also join the Website development group.

9. Newsletter: The directors discussed whether to take on a newsletter at this time, whether it should be by email, internet or mail, and other matters. Deb Matteucci offered to help do a newsletter regarding Medicare Part D, as she has already developed one for the Mental Health Association.

10. Transportation Committee: Brenda Desmond heads this committee. Erin Garlinghouse, Jennifer Robohm, Barb Mueske, and Kathleen Driscoll will work with her to focus on alternatives to transporting consumers to mental health services, including Montana State Hospital..

11. SAA Summit Meeting: The DPHHS is requesting that the SAAs become involved in the Request for Proposal process. Currently the DPHHS will be allocating \$750,000 to be used to develop pilot projects to improve Community Crisis Response Services. Tom Bartlett suggested that the WSAA support a proposal to develop a new Guildler House in Butte at \$175,000 and retrofit River House in Hamilton for \$75,000 (these are hypothetical amounts). All RFPs require a letter of approval by the SAA, identification of the nature of the service, the targeted population to be served, community support and collaboration and how the program will be sustained after the grant runs out. Dan Ladd suggested looking at the benefits of the WRAP program and reviewed current training for WRAP trainers to train consumers. The Mental Health Association is putting Advance Directives in an accessible online format so they can be accessed around the state, as needed. Discussion ensued regarding who puts in the proposals and whether it should be limited to \$250,000 per SAA. Tom referred to the WSAA’s #1 goal of proposals to the AMDD and providers for 2006 for improving the crisis stabilization programs in the region, specifically in Butte and Hamilton. Dan clarified that the RFPs must be publicized by Feb. 1, 2006, AMDD

will accept proposals through March or April, 2006, and anticipates making the awards by June 1, 2006. Each SAA will have a representative on the RFP committee. The expectation is that any new pilot or program will offer seamless services to people with chemical dependency and mental illness.

Although the proposals will probably come from current providers, the SAAs can invite providers to make a proposal for specific services that the WSAA determines are needed, such as retrofitting Riverfront or expanding Guilder House. Directors noted that currently St. Pat's Hospital in Missoula is investing in a detox unit. Also a new Stephens House is opening in 2 weeks and Kalispell has a pretty good crisis response system in place already. Therefore, efforts should be focused on areas that have high over utilization of MSH, i.e. Butte-Silver Bow and Missoula, or have inadequate crisis response services. Other ideas included sending trainers to rural areas to train medical centers to respond to mental health crises so people don't have to go to MSH, including Hamilton and crisis stabilization centers which have trained assistants to help people get through the Medicaid application process.

Several directors want to see a time line which gives the SAA appropriate time to review the proposals, prioritize them and make recommendations, preferably 60 days. Most agreed that March 1, 2006 would be a good cut off date.

It was moved, seconded and passed to form a committee to study the RFPs and any proposals the WSAA receives.

The committee is composed of Charles Baker, Denelle Pappier, Tom Bartlett, Abigail Sabol, Royalee Bishop, Jane Tremper East, and Mike Smith. Charles is the Chair and Danelle is Secretary. New members can also join.

12. Mental Health Crisis Management Priorities: The AMDD has prepared a list of services identified through its listening tours with the LACs, from the SAAs meetings and from other sources which it is now asking the SAAs to assist it in prioritizing these services. The directors reviewed the list, discussed the issues and prioritized the services **as shown on the attachment** you will receive from Tom Bartlett.

14. MHOAC: Directors discussed the white paper prepared by CSAA regarding the interrelationship between the LACs, SAAs and MHOAC. It was determined that we should invite the MHOAC Directors to the next SAA Summit meeting in March.

15. Next Board Meeting: The next board meeting will be held at Saint Patrick's Hospital Conference Center on February 15 from 10-2.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:25PM.