

**MEETING MINUTES**

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**Attendees**

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**Voting Members**

Mr. Chris Mosley, Chair  
Dr. Carol Holtz, Vice Chair  
Mr. Keith Ledford, Treasurer  
Mr. Steve Grimsley, Secretary  
Mr. Pete Quinones, Board Member  
Mr. Randal Crider, Board Member  
Mr. Larry Maxey, Board Member  
Mr. Leland Johnson, Board Member  
Ms. Karen Sparks, Board Member  
Ms. Mary Ghorley, Board Member  
Mr. Thomas Brown, Board Member

**Others Present**

Mr. Jim Catanzaro, Jr., Legal Counsel  
Ms. Melanie Dallas, Chief Executive Officer  
Ms. Stephanie Bishop, Chief Compliance Officer  
Ms. Marla Flynn, Chief Financial Officer  
Ms. Dena Payne, Chief Operating Officer  
Ms. Angela Velez, Director of Intensive Services  
Ms. Kathleen Varda, Foundation Director  
Ms. Melissa O'Brien, Marketing Director  
Mr. Mike Mullet, Community Relations Director  
Ms. Melissa Stone, Executive Secretary

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**I. Call to Order**

**Action:** Chair Chris Mosley called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

**Action:** The agenda was approved as presented upon unanimous vote of motion by Vice Chair Carol Holtz and second by Mr. Leland Johnson.

**III. Executive Session**

**Action:** Upon unanimous vote of motion by Mr. Pete Quinones and second by Vice Chair Carol Holtz, the Governing Board moved into Executive Session to authorize negotiations to purchase, dispose of, or lease property; to discuss or deliberate on the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or an employee; and to consult with legal counsel regarding pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings,

or other judicial action brought by or against the facility, or any officer or employee, or in which the facility or any officer or employee may be directly involved.

**IV. Reconvention of Regular Session**

**Action:** The Chair was authorized to sign the necessary documents to transfer the 180 Wateroak Drive, Cedartown, Georgia, property from Highland Rivers Behavioral Health to the Highland Rivers Foundation upon unanimous vote of motion by Mr. Leland Johnson and second by Mr. Randal Crider.

**Action:** The Highland Rivers Foundation was authorized to accept the bid of \$36,945 from the Georgia Drainage Specialists to fix a sinkhole at 729 Lawrence Street, Marietta, Georgia, upon unanimous vote of motion by Mr. Pete Quinones and second by Mr. Larry Maxey.

**V. Appointment of County Representation Committee**

Chief Executive Officer Melanie Dallas reminded the members that Title 37 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated established code around the governance of community service boards. The code included requirements for the board seats. It was required that each board review its seats two years after the most recent census. It was time for the board to review the code to ensure county representation was appropriate. Chair Chris Mosley asked for volunteers to sit on a county representation committee to undertake the review. Mr. Thomas Brown, Mr. Leland Johnson, and Treasurer Keith Ledford volunteered to sit on the committee. Mr. Mosley requested that Legal Counsel also sit on the committee to ensure accurate interpretation of the code.

**VI. Appointment of the Policy Review Committee**

Chief Executive Officer Melanie Dallas informed the members that Highland Rivers Behavioral Health governing board was accredited. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) standards required that the board conduct an annual review of the board's policies and procedures. Chair Chris Mosley asked for volunteers for a policy review committee. Secretary Steve Grimsley and Ms. Mary Ghorley volunteered to sit on the committee. It was suggested that Ms. Chinwe Okoronkwo would also be an excellent addition to the committee.

**VII. Consent Agenda Items**

**Action:** The following consent agenda items were approved upon unanimous vote of motion by Vice Chair Carol Holtz and second by Mr. Larry Maxey.

- Governing Board Meeting Minutes for June 22, 2022
- FY22 Co-Responder Clinician Contract #44100-026-0000183388
- FY22 Integrated Medicine Contract #4100-026-00003037
- FY22 Staffing Enhancements Contract #44100-026-CMA00003111
- FY23 Behavioral Health Services Contract #44100-261-0262023103
- FY23 Women's Treatment & Recovery Services Contract #44100-261-0262023113
- FY23 Behavioral Health Assessment Contract #44100-909-0000178967
- FY23 Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Contract #44100-261-9072023103
- FY23 Assertive Community Treatment Contract #44100-026-CMA00003117
- FY23 System of Care Contract #44100-026-0000166451 - Amendment #01
- FY23 System of Care Contract #44100-026-CMA00003110
- FY23 Intensive Case Management Contract #44100-026-CMA00003104
- FY23 Case Management Contract #44100-026-0000169767 - Amendment #01
- FY22 Cobb Jail In-reach Case Manager Contract #44100-026-0000170767 - Amendment #01
- FY22 Cobb Integrated Medicine Contract #44100-026-0000173775 - Amendment #01

- FY22 Cobb Crisis Respite Apartments Contract #44100-026-0000172508 - Amendment #01

### **VIII. Agency Scorecard**

Chief Operating Officer Dena Payne directed the members to the agency scorecards in the packet. She gave the following highlights from the Cobb scorecard.

- The majority of the scorecard was highlighted in yellow. This was due to the highlighted metrics being combined with the Highland Rivers Behavioral Health scorecard.
- The critical incidents metric exceeded the goal and had improved significantly.
- The annual training metric was higher than the prior year at 86%.

Ms. Payne directed the members to the Highland Rivers Behavioral Health scorecard. She gave the following highlights from the scorecard.

- Most of the categories were integrated because all counties were on one system together.
- The percent of staff meeting 90% of their productivity and the overall productivity dropped due to bringing on the Cobb County staff. The staff were still in their training period. They would start on the pay for performance model effective July 1st.
- The audit scores were for the whole agency. The metric had dropped due to the intellectual/developmental disability chart audits starting up again. The providers had to download items from the DBHDD system and upload them to the Carelogic system.
- The operating margin was positive in June. There was 46.6 days cash on hand.
- The collection to fee for service net revenue metric was 169%. This could be attributed to DBHDD giving the agency an allotment from the maximum reimbursement level (MRL).
- The bad debt to fee for service net revenue metric was 3.2% due to the cleanup of some old claims.
- The services provided versus services billed metric had decreased to 91%. Billing was working with the administrative services organization (ASO) to integrate Cobb County into their system.
- The services provided with an authorization exceeded the goal. The Cobb County clinicians are doing their own authorizations now.
- The HR metrics were for the whole agency. The turnover rate continued to be high. New people came on board and would leave when they found a position with a higher salary. The metrics would be reviewed to see if they needed to remain the same for FY23.
- The critical incident metric had fallen slightly under the goal.
- Overtime was 2.2% of payroll.
- The annual training metric increased from 74% in FY21 to 92% in FY22.

Mr. Pete Quinones asked if the agency had a write-off report and if the report was tracked to ensure claims were sent out in a timely manner. Ms. Payne stated that there was a process for tracking claims. She also met with the Director of Receivables every month to reconcile any variances. Mr. Quinones asked if there was a shortage of staff in that department. Ms. Payne stated the staff in the department had a long tenure.

### **IX. Finance Committee Report**

Treasurer Keith Ledford informed the members that the finance committee had reviewed the financials. He asked Chief Financial Officer Marla Flynn to give a synopsis of the financials. Ms. Flynn directed the members to the Cobb County financials in the packet. The balance



sheet was as of June 2022. The balance sheet showed cash at \$4.1 million. The accounts receivables were up due to the timing of payments from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD). The accounts payable were up in correlation to the accounts receivable due to the consolidation. The other current liabilities in June increased due to the timing differences of accruals of the State Health Benefit Plan. There was also an other post-employment benefit (OPEB) adjusting journal entry.

The profit and loss statement showed total program revenue of \$23,890,968. Medicaid was down because of an error that misclassified Medicare in the amount of \$399,247. Medicaid revenue was lower than budget due to the lower than anticipated billing in the Peer, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), and Intensive Case Management (ICM) programs. There were also some vacant positions in the programs. Medicaid waiver revenue was lower than budgeted due to the intellectual/developmental disability (IDD) day programs not recovering from COVID as quickly as anticipated. IDD also closed down a group home. The fee for service revenue was lower than budgeted due to the lower than budgeted outpatient case management productivity and vacant positions. Contract revenue was lower than budgeted due to the cancelation of the detention center contract. CMO's revenues decreased due to the seasonal fluctuations in the billable revenues. Medicare/commercial insurance is down due to vacancies in positions. Total expenses were \$22,857,048. Salaries were down due to the number of vacant positions. The agency staffing expenses were over budget in the Behavioral Health Crisis Center (BHCC). Staffing contracts were being combined. The increase was offset by the lower payroll expenses. Pharmaceuticals and lab fees were down. The pest control expense was over budget due to a bed bug treatment that was not in the budget. The statement of net position showed total current assets at \$7,530,618. The total current liabilities were \$582,971. The total net position was \$4,481,458. The graphs showed a current ratio of 10.95. Accounts receivable days outstanding were 47.41. There was 72.70 days cash on hand. There were some issues with operating margin in regards to calculations and classification that were being rectified. Mr. Pete Quinones asked if there were any issues when the financials were switched from a cash basis to an accrual basis. Ms. Flynn stated there were some issues and fluctuations. The issues have been fixed.

Ms. Flynn directed the members to the Highland Rivers financials in the packet. The Balance Sheet was as of June 2022. The total current assets were \$14,144,705 and were \$3,750,947 over the prior year. The agency had a profit in the prior year and there was a profit in the current year. Cash was \$6.4 million and was up from \$2.9 million from the same time last year. This was mainly due to the \$3 million received from DBHDD for the bonuses and raises. Account receivables were up due to the timing of payments from DBHDD and the consolidated funds from the consolidation. Accounts payable were up in correlation to the accounts receivable due to the consolidation. The other current liabilities increased due to timing differences of accruals of the State Health Benefits Plan. The KPIs showed 46.6 days cash on hand and a current ratio of 2.6.

The profit and loss statement FY22 year to date through June 2022 showed total revenue of \$52,134,797. The grant in aid was up \$3 million over the prior year due to the supplemental funding for the bonuses and raises. Fee for service revenue was down from last year due to receiving fixed payments last year versus fee for service for FY23. The Medicaid waiver was down due to the closing of three group homes. CMO's revenues decreased due to the seasonal fluctuations. Medicare and commercial insurance were down due to vacancies in positions. Other miscellaneous revenue was up due to receiving CARES Act funds of \$378,000 in November and \$261,000 in December. The total expenses were \$49,826,433. Salaries were down due to vacancies. Contract labor had increased due to hiring new staff through Ascend. All IDD related expenses were low due to the closing of group homes. Pharmaceuticals costs were lower due to the timing of invoices from the MAT (Medication Assisted Treatment) program. Telecommunication and systems costs were high due to the consolidation. Professional fees were high due to increased legal fees. The net profit year to date

was \$2,308,364. The agency was in a good financial position.

**X. Compliance Committee Report**

Committee Chair Larry Maxey informed the members that it was a good committee meeting. It was reported that all Cobb County records were now on the computer. Incidents of falls have also decreased tremendously. He asked Chief Compliance Officer Stephanie Bishop to give an update from the earlier meeting. Ms. Bishop stated that she had presented data regarding incident reports at the meeting. The incidents reported for June were just for Highland Rivers. The incidents reported in July were for all the consolidated counties. The addition of the data from the consolidated counties made it appear that incidents had increased. Ms. Bishop stated that she had also presented the draft annual compliance report to the members. It contained everything that was done under the seven elements of a compliance program and how in line the agency was in regards to those elements. The draft will be presented at the next executive compliance committee meeting.

**XI. GACSB Strategic Planning Retreat Discussion**

Mr. Leland Johnson informed the members that the Georgia Association of Community Service Boards (GACSB) was made up of all the CEOs of the community service boards (CSBs) and 1 board member from each CSB. The GACSB had just held their annual strategic planning retreat. He and Chief Executive Officer Melanie Dallas attended the retreat. Commissioner Judy Fitzgerald participated in the retreat and gave her thoughts on what the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) and the CSBs needed to be thinking about and doing for the future. Her thoughts included the following:

- Finances needed to be budget neutral for next year.
- The Behavioral Health Commission has done some good work in the last two and a half years. It has been extended and there will be an emphasis on child and adolescent services.
- The Care Management Organization (CMO) procurement was underway. A whitepaper crafted by the GACSB was in the packet.
- The Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) had a new Office of Strategic Planning which would also encompass health. The Commissioner was not sure where it was going to go.
- The 988 line was up and running.
- The opioid settlement was winding its way through the bureaucracy and courts.
- The behavioral health portion of the Department of Justice (DOJ) settlement seemed to be making progress. The Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (IDD) portion was not making progress.
- DBHDD was commissioning studies on IDD rates and behavioral health rates that the legislature would use as guideposts.

The Commissioner made the statement that CSBs needed to think of how they would function in the future if DBHDD only funded forensic services and hospitals. What would happen if DBHDD wasn't a payer anymore? What type of independent network might CSBs have? Would it include mergers, acquisitions, or sharing of services? Mr. Johnson stated that Ms. Dallas was on the executive committee of the GACSB and would be working with the GACSB to answer the questions posed by the Commissioner.

Ms. Dallas stated that the CSBs suffered from an identity crisis. People didn't know what services CSBs provided or what they did. The GACSB executive committee talked about marketing the CSBs. They also talked about how the network could become more accountable and ensure that services were provided in all areas. She stated that Highland Rivers was poised and ready to move forward. Chair Chris Mosley thanked Mr. Johnson for attending the strategic retreat and providing an update for the board.



## **XII. CEO Report**

Chief Executive Officer Melanie Dallas directed the members to the CEO report in the packet. She gave the following highlights from the report.

- Ms. Dallas introduced Ms. Angela Velez. Ms. Velez was selected to fill the Director of Intensive Services position. She asked Ms. Velez to introduce herself. Ms. Velez informed the members that she was licensed in four states. She was also an Applied Behavior Analyst and helped to support individuals with autism. She has experience in crisis management, utilization review, and the provision of services.
- The first cohort of the leadership academy attended training in Cartersville. Ms. Linda Kohanov conducted the training and there was positive feedback from the participants. The cohort asked to work with horses to help with the training. Ms. Dallas was working to find a venue that was not cost prohibitive.
- The Office of Planning and Budget and the Governor's Office of Health Strategy visited Highland Rivers in July. The visit allowed Ms. Dallas and her team to provide information about the services provided by the agency and to establish key relationships. The visitors wanted to understand operations and eligibility for state contracted services. Mr. Cody Whitlock of the Governor's Office connected Ms. Dallas with Commissioner Patricia Ross from the Department of Veteran Services. The connection led to Ms. Dallas and her team joining a taskforce on veterans' services that includes all cabinet level departments.
- Ms. Carol Carabello, the new Director of Mental Health Services for DBHDD, and her team met with Highland Rivers on August 15th. The topics discussed in the meeting were co-response, emergency room assessment, and a possible crisis diversion center.
- Ms. Dallas and her team have put in several ARPA requests in Cobb County. Cobb wanted the funds to go towards public safety, mental health services, and substance-use services. The proposal included expanding co-response, placing a clinician in the 911 center, and placing recovery navigators in the courts. An additional request was for the Mothers Making a Change program. It is currently housed in apartments that are not in a good area and need considerable renovation. If awarded, the funds would go to purchasing the building currently used to house programs in Austell and remodeling the building into a residential facility.
- Highland Rivers has applied for a grant in Cherokee County for a rapid response team for veterans for suicide mitigation. Highland Rivers also applied for a co-response grant in Cherokee County.

## **XIII. Community Relations & Marketing Report**

Community Relations Director Mike Mullet directed the members to the draft annual report that had been provided. It was a collaborative effort between Mr. Mullet, Marketing Director Melissa O'Brien, and other staff. Mr. Mullet stated that Highland Rivers would be working with the Georgia Association of Community Services Boards to provide marketing materials to position community service boards (CSBs) as providers of choice and to explain what a CSB is and what it does.

## **XIV. Highland Rivers Foundation Report**

Foundation Director Kathleen Varda directed the members to the foundation report in the packet. She gave the following highlights from her report.

- The Green Zone breakfast ignited a lot of touchpoints and meetings. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) was really excited about the concept and wants to take the model around the country. It is catching fire and moving quickly. All that was needed was the initial capital. Mohawk was still interested and asked for more information about the project.

- The Appalachian Regional Commission awarded the foundation a three-year grant to support the peer workforce.
- The Georgia Council on Substance Abuse awarded the foundation a \$2,000 grant to hold the 4th Annual Operation Gratitude. The event was delayed until October 15th. It will be held at the American Legion in Cherokee County. Flyers and invitations would be sent out. It was a family event.
- The Morehouse School of Medicine grant was heading into its third year. Highland Rivers had provided substance use disorder education to over 75 community members and distributed 150 Narcan kits.

**XV. Recognition of Visitors**

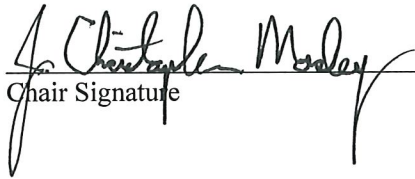
There were no visitors.

**XVI. Public Comment**

Chair Chris Mosley presented Mr. Leland Johnson with an award for his dedication and service as the FY22 Governing Board Chair. The members thanked Mr. Johnson for his loyal service.

**XVII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned.

  
Chair Signature

10-26-22  
Date