

MINUTES  
8 February 2021  
Human Services Advisory Board, San Juan County

Dwight Colley called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. via Microsoft Teams.

Members present: Theresa Chemnick, Dwight Colley, Diana Porter, Catherine Ellis. Excused absence: Melissa Guard.

Staff present: Richard Uri, Cynthia Stark-Wickman, Barbara LaBrash.

Agenda: The Board approved the agenda.

Minutes: The Board approved the minutes from the 14 December 2020 meeting with no changes.

Guests: Cindy Wolf, County Councilmember (District 2) and HSAB liaison.

Human Services Program Report: Uri added the following:

Holidays made it hard to be productive, but now lots of progress. Covid vaccination administration has made everyone much busier. Technical issues with vaccine rollout had an impact. In response to a board member question, Uri explained the reasons drug court is not the best option for all drug offenders, e.g. if there is a less intensive need, or if a history of violence, or if the person previously failed the program. Drug court is a two-year commitment, and includes supports such as help with housing and child care, etc. Drug court is not for the person who needs treatment for substance abuse right away until Medicaid or private insurance starts.

LaBrash met with new councilmember Cindy Wolf and shared information about North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization and mental health in the county. Joe Valentine of North Sound also provided an orientation.

In response to a board member question, LaBrash explained crisis stabilization facilities/services in use by San Juan County. Our cases tend to be too acute for a voluntary crisis triage center. Oak Harbor's new crisis stabilization center is a regional (includes SJC) facility for lower level intensity treatment. The SJC sheriff has said that if someone needs it, they will get the person there. SJC is not putting any money into that facility directly, but individual counties, state agencies and NSBH-ASO fund it.

Compass Health has recently hired and is in the process of training a new SUD-T provider.

Prevention: Stark-Wickman added the following:

She looks forward to having Cindy Wolf as a human services advocate on the County Council. Human Services is a complex and long-term area to support, unlike capital projects that tend to get a lot of attention.

Dedicated Marijuana Account: it comes from the state Department of Health and impacts policy and decision-making in regard to preventing youth substance use. Although use of these funds is narrow, Stark-Wickman has been working with the Health Care Authority for 15 years and knows how to meet the requirements. Programs must be evidence-based and involve community partnership development.

On Lopez, Paul Lewis and the Lopez Island Family Resource Center will offset the lack of Prevention Coalition by building collaborative partnerships in the community. Lewis is a prevention-intervention specialist.

Stark-Wickman noted that the county is not allowed to lobby, but cannabis retailers wanting increases in accessibility and sales invest a lot in lobbying. A working relationship with retailers is desired. We can offset lobbying efforts by bringing knowledge, facts that have impact and power. We can combine the restrictions that exist and increased prevention, intervention and treatment to create balance for the health of the community. She will meet with legislative representative Lekanoff on Wednesday. Uri shared that craft growers are appealing to have their own retail side, similar to recent movements behind craft brewers and distillers. Also laws are being updated to use the term cannabis in place of marijuana.

Uri reported that anxiety and depression has increased significantly. Provider burnout is potentially a big problem, but the delicate balance is being held at this time. People seeking help are those who find their

previous successful coping skills are not working, either for the first time, or after treatment and a period of success. The state's self-care guidance to providers needs to be refreshed. Just like the public, sending the same message when the situation worsens loses its effectiveness.

Councilmember Cindy Wolf's comments: she appreciates the work of the HSAB and would like to join the meetings. Mondays after 1:30pm should be okay.

North Sound Behavioral Health Advisory Board: Porter reported:

Crisis data is a focus each month. Does the HSAB have any specific questions? What are the needs of San Juan County? LaBrash said she will send the board members the data that is collected now. Hospitalization data is not collected any more due to the MCOs. Colley requested analysis in addition to data because the meaning can be lost if only numbers are provided.

Board Member Reports: No reports this time.

Election of officers: The following slate of officers was approved unanimously: Dwight Colley, Chair; Diana Porter, Vice Chair; and Theresa Chemnick, Secretary

Next Meeting: 8 March 2021, starting at 11:45 a.m.  
Meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Theresa Chemnick, Board Secretary

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