



**Denton County MHMR Center**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, October 24, 2024**

**Trustees Present:** Patti Dunn, Isabel Hernandez, Dianne Hickey, Linda Holloway, Ph.D., Cynthia Jones, Ph.D., Doug Lee, Ron Marchant, Jack Phillips, Kelly Sayre, Judi Swayne

**Trustees Absent:** Leah Strittmatter

**Staff Present:** Veronica Armendariz, Keelah Adelegan, Kylin Cofield, Michelle Conrad, Pam Gutierrez, Dallas Hamilton, Kayla Lusk, Jessica Pham, Erin Posey, Dr. Meena Vyas, Taylor Warren, Fonny Wright, Ritch Wright

**Guests Present:** Kasey Brown, Becca Hobby

**I. Call to Order**

**A. Roll Call** – a quorum was present for the Regularly Scheduled Board of Trustees meeting. Leah Strittmatter had an excused absence.

**B. Welcome to Guests and Staff**

Dianne Hickey, Board of Trustees Chair, called the Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Denton County MHMR Center Board of Trustees to order at 1:00 p.m. in the boardroom of Denton County MHMR Center, 2519 Scripture Street, Denton, Texas. Dianne Hickey welcomed guests and staff.

**C. Public Comments**

**D. Approval of the Regularly Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes from September 26, 2024.**

The Board of Trustees reviewed the Minutes of the Regularly Scheduled Board of Trustees meeting, September 26, 2024.

**Board Action:** Judi Swayne made a motion for the Board of Trustees to approve the Minutes of the Regularly Scheduled Board of Trustees Meeting, September 26, 2024. Patti Dunn seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with one abstention, Linda Holloway, Ph.D. Linda Holloway, Ph.D. was not present at the September 26, 2024, Board of Trustees meeting.

**E. Approval of the Special Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes from October 7, 2024.**

The Board of Trustees reviewed the Minutes of the Special Board of Trustees meeting, October 7, 2024.

**Board Action:** Jack Phillips made a motion for the Board of Trustees to approve the Minutes of the Special Board of Trustees Meeting, October 7, 2024. Isabel Hernandez seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with two abstentions, Patti Dunn and Linda Holloway, Ph.D. Patti Dunn and Linda Holloway, Ph.D., were not present at the October 7, 2024, Special Board of Trustees meeting.

**F. Presentation – Military Veteran Peer Network (MVPN) – *Kasey Brown, Executive Director, Veterans Point; Becca Hobby, MVPN Peer Service Coordinator***

The Board reserves the right to convene in Executive Session(s) from time to time as deemed necessary during this meeting - Executive Session(s) pursuant to Article 6252-17, Sec. 2, V.T.C.S., regarding Litigation (e), Real Estate (f), Personnel (g) and Security (j).

**II. Committee Reports**

*Finance Committee*

**A. FY 2025 Period 1 (September) Financial Statements. – *Dianne Hickey, Finance Committee Chair***

In September 2024, revenues exceeded expenditures by \$34,253. The budget for September 2024 is an excess of \$154,725. Year-to-date (YTD) through September 2024, revenues exceeded expenditures by \$34,253. The budget YTD through September 2024 is an excess of \$154,725.

**Board Action:** Dianne Hickey made a motion for the Board of Trustees to approve the Financial Statements for the period ending in September 2024, which passed unanimously. A “second” was not required since the primary motion was made by the Finance Committee.

**B. Review and Approval of Revised FY 2025 Budget. – *Dianne Hickey, Finance Committee Chair***

**Board Action:** Dianne Hickey made a motion for the Board of Trustees to approve the Revised FY 2025 Budget, which passed unanimously. A “second” was not required since the primary motion was made by the Finance Committee.

*Personnel Committee*

**C. Review and Approval of Policies. – Linda Holloway, Ph.D., Personnel Committee Chair**

- Policy 2.102 Consolidated Local Service Plan
- Policy 2.105 Citizen Comment Scheduled Board Meetings
- Policy 7.704 Tobacco, Vapor and Smoke Free Workplace

**Board Action:** Linda Holloway, Ph.D., made a motion for the Board of Trustees to approve the Policies: Policy 2.102 Consolidated Local Service Plan, Policy 2.105 Citizen Comment Scheduled Board Meetings, and Policy 7.704 Tobacco, Vapor and Smoke Free Workplace, which passed unanimously. A “second” was not required since the primary motion was made by the Personnel Committee.

**III. Other Agenda Items**

**A. Review and Approval of State Leadership Thank You Letter. – Pam Gutierrez, Executive Director**

**Board Action:** Kelly Sayre made a motion for the Board of Trustees to approve the State Leadership Thank You Letter, to be signed by each Board of Trustee. Patti Dunn seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**B. Behavioral Health (BH) and Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Satisfaction Survey Report. – Veronica Armendariz, Senior Director of QM/UM**

**Board Action:** Discussion Item Only

**C. Human Resources (HR) Report. – Erin Posey, Chief HR Officer**

**Board Action:** Discussion Item Only

**D. Zero Suicide Task Force Update. – Dallas Hamilton, Senior Director of Crisis Services**

**Board Action:** Discussion Item Only

**E. Abuse & Neglect/Critical Incidents Report. – Kylin Cofield, MH Rights Protection Officer; Kayla Lusk, IDD Rights Protection Officer**

**Board Action:** Discussion Item Only

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#### **IV. Executive Director Report**

- Congratulations Dr. Cynthia Jones, we are so proud of you!
- The HCS Wait list currently has 3248 individuals waiting for services.
- The IDD General Revenue Wait list currently has 305 waiting for services.
- Mental Health Adult Services continues not to have a wait list.
- Mental Health Child and Adolescent Services continues not to have a wait list.
- The Center's Clothing, and blanket Drive is here, and the Center is greatly in need of gently used or new coats, (all sizes) new blankets, (Walmart has blankets for \$5.00 dollars), and gloves
- The Center's Holiday Helping Hands is almost upon us. This program provides gifts and gift cards for children and adults. If you would like to adopt or donate money, we would be so grateful. Please know we would be very happy to shop for you.
- There are several Legislative priorities that we are working on for the coming Legislative Session. Kelly and I met with Senator Tan Parker yesterday to discuss our Legislative Priorities. The Legislative Priorities are outlined below.

#### **Legislative Priorities**

##### **Mental Health and Substance Use**

- Mental Health Outpatient Capacity Waitlist funding is a very serious issue for Denton County MHMR Center and other Community Centers. HHSC utilized the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to fund a significant number of mental health positions to prevent a waitlist for outpatient mental health services. The natural lifecycle of this Covid-related funding comes to an end in FY2026, and the financial impact to the Center will be a loss of funds from the MH/COVID grant in the amount of \$861,457 and for the Outpatient Capacity Waitlist and \$48,606 for MCOT/Hotline. Because this funding is scheduled to end in FY 2026, the Center has no guarantee regarding this current funding. The Center is requesting a Legislative mandate for HHSC to continue to fund the Mental Health Outpatient Waitlist funding and for the ARPA funds in order for the Centers to continue hiring and to have the ability not to have a waitlist for services. Without this funding the Center will have to review all services and implement a waitlist. The annual total is a total of \$910,063.
- The Center's Crisis Residential Unit (CRU) is funded through SB 292, the Center receives \$422,232 and a 100% match of \$422,232 is required. There is no guarantee of the SB 292 Grant continuing after this fiscal year. The requirement for the 100% match has put every recipient of the SB 292 grant in a position that takes the match funding away from additional services. Legislative funding for Crisis Residential Units (CRU) (current operating cost for the Crisis Residential Unit is \$1,134,634). Request

Legislative mandate for SB 292 funding to continue and request Legislative requirement to remove the current 100% match required for SB 292.

- Extended Observation Unit (EOU) – The EOU is a 48-hour emergency services program to individuals in a mental health crisis who might pose a high to moderate risk of harm to themselves or others. The Unit can accept individuals on an emergency detention. After an individual is in this unit for up to 48 hours, if a higher level of care is required, the individual can be assessed and if clinically appropriate the individual could be referred to a private inpatient psychiatric hospital or if a lower level of care is required the individual may be referred to the Crisis Residential Unit. The EOU costs approximately \$3,100,000 on an annual basis. If the Crisis Residential Unit is combined with an Extended Observation Unit, the total cost would be \$4,234,634. Request Legislative mandate for HHSC to provide funding opportunities for EOU without any match requirement.
- Grant availability is very important. The grants that are available from HHSC currently have a match requirement. This is an additional financial hardship on a system that is struggling to provide services with limited funding. If the Legislature could mandate that grants from HHSC cannot have a match this would allow Community Centers to provide the critically needed services to the individuals that are suffering from Mental Health, Substance Use Disorder (SUD), and services to Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (IDD), the most.
- The severity and acuity of the children and adults that are requiring crisis stabilization, mental health and substance use services has continued to increase exponentially. This is seen in our school shootings, and in the individuals that the Community Centers are treating on a daily basis and in the acuity of the children that are requiring services. The children are as young as 3 years of age that are requiring mental health services. If additional funding is not appropriated by the Legislature to the Community Mental Centers, to not only Crisis services but on-going Mental Health Services Texas, my fear is that we will continue see more tragedies.

### **Individuals With Developmental Disabilities**

- Individuals With Developmental Disabilities (IDD) – Enhanced Rate enhancement for direct care workers at Community Outpatient Centers. Current pay is \$10.61 per hour, we are advocating for a base wage for Residential Direct Support Program Specialist of at least \$19.00 an hour, but that other voices, Texas Conservative Coalition Research Institute (TCCRI report) are calling for parity with State Supported Living Center Direct Support Program wages. Legislative mandate that base wage for Residential Direct Support Program Specialist of at least \$19.00 an hour.
- The Center's Holiday Luncheon is December 13, 2024, at 11:00 am. The luncheon will be at Robison ranch, Invite will be coming. We would love for you all to join us!

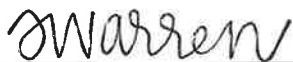
- Happy Holidays to everyone, I hope you have a wonderful Holiday with your family and friends!
- Thank you to the Chiefs, Leadership staff and all the staff for all your hard work.
- Thank you to the Board for all your support and leadership.

**V. Chair Comments**

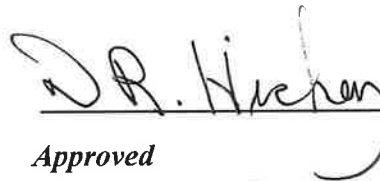
- Thank you to the Board for attending this meeting in person. It is important for you to attend as we have items to approve.
- Dr. Cynthia Jones, we are so proud of you!
- Our next meeting has been rescheduled to January 30, 2025.
- Have a happy and healthy Holiday, we will see you in January! Our hope is to take the Board on a tour of the new Admin Building.
- Jack Phillips stated he appreciates everyone. I am always excited to attend these meetings and am so appreciative of everyone.

**VI. New Business** – Next Board meeting will be held at the Denton Outpatient Clinic (DOPC) on Thursday, January 30, 2025.

**VII. Adjourned** – The Board of Trustees adjourned at 2:50 p.m.



*Respectfully Submitted*  
Taylor Warren, Executive Assistant  
Denton County MHMR



*Approved*  
Dianne Hickey, Chair  
Denton County MHMR Board of Trustees