

**Joint minutes of the Butler County Mental Health Board and the Butler County  
Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services Board Ad Hoc Committees  
September 23, 2009**

The Ad Hoc Committee of the Butler County Mental Health Board and the Butler County Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services Board met on Wednesday, September 23, 2009 at 7:30 am at the Board office located at 5963 Boymel Drive, Fairfield, Ohio.

**Welcome/Attendance**

Individuals present at the meeting were: Laura Amriott, Esq., BCMHB Immediate Past President and Ad Hoc Committee Chair, Bob Myron, BCMHB President, Pat Deis-Gleeson, RN, BSN, BCMHB Secretary, Dick Chartier BCADAS President and Ad Hoc Committee Chair, Bruce Jewett BCADAS Board member, and Dr. Ted Hunter, BCADAS Board member.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**The group approved the Joint Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes for September 14, 2009 unanimously.**

**Purpose of meeting**

As agreed upon at the September 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, the group was to focus on a further review of the proposed tables of organization and administrative budgets presented by the BCMHB and BCADAS Executive Directors. Additionally, this meeting was to be used to identify consensus items and aspects of a possible consolidation of the BCMHB and BMADAS Boards which members of the respective Ad hoc committees were comfortable agreeing upon. Finally, discussion was planned to identify items holding the Ad hoc committees from moving forward with a recommendation to their respective Boards.

Discussion among the group was consistent that the main goal of the Ad hoc committees is to explore the best method in which to serve the respective client populations both now and in the future. Two primary options were identified: 1) If consolidation or merger was determined to provide the greatest opportunity for optimal service for clients of both boards, then each Ad hoc committee would recommend to its respective Board that a merger was in the best interest for all interested parties; and 2) if consolidation or merger was not unanimously embraced by both Ad hoc committees, then a plan would be developed for a consolidation or merger, but the respective Boards would not push for said consolidation or merger.

Discussion then moved to identifying those items or concepts which are believed to be holding the Ad hoc committees back from moving forward with a recommendation to consolidate or merge. Dr. Hunter and Bruce Jewett expressed concern that emphasis on the drug and alcohol specialty would get "lost" in a combined board. Pat Deis-Gleeson reminded the group that by statute, a new combined 18-member board would be

comprised of 50% expressing an interest in mental health issues and 50% expressing an interest in drug and alcohol addiction issues.

A review of the proposed Table of Organization shows both an Executive Director as well as a Director of AoD Services, plus a position of Coordinator of AoD Coalition which is paid for by grant money designated towards prevention efforts.

Dr. Hunter shared his belief there will be "slippage" in a combined Board away from a focus on AoD services toward mental health services. He indicated he has observed this happening before and expressed a concern that drug and alcohol clients should not be treated as mental health clients because the two groups require different treatments and different philosophies of care. However, Ms. Amriott reminded the group that many of the individuals targeted for care are already clients of both Boards.

Bruce Jewitt expressed concern that certain salaries for various Mental Health Board positions are excessive. However, Ms. Amriott reminded that those salaries are comparable to other counties of similar population and budget size and that salary amounts have been set based on researching other such counties. Lastly, Ms. Amriott pointed out that many of the Mental Health Board staff are licensed professionals with Masters or Doctorate level educations which warrant higher salaries than for those without such credentials.

BCADAS members expressed a desire to remove the cost of MCSIS from projected savings in a combined board. Such removal results in deleting \$17,850 from the BCADAS budget and \$32,150 from the BCMHB budget. An opinion was expressed that these amounts should not be included in evaluating true cost savings of a combined Board since both Boards have independent plans to discontinue their current MCSIS contracts.

However, even when removing MCSIS amounts from a proposed combined budget, it is anticipated that significant cost savings would be achieved and that those cost savings could be utilized to improve the quality and number of service units in the county for the defined client populations.

The group discussed the need for strong leadership from all staff in a combined Board so that the care of AoD clients are not "trees" lost in the "forest" of Mental Health services. It is believed that conscious effort will be necessary to maintain an emphasis on AoD prevention, since the treatment philosophies of the two groups are perceived as being different.

Discussion then turned towards those items on which there is general agreement. Those were identified as the following: 1) a combined Board can save significant money; 2) money saved can be used to increase the quantity of client services in the county; 3) services to all clients will fluctuate depending on the flow of money from state and federal government sources; 4) a belief that clients could be served well by a combined Board; 5) desired results can be achieved without wasted energy or effort; 6) there are

benefits associated with maintaining the autonomy of emphasis on drug and alcohol issues and prevention; 7) it will be necessary for the Ad hoc committees to outline a plan for any consolidation or merger; 8) it is preferable to have the approval of both Boards to continue or move forward; and 9) it is time for the Boards to either endorse the concept of consolidating or merging, or determine there is not consensus to do so.

BCADAS Ad hoc committee members expressed their hesitancy regarding a consolidation or merger, but also that they can envision a combined Board working and functioning efficiently. Those members can see the efficacy and efficiency of a combined Board and they have seen enough evidence to see the advantages of moving forward to the next step of putting together an action plan.

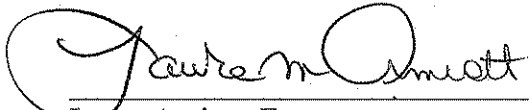
### **Next Steps**

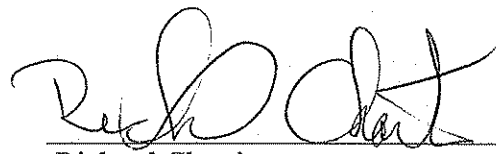
The BCADAS Ad hoc committee members indicated they would have discussion concerning the consolidation or merger topic during their Board governance committee meeting scheduled for the first week in October. Also, it is anticipated that the BCMHB will discuss the topic at their full Board meeting in October, and the BCADAS will conduct similar discussions at their next full Board meeting in November.

Pat Deis-Gleeson expressed the importance that all members of both Boards receive copies of these minutes in their packets for their next full monthly Board meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Laura Amriott, Esq.  
BCMHB Ad Hoc Committee Chair

  
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Richard Chartier  
BCADAS Ad Hoc Committee Chair