

**Florida Parishes Human Services Authority**  
**Governing Board Meeting**  
**February 28, 2014**  
**835 Pride Drive, Suite B**  
**Hammond, LA 70401**  
**9:30 A.M.**

Attorney Mack McCraney, Sr., Assistant District Attorney of the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial District Court conducted the swearing in ceremony of the newly appointed board representative, Mr. David Cressy, representing St. Tammany parish, and the reappointments of Ms. Rubby Douglas, representing Livingston Parish, and Ms. Mary Pirosko, representing Tangipahoa parish.

Mary Pirosko, Chair, called the meeting of the Florida Parishes Human Services Authority (FPHSA) Governing Board to order at 9:35 a.m.

Varetta Spears conducted a roll call. A quorum was established.

In attendance:

**Board Members:** David Cressy; Linda Deamer; Rubby Douglas; Cheryl Klein; Mary Pirosko; Edward Ratcliff; Thomas Zachary, Jr.

**FPHSA Staff / Guest:** Melanie Watkins, Executive Director; Trent Myers, Administrative Director; Tina B. Linder, HR Director; Dr. Schoener Laprairie, MHS; Dr. Tra Ladner, MHS; Sue Hutti, ADS; Rachelle Bethel-Sibley, FPHSA Administration; Rebecca Soley, FPHSA Administration; Varetta Spears, FPHSA Administration; Attorney Mack McCraney, Sr., 21<sup>st</sup> JDC; Lisa Longfellow, Department of Health & Hospitals (DHH)/Office of Behavioral Health (OBH)

Prayer was offered by Mr. Ratcliff.

**Excused Absences:**

Ms. Douglas made a motion to excuse the absence of Ms. Robert and Ms. Soileau: seconded by Ms. Klein.

Roll call vote unanimous; motion carried.

**Review/Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Deamer made a motion to accept the minutes of the previous meeting as written; seconded by Mr. Ratcliff.

Roll call vote unanimous; motion carried.

**Ad Hoc Nominations Committee:**

The Ad Hoc Nominations Committee submitted a report, nominating the following board members to serve as officers for the 2014 year: Ms. Pirosko, Chair and Ms. Douglas, Vice-Chair.

Ms. Pirosko called for nominations from the floor, there were none.

Mr. Cressy made a motion that the nominations be closed as submitted by the Ad Hoc Nominations Committee; seconded by Ms. Deamer.

Roll call vote unanimous; motion carried.

Mr. Cressy made a motion to accept the nominations of the committee; seconded by Ms. Klein.

Roll call vote unanimous; motion carried.

**Comments & Questions:**

Ms. Pirosko welcomed all in attendance and extended an opportunity for public input.

Ms. Pirosko congratulated Ms. Deamer on her recognition in a featured article in the Lions Roar, Southeastern Louisiana University Newspaper.

Ms. Klein expressed concern regarding the recent cancellation of the January board meeting due to inclement icy weather conditions. A discussion among board members concluded that it is necessary to review the bylaws and include procedures for the board to conduct business in the event a general meeting must be cancelled or rescheduled.

Ms. Pirosko appointed an Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee to review the current bylaws and include procedures for the board to follow in the event meetings are cancelled in the future. The committee will submit the preliminary revisions to the board for review. The committee includes: Ms. Deamer; Ms. Douglas; Ms. Klein.

**Coordinated System of Care (CSoC)**

Ms. Watkins introduced Ms. Lisa Longfellow, DHH/OBH Liaison for CSoC. She explained that Ms. Longfellow has met in 3 of the 5 parishes served by FPHSA to begin the implementation of the CSoC initiative for our area.

Ms. Longfellow said that the current goal of CSoC is to build interest and support in the community. She explained the criteria for eligibility for high-need, at-risk youth to be served by this program and gave a brief overview of the CSoC initiative.

### **Executive Director's Report:**

Melanie Watkins submitted a copy of the Executive Director's Report for February to members of the governing board. She outlined the content which included:

- ❖ On behalf of the FPHSA Executive Administration, Ms. Watkins welcomed everyone to the new location. She said that there are still some minor things to be addressed with regards to the facility, staffing assignments, and responsibilities; however, in spite of the minor things to address, everyone is gradually getting settled and adapting to the new routines and workflow at Pride Drive, Hammond, LA.
- ❖ Update on Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Ms. Watkins reported that the most immediate newsflash is that FPHSA just received notification from CARF this week that the agency has been accredited for three years. She said that she is very pleased and proud to have obtained this accreditation, and commended the staff, who worked diligently to make it happen. Ms. Watkins said that the plan is to send out community newsletters to inform the stakeholders of the agency's accreditation, as well as the recent relocation and consolidation efforts.
- ❖ Legislative Audit. Ms. Watkins reported that the agency just finished responding to all of the Legislative Auditor's requests for information. She reported that FPHSA's staff had an interview with the auditing staff on January 9<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Watkins reported that in addition to the agency's routine two-year audit, the auditors are also following up with regards to the previous audit report issued on August 14, 2013, regarding the implementation of the Louisiana Behavioral Health Partnership (LBHP) and Magellan as the managed care entity. She said that they are in contact with two other districts/authorities, as well, regarding the current situation so that they can assess the status and/or if any improvements have been noted with regard to the LBHP implementation since the initial audit. Ms. Watkins said that it is their goal to have the audits completed for to the upcoming legislative session.
- ❖ Safety Audit. Ms. Watkins reported that the agency's annual Safety Audit was conducted by the Office of Risk Management (ORM). She explained that since the state is self-insured, this is very important as it impacts the fees that the agency is assessed for coverage through ORM. She announced that the agency was found to be 100 percent in compliance, with no significant findings or recommendations.
- ❖ Hiring freeze implemented. Ms. Watkins reported that on January 15, 2014, Governor Jindal issued an Executive Order(BJ14-1) implementing a Limited Hiring Freeze to be in effect until June 30, 2015, which will be through the next fiscal year. She explained

that direct care positions are considered to be exempt from the hiring freeze; however, the agency has been notified that the mid-year budget cut amount will include 8 positions.

- ❖ Human Service Interagency Council (HSIC) meeting update. Ms. Watkins reported that at the HSIC meeting held on January 16, 2014, it was announced that a single provider has been selected to conduct the Independent Assessments (IAs) on a statewide basis for Magellan. She said that Pathways, which is currently based in Alexandria, LA and Magellan, are in negotiations with regards to payment rates and how the new assessment process would be implemented across the state. Ms. Watkins said that the tentative plan is that they would start operations in major metropolitan areas first as those areas are more densely populated and travel would not be a major factor as it will be in the rural areas of the state.
- ❖ Update on proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2014-15. Ms. Watkins reported that on January 24, 2014, the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2014-15 was presented to the Joint Legislative Committee for the Budget by the Commissioner of Administration, Kristy Nichols. Ms. Watkins explained that this was the first year the agency had no prior discussions or knowledge about the budget proposed by DOA. She said that a copy of the proposed Executive Budget was received late, after working hours, and there was a request to respond with an impact statement in a short timeframe.
- ❖ Update on St. Tammany Parish Needs Assessment process. Ms. Watkins reported that some of FPHSA staff recently participated in the St. Tammany Parish Needs Assessment process regarding behavioral health services for the parish. She said Louisiana Public Health Institute (LPHI) is coordinating the assessment process with consultants from the National Council for Community Behavioral Health Care. Ms. Watkins said that they have met with numerous stakeholders, in addition to staff at Lurline Smith Mental Health Center. Ms. Watkins said that she met with the consultants on January 15, 2014 to discuss specific details about FPHSA and the needs of the area, more specifically St. Tammany parish. Ms. Watkins conveyed that in regards to FPHSA, all five parishes served by the agency must be considered. The representatives said that they understood the role of FPHSA and would take that into consideration when compiling recommendations. She said that they have been conducting a thorough and comprehensive assessment on behalf of St. Tammany Parish as they have met with all of the local hospitals/emergency rooms in the parish, St. Tammany Parish Coroner's office, other community providers and stakeholders, as well as FPHSA. Ms. Watkins said that given their expertise on a national level, she and key staff are anxious to hear their findings and recommendations for an improved system of care. She said the projected goal date for their report is April 9, 2014.

- ❖ Information update. Ms. Watkins reported that as a point of information, the Governor and DOA have contracted with Alvarez and Marsal, a consulting firm, to assess the current state agencies for efficiency of operations in an effort to determine more cost effective ways for the state to do business. She said that the task is on a very tight timeline, given the upcoming Legislative session. The cost of the contract is \$4 million, but the Governor is reportedly confident they will be able to save the state \$500 million as a result of this study.
- ❖ Update on 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District Court (JDC). Ms. Watkins reported that on February 5, 2014, Judge Garcia of the 22<sup>nd</sup> JDC, invited various stakeholders involved with the Behavioral Health Court in St. Tammany Parish, which included FPHSA, along with Senator Ben Nevers; Representative Scott Simon; Dr. Craig Coenson, Magellan CEO; and others, to discuss the need for additional funding for services. She said that following that meeting, the judges from both the 21<sup>st</sup> JDC and 22<sup>nd</sup> JDC, along with the local legislative delegation, all met for a dinner meeting. Ms. Watkins said that FPHSA was a topic of discussion at that meeting and Judge Garcia made them aware that FPHSA has been the lowest funded district/authority per capita. As a result of that meeting, Senator Nevers hosted a meeting on February 24, 2014, in the Senate Conference Room at the Capitol to further discuss funding issues related to FPHSA. Ms. Watkins said that Senator Nevers seems to be very interested in supporting the expansion of services for those individuals served through Behavioral Health Court, as well as other citizens in our area. He seems to be a passionate advocate for those individuals in need of services and is exploring possible ways to increase available funding.
- ❖ Agency update. Ms. Watkins provided a copy of the second issue of the staff newsletter to the board. She also provided a copy of the Rosenblum Mental Health Center C'est Bon Survey Results conducted in October/November 2013 for the board's review. The results outlined how the consumers rated the services received using a grading scale.
- ❖ Re-Entry Drug Court. Ms. Watkins explained that Judge Knight of the 22<sup>nd</sup> JDC in St. Tammany Parish is implementing an innovative new program called Re-entry Court in an effort to rehabilitate offenders and help them get back on track. She said that the program is just for St. Tammany parish at this time. She reported that FPHSA submitted a proposal to provide services for Re-Entry Court and is waiting on a response.

Mr. Ratcliff made a motion to accept the Executive Director's Report; seconded by Ms. Deamer.

Roll call vote unanimous; motion carried.

**Committee Reports:**

**Financial Report:**

Ms. Pirosko deferred to Ms. Sibley for the Financial Report for February. Ms. Sibley gave a brief overview of the projection and billing process with Magellan. She explained that Magellan gave the approval to resume billing on January 27, 2014; however, the agency encountered some problems with the electronic billing system and was unable to process billing. Ms. Sibley reported that billing through Magellan for Medicaid funding was resumed on February 7, 2014 and the agency has started to receive payments. She explained the billing and accounting process with Magellan. She submitted the Monthly Budget Report for month ending January 31, 2014. She explained the details of data contained in the report.

Ms. Douglas inquired about the Escrow Account. Ms. Sibley reported the status of the account.

Ms. Douglas made a motion to accept the Financial Report for the month of February; seconded by Mr. Zachary.

Roll call vote unanimous; motion carried.

**Drug Court Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):**

Ms. Deamer made a motion that the MOU between FPHSA and the 22<sup>nd</sup> JDC for St. Tammany Parish Drug Court for November 1, 2013 thru June 30, 2014 be approved; seconded by Ms. Klein.

Roll call vote unanimous; motion carried.

**Preadmission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR) - MOU:**

Ms. Watkins explained that the PASRR is an assessment performed by staff in the field for clients that maybe in or going into nursing homes to determine if it is an appropriate placement.

Ms. Douglas made a motion that Ms. Watkins proceed with negotiations with the PASRR to conduct business; seconded by Ms. Deamer

Roll call vote unanimous; motion passed.

**Department of Corrections (DOC)**

Ms. Douglas made a motion that Ms. Watkins proceed with negotiations to enter into agreement with DOC; seconded by Ms. Deamer.

Roll call vote unanimous; motion carried.

**Old Business:**

None

**New Business:**

**Policy 003- "Executive Limits – Treatment of Agency Staff:**

Ms. Watkins explained that Policy 003-“Executive Limits – Treatment of Agency Staff” was approved by the board in February 2013. She explained that the policy was submitted for annual review to the board to make any changes deemed necessary.

Ms. Deamer made a motion to accept Policy 003-“Executive Limits – Treatment of Agency Staff”, with no changes; seconded by Mr. Ratcliff.

Roll call vote unanimous motion carried.

**Board Retreat:**

Members of the board discussed possible dates to schedule a Board Retreat. A tentative date was scheduled for June 6, 2014. Members of the FPHSA staff will explore a facilitator for the retreat.

Ms. Deamer commended Ms. Watkins and staff on the diligent work performed and favorable outcomes on the CARF Accreditation and the ORM Audit.

**FPHSA Open House:**

It was discussed that the FPHSA Open House may be scheduled for Friday, March 28, 2014.

Confirmation of the Next Meeting Date:

It was confirmed that the next meeting date of the FPHSA Governing Board will be March 28, 2014 to be held at 835 Pride Drive, Hammond, LA.

The meeting was adjourned.