

## MINUTES

### Mental Disabilities Board of Visitors Annual Meeting

Thursday, November 8, 2018

The Calvert Hotel, 216 – 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Lewistown, Montana 59457

#### **Members Present**

Dan Laughlin, Chairperson  
Amy Tipton, Secretary  
Jeffrey Folsom  
Melissa Ancell  
Sicity Morris  
One position vacant

#### **Staff Present**

Craig Fitch, Attorney  
LuWaana Johnson,  
Paralegal/Patient Advocate  
Two positions vacant

Chairman Daniel Laughlin called the annual meeting of the Mental Disabilities Board of Visitors to order at 8:30 a.m. A quorum of the Board was established. The meeting opened with a self-introduction by each attendee that included a brief history of each person's background and how it shaped their interest in the Board of Visitors.

#### **Election of Board Officers**

Dan Laughlin was re-elected as chairperson. Amy Tipton was re-elected as Secretary.

#### **Budget Review**

The 2017 Legislature made some deep cuts to the Board of Visitors' (Board) and the Mental Health Ombudsman's (Ombudsman) combined budget through June 30, 2019. This was partially accomplished by eliminating site inspections, staff vacancy savings, and staff taking leave without pay through June 2018. Craig Fitch explained the current budget situation and introduced Stacey Otterstrom, the Boards and Appointments Advisor for Governor Bullock, who attended as a visitor.

#### **Stacey Otterstrom**

Stacey led a discussion concerning the Board and the Ombudsman's offices and their role in state government. The Board engaged in a discussion about core services and the changing landscape of mental health service delivery in the State.

#### **Staff Update**

Craig Fitch and LuWaana Johnson updated the Board on staff activities conducted over the past year. This included site inspection information, direct advocacy/legal representation at the State facilities (Montana State Hospital and Montana Developmental Center) and general community-based advocacy at the state level.

**Working Lunch Break and Public Comment** – Lunch brought in from Central Feed Grilling Company. The staff update and general discussion regarding the Board's core services continued through the lunch hour as no member of the public showed up to make comments or ask questions. The discussion also included an open ended, budget problem solving exercise which culminated in the Board proposing the possibility of contracting with someone to fulfill some limited Executive Director duties through the remainder of the fiscal year.

### **Montana Mental Health Nursing Care Center**

The Board meeting continued at MMHNCC. Sherri Bell, Clinical Director of Montana State Hospital, joined the meeting and all were given a tour of The Center by Superintendent Dianne Scotten.

### **Sherri Bell**

Sherri Bell, in her role as Clinical Director of Montana State Hospital (MSH), wrote for and was given a grant of \$250,000 from SAMSHA for Recovery Oriented Cognitive Therapy which is a three-day training with follow-up services. Sherri was able to host this training three times during the past year for MSH staff and mental health professionals from throughout the state.

Sherri spoke to MMHNCC administrative staff and Board members about the grant and presented an overview of the Recovery Oriented Cognitive Therapy training with examples of successes already in place at MSH. Community providers have been grateful for the training and are putting the practices in place.

### **Department of Public Health and Human Services**

Zoe Barnard, Administrator of Addictive and Mental Disorders Division of DPHHS, joined the meeting by speaker phone. Zoe gave a brief overview of the current happenings at the following facilities:

- MMHNCC – Lewistown
- Montana State Hospital – Warm Springs
- Montana Chemical Dependency Center – Butte
- Central Bureau – Helena

**Meeting adjourned**