

ARLINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD  
Mental Health Committee Meeting  
January 24, 2024

**Committee Members Present:** Dori Mitchell, Judy Deane, John Mitchell, Anne Hermann

**Committee Members Absent:** n/a

**Guests Present:** n/a

**Others Present:** Binta Niambi Brown, Carol Sacks, Steve Gallagher, Steve Taphorn

**Staff Present:** Carol Layer, Asta Lynch, Anabel Majano

**Call to Order: 5:00 pm**

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

**Welcome**

Ms. Layer and Ms. Lynch welcomed the committee members and guests.

**Approval of Minutes**

This was an informational meeting as the committee doesn't have a chair or co-chair.

**Welcome and Introductions Confirmation of 2024 Meeting Dates**

After welcoming the committee members and others Ms. Lynch shared the 2024 meeting dates for the MHC. Members discussed the need to reschedule November and December due to CSB committee meeting and holiday conflicts. A joint meeting on December 11<sup>th</sup> is proposed as a solution. The committee will stay virtually until a chair is appointed.

**Restoration to Competency Process - request from Judy Deanne**

Ms. Layer mentioned that this presentation will be rescheduled for February's meeting due to Ms. Somerville not being available due to a personal emergency.

Ms. Layer gave an abbreviated message about Ms. Somerville's Bureau, and she reported that there was an article circulated related to the detention center operations, she stated that the article didn't mention the CSB functions, but the sheriff's office is under the spotlight. The CSB prepared some updates and documents in case there are questions about the CSB's role following several deaths over several years. The sheriff and CSB staff met with a consultant to evaluate best practices and make recommendations.

### **Behavioral Healthcare Division Director's Report**

Ms. Layer provided updates on various bills and budget priorities that could impact behavioral health services. For example House Bill 314: Proposed to allow state hospitals to discharge clients over the objection of the CSB under certain circumstances, which is strongly opposed by the CSB, one more is House Bill 608: Which allows hospitals with a psychiatric department to perform pre-screenings for temporary detention, which could lead to hospitals choosing what patients they accept in their facilities, and Senate Bill 176: Proposes to exclude individuals with developmental disabilities or neurocognitive brain injury conditions from admissions to psychiatric hospitals, which is also opposed by the CSB and VHCSB.

Ms. Layer announced that Arlington will receive additional money beginning in July 2024 to implement the Marcus Alert Initiative, potentially expanding the mobile outreach and support team, and establishing a true co-response model with police.

### **MHC - Recruitment Update**

Ms. Layer stated Mr. Gabriel Duer was selected as the new Bureau Director for Client Services Entry Bureau (CSE) and his start date is January 29, 2024. His experience and leadership in crisis services were highlighted as assets.

### **Residential Contracts**

The transition to new residential facilities has gone smoothly, Ms. Layer said, with all individuals situated in their new homes. Ms. Mitchell mentioned safety concerns, such as a BB gun incident, are to be addressed. Ms. Mitchell asked about one of the facilities being male-only which Ms. Layer answered that two female clients were asked to live there but they declined due to different reasons.

### **Open Discussion**

- Ms. Layer announced that a new group is being planned for young adults aged 17 ½ to 30 years old, focusing on substance use disorders and incorporating harm reduction strategies. The Young Adult Substance Use Group is being developed and led in a collaborative effort by therapists from the following programs: Opioid, Substance Use Outpatient and Young Adult Mental Health.
- The committee discussed the importance of family groups for family members of young adults with serious mental illness and the possibility of reviving or promoting such groups. Ms. Lynch updated the committee on the multifamily psychoeducation group currently running.
- The committee was informed about the acting medical director and the ongoing search for a permanent replacement.
- The committee may visit new group homes in the spring or early summer.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 28<sup>th</sup>, which will be virtual. Ms. Layer and Ms. Lynch announced to the committee members that they would receive an email with links to various topics discussed in tonight's meeting.

**Adjournment**

As expected, the meeting adjourned at 7 p.m. as specified.