

WSAA Board of Director's Meeting  
Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007  
St. Patrick Hospital, Missoula

**Board Members:** ( 11 ) Tom Bartlett, Chairman; Courtney Collier Rudbach; Marty Ornishuk; Alyce Anderson; Boyd Roth; Michelle Lewis; Royalee Bishop; Jennifer Robohm; Howard Dean; Charles Baker; Brenda Desmond

**Ex-Officios:** ( 3 ) Dan Ladd; Mary Jane Fox; Alexandra Volkerts

**Guests:** ( 16 ) Ron Flickinger; Howard Grines; Dorothy Salmonson; Paula Lester; Misty Thompson, Winds of Change; Kay Jennings, Lois Wasson, Stacey Wheeler; Sunny Terry; Jane Tremper East; Michael East; Patrick Wayne; Carol Herak; Brooke Jaqueth, Summit ILC Missoula LAC; Linda Salmonson; Dave Bell; Janet Van Dyke, Vocational Rehabilitation

Opening Comments and Introductions: Tom Bartlett called the meeting to order at 10:00 and reminded everyone that anyone attending either the board of directors meeting or the Congress meeting can ask questions and make comments but only board members may vote on issues during the board meeting.

Motion made by Charles Baker and seconded by Alyce Anderson to accept Howard Dean as a new board member to represent the Dillon LAC. Motion was carried.

**Approval of Minutes** - Motion was made by Charles Baker to accept minutes as corrected. Seconded by Brenda Desmond. Corrections made and accepted.

**SAAs' Long Range Action Committee:** At the SAA Summit meeting it was agreed that each SAA will appoint three people to work on a Long Range Action Committee. There was some question regarding travel expenses for these people getting together. Are they an adjunct committee that reports to Summit; chair? Dan Ladd explained that the members are reimbursed for travel expenses but these are not paid positions. They need to be represented by at least 1 committee member from each SAA at Summit meetings and also at MOHAC quarterly meetings. The Community Program Officers, Dan Ladd and Lou Thompson are included on the list for communication. Working together for the next session should be smoother.

Alexis feels that three people are not enough people-locally. She feels that three people could be appointed to represent others in Summit meetings but planning group should include whoever is interested. Anyone should be able to participate in the planning committee and then designate the three to represent the SAA. .

In regards to long range plans for all three SAAs; it was recorded that the Mental Health Oversight and Advisory Council had just prepared a draft of their long term goals that could be

used as a guide. Also the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health has six national goals that could be used as out state goal for our long range plan rather than attempting to recreate goals; if these meet the needs of the SAAs. **Volunteers for the committee are: Charles Baker, Alexis Volkerts, Kay Jennings, Marty Onishuk, Jennifer Robohm, Patrick Wayne, Mary Jane Fox, Dennis Cox, and Dan Ladd.**

**Treasurer's Report:** Paul Meyer-absent and report taken from report. February's expenses were less due to smaller meal expense and no lodging expense. They totaled \$554.85 leaving a balance forward as \$7,784.53. It was moved and seconded to accept report as presented.

Charles Baker feels he is still owed about 3 months of webmaster services fees. He reports that several of his invoices have been rejected by Western Montana Mental Health Center's accounting department. Charles stated that the CSAA has a checkbook so that reimbursements can be made at the time the expense is presented. The point he would like to make is that many consumers are living on very short finances and he feels they should not have to wait to receive their reimbursements, noting that it can take two weeks for reimbursement. A general discussion followed in regards to how reimbursements are made. Further discussion will be made with Paul Meyer when he returns next month in regards to this issue. Brenda Desmond supports the idea of having an immediate system. Alyce Anderson reports that the Libby LAC has not received the advance \$80.00 that was approved at the last meeting. She also noted that Libby also received \$150.00 as opposed to other LAC's receiving \$200.00. In further discussion, Dann Ladd suggested that perhaps SAAs have their own accounting system.

WSAA expenses for hosting the March 16th SAA Summit were approximately \$565.00.

Dan Ladd reports that it appears that the bill for additional SAA funding is going through although there will be some change in the language. As stands now, it reads that department could/would be responsible for ANY expenses. The legislature is currently looking at additional \$70,000 each year. The total would be \$115,000.00 to be divided among the three SAAs.

Dan Ladd stated there appears to be improved status during this last legislation but interested parties need to be better prepared for collaboration for creating long term vision and have mental health bills that have support by the next legislature. Alexis Volkerts suggested that the persons on the committee also be the same persons going to the Summit on regular basis. This is a very complicated process and takes a great amount of time and planning. It takes a lot of work to determine what resources would be needed; what has worked and what has not worked.

Tom Barlett has announced that in September his term as president will be expiring and he will not be available for another term. He recommended that a nominating committee be formed for the purpose of selecting potential candidates. Alyce Anderson, Brooke Jaqueth, Patrick Wayne

and Mary Jane Fox agreed to be on the committee. Alexis suggest that we open it up to consumers to choose the next person.

Tom also suggested that in the months between now and September it would be good if interested individuals be given opportunities to chair meetings for their own experience. This would also give members a chance to evaluate candidates.

Brenda Desmond and all expressed appreciation for the work that Tom has and is doing.

Charles Baker gave a presentation on the changes that have been made in the mental health system in Hawaii. In 1990 their system was ranked dead last by NAMI of all the states. At the time the State of Hawaii agreed to improve the situation. No changes were made for several years. A judge was appointed as overseer in 2002. In 2006 Hawaii's NAMI ranking was 10th, and received a grade C from NAMI when the national average was a D. Currently, their recovery based services are given an A. It was also noted that a large part of the changes were made as they received a large number of appropriations.

Mary Jane Fox suggested the committee look at what other systems have done or are doing.

Brenda Desmond suggested in terms of traveling to investigate the video capabilities of DPHHS. Or perhaps a website: where can do video teleconferencing. Charles Baker stated this system can work from any computer. Consumers Asserting Leadership in Montana (CALM) has already purchased service so no additional expense of any significance. The potential is to have 15 different computers working at any one time. The virtual conference room that CALM has rented for a year will only be available to use for short periods of time. This could be set up through Vicki Stahl. It would be possible to use the whiteboard concept.

GoDaddy.com has been updated and paid so the website is taken care for another year.

Mary Jane Fox discussed some of the points concerning cultural competency put together by White Bison Inc.. Her computer system crashed and she is unable to do the power point presentation today but could present this at the next meeting. A portion of her verbal presentation is as follows: Turning the Tide is a two year grant educating the reservation populations regarding the dangers of substance abuse. Goal 1: the first year strategy includes the formulation of a supervisory board; conduct six community outreach meetings, increase knowledge regarding alcohol and other substance abuse. Goal 2: Increase treatment and aftercare options: by establishing a multidisciplinary team to plan implement and monitor culturally appropriate treatment options and increase coordination among all levels of governments, law enforcement, criminal justice and support services, both tribal and non-tribal agencies.

Year two strategy includes the reduction and prevention of crime, specifically alcohol and drug abuse by recommending refinements to the codes from input generated by the membership to the tribal council, generate and implement initiatives based on the first year's experiences with

the codes and community input. Make plans to implement sustainability after grant funding expires, provide and monitor treatment services to reduce alcohol and substance abuse as well as increase coordination among all levels of governments, law enforcements and support services. All planned programs are designed to be culturally appropriate. Mary Jane also explained culturally appropriate means that each of us has our own cultures with some commonalities. She also stated that both Lou and Joyce have been supportive of the CPO's attending any type of training put on by the Native American groups. In order for change to occur an understanding between people must occur.

Cultural competency is defined is shared language, style and culture and each having unique backgrounds. In addition a process of having the capacity of functioning effectively with others where they are with genuine regard for people where and who they are. The goal for us is to gain a better understanding of others. How do we know when we do not understand? We all see and judge the world as we are. Take responsibility for our own paradigms. Having open minds and being accepting is key ingredient. Montana has twelve different tribes each with their own culture.

White Bison Inc. is a Native cooperation formed through a vision of Don Coheis. After development he took it to elders throughout the United States and also visited with tribal leaders. The Wellbriety movement looks at substance abuses. It is looking at universe and with each other. There is only one race and that is the human race and we all live in very different earth suits. Native teachings are followed i.e.-four directions; four laws of change. Seven Sisters is another organization that addresses how you transform into healing a culture. White Bison Inc is on the web and is funded by grants. No charge for using materials.

See the [www.sacredwebrecovery.com](http://www.sacredwebrecovery.com) Montana Link. After the first meeting a web site was formed.

There is ongoing work with communities to heal communities with the plan to form reentry from all areas. There has been training. This was done at women's prison in Boulder-Riverside; Pine Hills done in February. Sacred Hoop program will commence in May to work on reentry coalition. She is working with Human Resources Development Council at tribe. A Grant to establish a substance/alcohol abuse program on the reservation and discussing co-occurring capable if not co-occurring integrated. The community meetings have started. They have met in Arlee, and other communities. The meeting is in Hot Springs on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Everyone shares a meal together with wonderful speakers and community input. The Mission meeting will be April 20<sup>th</sup> at 6pm at the Indian Senior Center. Another meeting will be held in Arlee on April 27<sup>th</sup>. Tribal members, NW Drug Task force, Indian probation and Parole area all involved. A second year grant of \$100K is to be put into culturally appropriate co-occurring treatment.

Charles Baker commented that treatment needs to meet the person where they are.

It was pointed out that the Department has responsibility for all mental health services at the prison, state hospital and Lewiston facility. Ninety percent of expenditures have been on crisis

services. There is a bigger picture and it will take time to bring all the pieces to the SAAs. The CPOs will be working with tribes as SAAs don't have ability or funding to do this work.

The tribal HRD was able to obtain the grant. Tribal health does the services but sent anyone to meetings. A lot of elders are attending. More people disclosing themselves as recipient of services. MCDC was identified as the best treatment as mental health issues were addressed. It was also stated the system can't be adults and kids but family. You can't just address substance abuse but need to have holistic approach. Mary Jane is participating in these meetings to share direction.

Brenda Desmond has a question regarding the State's budget. How much money from the state goes directly to tribes? Dan Ladd said the tribes receive funds directly from the federal level. IHS pays for stays at the state hospital.

Charles asked what the SAA can do to facilitate outreach. Tom Bartlett offered that the tribal board seat is in the process of being transferred to Tom Camel with official capacity to represent the Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribal Council.

AMDD reported the representatives from the SAAs can go along with state employees if extra seat although AMDD will not pay for meals.

There was a general discussion regarding incorporating Native American people in off reservation communities into local LACs. The Indian Center has been invited to join the LAC and they have participated in the jail diversion.

CIT training in Billings still had some openings. Call Tylene Merkle, Community Crisis Center 259-8800. They will be taking law enforcement and first responders for training, March 26<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup>.

CIT training Helena is full. Total of nine officers from Missoula area will be attending.

Charles Baker explained CALM- as basically a group of primary consumer forming together across the state. WRAP facilitators are the primary component. There are monies available that go begging as there is no consumer run organization in the state. This addresses this need. The organization would like to see supportive employment, supported housing etc. In addition Charles said often times what consumers really need is a place to sleep, a job and a date on Saturday night – a basic community support system. Vicki Stahl is heading CALM up at this point. A web site put together is hoping to raise enough money to become 501 (3) (c) and would like to see three part time staff who are consumers. A facilitator for WRAP groups, a half time person doing virtual conference room and another additional person. When MHSP is funded it is planned that CALM would be one of the eligible service providers. It would offer fee for services to many providers.

The WSAA is consumer driven but not necessarily primary consumer driven. CALM is only for primary consumers. Not duplicating what SAAs do but a union of primary consumers. Peer to peer, WRAP training, peer to peer supportive services are some of the areas that would

be addressed.

Dann Ladd explored and supported the SAMSHA Anti-stigma campaign. The adds are designed for communities; choice to use or not to use. Once the first goal is reached everything else will follow. Handouts accompanied his explanation. WSAA members were invited to contact their TV stations and radio stations and request they air these professional announcements.

Courtney Collier Rudbach stated people have fears in regards to entering acute care system for the first time. They worry about acceptance, getting a job, having a life. The general population has no idea what to anticipate. The Anti-Stigma campaign would be helpful in this area.

Dave Bell of Missoula is facilitating a support group that is open to everyone at the University Center room 216 but is not seeing a lot of people. Reaching out to people takes time and energy. He has been going to high schools and middle schools so they know if something happens to them or to someone else later in their life. It is held Thursday night, 6-7 pm. The group did art project.

Marty Onishuk from Missoula LAC stated they are discussing a bill board for October Mental Illness Month.

Charles Baker stated there is a 60% unemployment rate for those with mental illness. Those with mental illness also have about the same with poverty. He reports it knocks ten years off life expectancy. Services are needed to keep consumers out of crisis.

Alyce Anderson reported an adjustment needs to be made for those on disability. If you work now you lose benefits or your spend down increases.

Carol H. reports she is teaching school part time but no one has knowledge of her mental illness or she would loose her job.

Tom Bartlett stated that a major publication strongly suggests that on job applications you don't fill out that you have mental illness. A potential employer could be considered liable for any law suit for injuries a person with mental illness might cause later on if the employer knew from your application or interview that you have a mental illness. Plus you don't have to tell them.

Patrick Wayne asked what you put in as a reason for losing your last job; if it was due to your mental illness.

Michelle Lewis stated you must disclose to employer your illness in order for the American Disabilities Act to come into affect. This might allow you to take time away from your job to take care of an illness.

Charles Baker doesn't blame folks for not disclosing. But then the stigma is continued. Consumers are going to have to start speaking up.

Marty Onishuk - NAMI-Montana will have an April 3<sup>rd</sup> conference on Anosognosia at Fairmont-Hot Springs. Registration fee is \$95.00.

Alexis Volkerts with the Montana Advocacy Program (MAP) said that if there are discrimination issues please call 1-800-245-4743 in Helena. They have a discrimination unit in regards to employment discrimination. The first step is to report to the Human Rights Commission. You only have 180 days to file a complaint with the Human Rights Commission in regards to disability. The majority of discrimination case issues are related to mental illness. A person can not go to district court unless a complaint has been filed with Human Rights Commission.

MAP provides services at no charge; if you qualify. They do not do Social Security appeals. The standard charge by private attorneys 25% of any amount received. Montana has one of the highest denial rates with 90% of people denied SSI or SSDI on their first application. At the People's Law Center, Hilary Bush also does Social Security appeals.

The state of Montana is sponsoring SOAR training (SSI-SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery). This is a federal training program where Marcia Armstrong works with Michelle Thibodeau to help case managers complete disability applications to get closer to a 90% approval rate the first time around. This training is only for case managers at this point in time. There is a training class coming up in Whitefish in April.

Alexis Volkerts MAP does help individuals when they have problems with underpayments and over payments from SSI and SSDI. The contact person is Lisa Beck at 1-800-245- 4743.

Meeting adjourned at 12:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Royalee Bishop

