

**HIGHLAND RIVERS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**April 26, 2023**

**Cartersville Chamber of Commerce  
122 W. Main Street, Cartersville, GA, 30120**

*Members Present:*

Leland Johnson, Acting Chair  
Dr. Carol Holtz, Vice Chair  
Keith Ledford, Treasurer  
Steve Grimsley, Secretary  
Tonya Riddick, Board Member  
Chinwe Okoronkwo, Board Member  
Larry Maxey, Board Member  
Michael McElveen, Board Member  
Karen Sparks, Board Member  
Mary Ghorley, Board Member  
Thomas Brown, Board Member

**ACTIONS TAKEN:**

- ▶ Called meeting to order.
- ▶ Approved agenda.
- ▶ Approved entry into Executive Session to authorize negotiations to purchase, dispose of, or lease property 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.
- ▶ Reconvened into regular session.
- ▶ Authorized the CEO to complete a corrective deed for Lot 826 of Beaver Forest, Unit 19, in Ellijay, Georgia.
- ▶ Ratified the completion of the Memorandums of Understanding and the complete of the Participation Packages to continue in the national opioid settlements.
- ▶ Accepted the FY22 Highland Rivers Behavioral Health financial audit.
- ▶ Approved consent agenda items.
- ▶ Adjourned meeting.

**MEETING MINUTES**

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Attendees

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**Voting Members:**

Mr. Leland Johnson, Acting Chair  
Dr. Carol Holtz, Vice Chair  
Mr. Keith Ledford, Treasurer  
Ms. Steve Grimsley, Secretary  
Ms. Tonya Riddick, Board Member  
Ms. Chinwe Okoronkwo, Board Member  
Mr. Larry Maxey, Board Member  
Mr. Michael McElveen, Board Member  
Ms. Karen Sparks, Board Member  
Ms. Mary Ghorley, Board Member  
Mr. Thomas Brown, Board Member

**Others Present:**

Mr. James 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. Erica Collins, Vice President of Human Resources  
Ms. Cheryl Lewis, Vice President of Mental Health Services  
Dr. Michelle Hamm, Vice President of Substance Abuse Services  
Ms. Kathleen Varda, Foundation Director  
Mr. Mike Mullet, Community Relations Director  
Ms. Melissa O'Brien, Marketing Director  
Ms. Alexandria Sanford, Grants Manager  
Ms. Melissa Stone, Executive Coordinator & Board Liaison

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**I. Call to Order**

**Action:** Acting Chair Leland Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

**Action:** The agenda was approved as presented upon unanimous vote of motion by Ms. Karen Sparks and second by Vice Chair Carol Holtz.

**III. Executive Session**

**Action:** Upon unanimous vote of motion by Ms. Mary Ghorley and second by Vice Chair Carol Holtz, the Governing Board moved into Executive Session to authorize negotiations to purchase, dispose of, or lease property 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:** Chief Executive Officer Melanie Dallas was authorized to complete the corrective deed for Lot 826 of Beaver Forest, Unit 19, in Ellijay, Georgia, upon unanimous vote of motion by Ms. Karen Sparks and second by Mr. Larry Maxey.

**Action:** The Governing Board ratified the completion of the Memorandums of Understanding and the completion of the Participation Packages to continue in the national opioid settlements upon unanimous vote of motion by Ms. Karen Sparks and second by Mr. Larry Maxey.

#### **V. Appointment of Officer Nomination Committee**

Acting Chair Leland Johnson informed the members that it was time to elect new officers for the Governing Board. He requested that Ms. Karen Sparks, Ms. Chinwe Okoronkwo, Ms. Mary Ghorley, Mr. Thomas Brown, and Mr. Pete Quinones sit on the nomination committee. Ms. Karen Sparks will lead the committee.

#### **VI. FY22 HRBH Financial Audit**

Acting Chair Leland Johnson stated the attached audit report was only for Highland Rivers Behavioral Health (HRBH). The Cobb and Haralson county audits will be completed in the near future. He had received the HRBH audit and a letter from the auditor. The auditor had a recommendation that was also included in the FY21 audit report. HRBH needed to have the ability to reconcile accounts on a regular basis. Mr. Johnson stated he had discussed the recommendation with Chief Executive Officer Melanie Dallas. It was his understanding that Ms. Dallas and Chief Financial Officer Marla Flynn were working to hire a staff accountant in the financial department who would be responsible for the reconciliations. Any discrepancies would be analyzed and corrected as they happened instead of at the end of the fiscal year. The position had been posted. It was his recommendation that the financial audit be accepted.

**Action:** The FY22 Highland Rivers Behavioral Health financial audit was accepted upon unanimous vote of motion by Ms. Karen Sparks and second by Mr. Larry Maxey.

#### **VII. Consent Agenda Items**

**Action:** The following consent agenda items were approved upon unanimous vote of motion by Ms. Karen Sparks and second by Treasurer Keith Ledford.

- Governing Board Minutes for February 22, 2023
- FY24 DBHDD Contracts - Board Resolution
- FY23 High Utilization Management Contract #44100-026-CMA00003640
- FY23 Mental Health Treatment Court Case Manager Contract #44100-026-CMA00003541

#### **VIII. Compliance Committee Report**

Committee Chair Larry Maxey informed the members that the committee had a really good meeting. There was a lot of discussion and the members got a better understanding of the compliance program at Highland Rivers Behavioral Health. Chief Compliance Officer Stephanie Bishop informed the members that she had submitted the intent for survey information to the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). She hoped to get a response in June from CARF with the designated survey dates. The Governing Board would need to consider which member would speak with the survey team for the board accreditation portion of the survey. She stated the next big project would be accreditation



through the National Association for the Dually Diagnosed (NADD). It was required by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) for CSBs who were awarded Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCBHC) contracts.

**IX. Finance Committee Report**

Treasurer Keith Ledford informed the members that the committee had a great meeting. Chief Financial Officer Marla Flynn informed the members there was 65.8 days cash on hand year to date as of February 2023. The standard was 30 days. The current ratio was 3.3 which was excellent. The net income was \$1,818,741 year to date. The agency was financially stable.

**X. Agency Scorecard**

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

- Productivity had started back on an upward trend. It was historically lower during the holidays.
- The quality metric was below the goal due to Cobb staff learning the new system. It was a learning experience.
- The financial metrics showed a negative operating margin. The collections to fee for service revenue metric was 103% and fluctuated based on payer responses.
- The bad debt metric has been met.
- The services provided with an authorization metric was met.
- The finance committee discussed human resource metrics. The workforce continued to be a challenge.
- The DBHDD critical incident metric was met.
- The annual scores hadn't changed.

**XI. 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 had crafted a letter to go out to all the county commissions in the Highland Rivers Behavioral Health (HRBH) area. The letter outlined the requirements in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated for board appointments. It also included a reminder about the importance of ensuring there were no conflicts of interest for potential members. She stated the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) was interested in CSB boards and how they worked. She had sent DBHDD Commissioner Kevin Tanner a copy of the letter also.
- The DBHDD auditors continued to request information. They were trying to understand the workings of a consolidation. The information would be used to create a road map for future consolidations.
- HRBH was chosen to be one of the next Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (CCBHCs) in Georgia. The team has jumped on the challenge.
- Vice President of Community Relations and Development Kathleen Varda and her team have been successful in getting 75% of grants submitted.
- Ms. Dallas and Ms. Varda will be attending NATCON to give three presentations. They would be presenting on the Appalachian Regional Commission grant (Recovery to Work), the Green Zone concept, and co-response programs.
- The workforce continues to be the biggest challenge. This is a statewide and national trend. House Bill 520 did not pass the Georgia Senate. The CSBs had responded to the legislature about the bill and how it would decimate the workforce.

## **XII. Find Help Demonstration**

Community Relations Director Mike Mullet gave a demonstration of the Find Help platform. It could be used to find resources in the community. Highland Rivers Behavioral Health (HRBH) had a branded Find Help site and a link to the site on the HRBH website home page. Community members can search for resources by entering their zip code. It allowed them to get easily accessible information on HRBH and other community resources. Chief Executive Officer Melanie Dallas stated it was a closed loop referral system that allowed HRBH to track referrals and other information. Chief Operating Officer Dena Payne stated it would be integrated with the HRBH electronic health records system so referrals could go straight into the records. Mr. Mullet stated there were reports that allowed the team to analyze data and sort it by community. Ms. Mary Ghorley stated Piedmont had also started using Find Help. She was very happy to hear that the HRBH case management team was using the product. Ms. Tonya Riddick asked if the information was being marketed. Mr. Mullet stated a press release had been sent out and the information was also blasted out on Facebook and Instagram. Additionally, a report was sent out each month to all staff to remind them to log onto the site and to post the flyers in their clinics.

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

Community Relations Director Mike Mullet stated he and Marketing Director Melissa O'Brien had been working on marketing and community outreach. The team had been working as support for some of the grants. Several of the grants had community outreach, collateral, and other marketing requirements. The team also engaged with human resources on new recruitment strategies, including revamping the careers page on the website, staff testimonials, and outreach collateral.

## **XIV. Grants Report**

Vice President of Community Relations and Development Kathleen Varda introduced Ms. Alex Sanford. Ms. Sanford is the grants manager for Highland Rivers Behavioral Health. She is responsible for writing and managing grants. She brought in \$19.3 million in multi-year funding. She did project management with the Appalachian Regional Commission Recovery to Work initiative. Ms. Kathleen reviewed the grant report with the members.

## **XV. Highland Rivers Foundation Report**

Vice President of Community Relations and Development Kathleen Varda directed the members to the foundation report in the packet. She stated the highest priority was the capital campaign to purchase and renovate a new location for the Mothers Making a Change program in Cobb County. It was a \$4.9 million campaign. The Woodruff Foundation had made a soft commitment of \$490,000. The Cobb Community Foundation was interested in helping run the fund. Ms. Varda and her team were reviewing the agreements. The board members could help the campaign by getting the Highland Rivers Foundation's name out there and talking about the need with friends and family. Ms. Tonya Riddick stated an easy way to support the foundation was to make an annual contribution.

## **XVI. Recognition of Visitors**

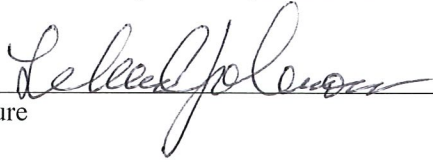
Acting Chair Leland Johnson recognized Chairwoman Lisa Cupid from the Cobb County Board of Commissioners. Chief Executive Officer Melanie Dallas thanked Chairwoman Cupid and the Cobb County Board of Commissioners for their continued support.

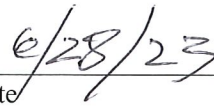
## **XVII. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**XVIII. Adjournment**

**Action:** The meeting was adjourned upon unanimous vote of motion by Vice Chair Carol Holtz and second by Ms. Tonya Riddick.

  
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Signature

  
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Date