

Counseling Service of Addison County, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
109 Catamount Park, Middlebury, VT
June 9, 2022

Board members attending: Sarah McGowen Audet, President; Suzanne Aldana, Secretary. Members at large: Bill Cunningham; David Hallam; Gary Margolis; Len Rowell; Kerianne Severy; Jane Spencer. Absent: David Roberts, Vice-President; Joanne Scott, Treasurer; Matt Birong; Marc Gwinn.
Staff attending: Rachel Lee Cummings, Executive Director; Bill Claessens, CFO; Alexa Euler, HR Director; Jenn Staats, Executive Coordinator and recorder.
Guest: Alexander “Sandy” Smith, Director of Adult Mental Health Services.

Sarah Audet called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM. Agenda adjustment: The Finance Committee’s quarterly report on payment reform will move to the top of the agenda.

Finance Committee Report: Payment reform for developmental services might launch in late summer. Mental health payment reform is different. To illustrate how the payment reform platform is supported, Bill Claessens presented a “three-legged stool” model: The “platform” is supported by 1. People served per month; 2. Number of hours, and; 3. Quality (value based) measures. Bill shared department target details and current markers.

The employment landscape across Vermont remains challenging. Alexa Euler shared that, currently, there are three employment openings for every worker in Vermont. At CSAC, turnover is stable, some staff have returned and there is increases in applications. However, vacancy remains problematic. A “path to success” includes retention and hiring strategies; growing internships; addressing culture and practice shifts, and; meeting documentation standards.

Bill and Rachel report that the “Road Show” presentations are going well. Staff recognize their critical role to meet payment reform targets with documentation timeliness and completion. The meetings have also provided useful feedback from staff.

Governor Scott has signed the state budget which includes a historic 8% increase in funding to DAs. Funding for My Pad has increased and is permanent.

Guest/Speaker: Sandy Smith reports that the commitment and resilience of the staff in adult mental health (emergency, adult outpatient, substance use disorder, and community rehabilitation and treatment services) is unlike anything he has seen in the last two decades. Sandy’s staff has faced multiple, significant transition issues in the last year. Pay increases have had a positive impact for the adult services staff.

Re-envisioning what it means to be a community health service provider and transforming how we serve clients has been occupying Sandy’s thoughts.

Changes at My Pad have been significant and forward moving. “Power, Voice, Choice” has eleven participants. Clients, families and staff continue to work on emergency room/hospitalization issues.

Decision and Review Items:

Approval of Minutes of May 12, 2022: Gary Margolis made the motion and Jane Spencer seconded the motion to accept the minutes of May 12, 2022. Vote was called and passed unanimously; Suzanne Aldana abstained.

Election to the Board: Discussion about potential board candidates. Gary made a motion to elect Anna Benvenuto, Jon Crystal, Daniel Gutierrez, and Eva Vekos to the CSAC Board of Directors. David Hallam seconded the motion. The vote was called and all four candidates were unanimously elected to serve three-year terms.

President's Remarks: Sarah McGowen Audet

Sarah facilitated discussion about the strategic planning proposals. The board agreed to vote on the proposals via email after all references checks are completed and shared to the board. (See below)

Tabitha Moore has facilitated the first of three anti-bias trainings by for the board.

Due to time constraints, the board president asked to bypass committee reports; all written reports are in the board packet.

Executive Director's Report: Rachel Lee Cummings

Rachel visited My Pad.

Development Director Beth Tarallo accepted a gift of \$3500 for Emergency Services from Middlebury Rotary Club.

Bocce sponsorship and fundraising is going very well.

Rachel reported that she was recently voted to be co-president of Vermont Care Partners (VCP).

Business and Financial Report: Bill Claessens

Bill reported that key performance indicators are strong and steady.

HR report: Alexa Euler

A DA group has been established to focus on innovating staff recruitment practices.

HR is working on the health insurance renewal. Recommendations will be made to Management Team in late summer.

Other business

Sarah invited board members to attend a free webinar hosted by United Way of Addison County on June 30 regarding financial knowledge/responsibilities for board members.

David Hallam made a motion to adjourn. Jane seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the vote was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 6:28 PM.

ADDENDUM: Results from electronic post-meeting vote to hire strategic planning facilitator, Jane Van Buren and Rebecca Gurney of Noonmark Services: 10 yea, 5 abstentions, 1 no response. (Reported by Sarah McGowen Audet, 6.24.2022)