

Counseling Services of Addison County, Inc.
Board of Directors Minutes
July 13, 2017

Board Members Attending: Barbara Doyle-Wilch, President; Louise Sandberg, Vice-President; Kitty Oxholm, Secretary. Members at large David Hallam, Lewis Holmes, Gary Margolis, Len Rowell. (Absent: Ted Tighe, Joanne Scott)

Staff Attending: Bob Thorn, Director; Bill Claessens, CFO; Alexa Euler, Director, HR; Keith Grier, Quality Assurance and Compliance Officer; Alexander "Sandy" Smith, director of MH/CRT; Jenn Staats, recorder.

Guest: Dr. Alberto Fergusson (Bogota, Columbia, South America)

Barbara called the meeting to order at 4:33pm.

Approvals:

Len moved to approve the minutes of June 8, 2017 meeting as presented, seconded by Louise. Vote called and motion passed.

Announcements and Updates:

Happy Minute: Bob invited guest Dr. Alberto Fergusson and CRT director Sandy Smith to share the progress of a grant application they will submit on September 1st. The grant would support incorporation of community-inclusion concepts utilizing Open Dialogue as a foundation of treatment for mental health clients. CSAC is one of thirty applicants still in the running for the \$100,000 award.

"The more meaningful the role the more potent the recovery effect." Three principles: 1. Work on client and community education together. 2. Create client/community connections while being mindful of confidentiality. 3. Find meaningful roles (as deemed by the community) for clients. Discussions generated during the application-development process have been "overwhelming" and have energized the CRT team. Sandy is so committed to the ideas which have been developed that, even if the grant is not received, these ideas will be incorporated into CSAC's mental health treatment methods. Bob: "It is cutting edge. This is important work." Additionally, the current mindset of people in mental health treatment as "only being able to accomplish simple tasks" will be challenged. David: This fosters a "changing culture."

Sandy: "This takes the new developments to a worldwide level." Alberto emphasized the advance from "common sense evidence" to scientific evidence. They have a researcher from Yale on the team who is spectacular and energetic as well as a leader in philosophy from Germany; there is a merging of scientific and philosophical representatives who will be meeting in Norway within the year at an Open Dialogue conference.

President Remarks: The budget is not ready for board decision/approval this evening, however agreement must be reached by August 1st. Barbara requested that the Executive Committee meet next week and that tonight the Exec. Comm. be authorized by the board to vote on the FY18 budget.

Motion: David moved to review, and authorize the executive committee to approve the fiscal year 2018 budget. Gary Margolis seconded the motion. Bill will send out the budget early next week to the board. The Executive Committee meeting is set for Thursday, July 20 at 4:30, 109 Catamount Park to vote on budget approval. All are welcome to attend.

Committee Reports:

MH/CRT, David reporting: There was an inquiry about the purchase of Robinson House. Bill clarified that the action now rests with the seller. Alberto will speak at Evergreen next week. Sarah Greenspace (CSAC intern) spoke about improvements at Rutland Regional Medical Center in regard to MH patients. Summary: five rooms separate from the ER with creature comforts such as art supplies and a tablet, a shower, 1-1 trained caregivers, a “sensory cart,” etc. Discussion about the current conditions of space, privacy, timeline at Porter Medical Center. Bob: “[MH patients] staying in an ER is disastrous;” improvements for Porter Medical are critical for consumers.

DS/FAC: FAC has not met since the departure of Kim McCarthy.

Y&F: In process of reappraising advisory group. Kitty will serve as Board liaison on this committee.

Development: Once Ann is back with her Master’s in-hand, development planning is imminent.

Nominating: Len and Gary reporting: In agreement that protocol for bringing in new members:

1. Any Board member can submit names to Nominating Committee at any time.
2. Full Board considers name.
3. Board agrees to reach out to nominee to have discussion to see if there is a “fit” (not to invite to the board).
4. Exec. Director and Board President meet with nominee, give nominee materials indicating duties and responsibilities.
5. Exec. Director and Board President recommend candidate to the full Board, assign a mentor.
6. Board President invites nominee to join Board. Receives board book.

Two possible candidates in the sights, both in “stage three.”

Executive Director’s Remarks: “Psychiatry by the Numbers” tabled until Sept.

Business and Financial Reports: Financials are looking good.

HR Report, Alexa Euler: “Culture and Employee Engagement at CSAC”

Term “employee engagement” is “squidgy” and lacks commonly accepted definition. But CSAC employees’ survey results are quite favorable, higher than national trend. Turnover tends to be for family reasons or finding a job that pays more. Relationships with supervisor, meaningful work, independence, opportunities to learn and grow, flexibility and transparency in communication all received high marks. Professional literature is specific to risks. Alexa notes that there is stress about looming federal decisions in regard to healthcare, Medicaid. The key is to invest: pay well, invest in supervisors, involve staff in decision making, communicate well, increase recognition, ask the staff what is needed. The Board can understand the value of and take deliberate care of our current culture, appreciate the complexities, and focus on the mission. Louise: do not underestimate the stress that accompanies technology changes—tech changes can devastate a company.

Further conversation

No August meeting. In October all managers will be offering reports.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.