

MHADA Board Minutes
Cape May County
August 8, 2023

In Attendance:

Membership:	Majken Mechling – Chair	Interested Parties:	Lisa Shaffer	K. Mattleman
	Dave Grusemeyer		Amy Dindak	Jennifer Zoyak
	Mary Dozier		Pat Devaney	Kelly Benigno
	Barry Keefe		Peter Belasco	Jen Arenberg
	Judy Kunec		Lilly Elsohn	
	Rev Tom Dawson		Michelle Myles	Tonia Ahern
			Sueanne Agger	Amy Villano
			Katie Faldetta	Donna Groome
			Bridget DeFiccio	K.Mikus
			Amy Dindak	Kelly Benigno

Call to Order

The virtual meeting was called to order by Majken Mechling at 5:02. Majken acknowledged two visitors from Mending Minds Healing Hearts. An agency in Linwood and Mays Landing that offers mental health treatment. The Board introduced themselves and welcomed the visitors.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the June meeting was made by Rev Dawson, seconded by Barry Keefe. Motion carried.

Reports and Correspondence

Mental Health:

Addiction Services: No report.

GCADA: P. Belasco reported out that GCADA sent out a letter to the Counties advising that they are in the process of identifying additional funding sources to restore the Municipal Alliance Program to previous funding levels. In addition, the LOA for FY24 has been executed for both the DEDR and DMHAS-YL grants and the sub-agreements with municipalities are being executed today.

Old Business

Membership: Pat reported that Lisa Shaffer has requested to join the Board. Lisa gave a brief description of her experience in the mental health and co-occurring field. A motion was made by Mary Dozier, seconded by Rev. Dawson, to request her appointment from the County Commissioners. Motion carried.

Heroin Issue Update:

Kelly reported for Joe Landis: the second vehicle is being customized; the summer camp went really well and the youth were very appreciative; the NARCAN vending machine project is underway. Sueanne gave

her report on OORP and the Recovery Center (see attached report).. In June there were 106 unduplicated visitors and 352 duplicated which shows that people are coming back to the Center. More data is available in the report. Overdose Awareness Day is 8/29/23. The flyer is in the packet. Katie reported that there are 6 youth returning to Coastal Prep in September. She expects more will come once school starts. The OFRT committee will be meeting in August. Pat stated that the JAIL MAT program is continuing to serve about 25 people per month.

EISS, NJ4S and Arrive Together

Michelle Myles reported that EISS continues to serve more clients. In July 63 people were served and 58 of those were walk ins. On average 2 or 3 cases are referred to screening. EISS is open 9-5 five days a week and weekend coverage is available. Arrive Together is doing very well. The relationship between Acenda and the police is strong. In the six weeks , 30 clients have been served and about 65% are co-occurring. Most of the cases are not hospitalized.

Bridget reported that senior staff for NJ4S have been hired and are making key contacts within the two counties. The Advisory Group has been formed and will be meeting this week. Melissa Fox at Acenda is the contact person.

Settlement Funds

Pat reported that the County's Settlement allocation is up to \$665,000. A report is due to the state by September 1st although the time period to be covered is July 2022 to June 30, 2023 so not much has occurred. Peter and Pat explained that the county would like to wait and see what the state will do with their funds as the county funds will be better utilized to fill gaps. It was suggested that there be consideration of some type of memorial where families can go and remember their lost loved ones. Another suggestion was to increase awareness of fentanyl in everything as many people are not as aware of the dangers of the drug in other drugs (meth, cocaine, pills) that people are buying.

New Business

Mid year update on 2023 grant and 2024 plans

Pat reviewed the six month performance of the subcontracts in the Chapter 51 grant. The least utilized is halfway house which is budgeted at 22,950- even though the contract with New Hope is for 15,300 and only 6,590 has been spent. The availability of sober living has seemingly reduced the demand for halfway house services. Although the 2024 allocation has not yet been received, Pat suggested that the extra 7,560 may be re directed if the allocation is less than last year or there is more demand in other services.

Regrading RFPs, Pat outlined the schedule for the RFPs. The recovery center is due 8/9 and Mary Dozier has agreed to review. Judy Kunec also agreed. The remaining three will also need volunteers. Pat will follow up with members to see who is available.

DRCC Recruitment and 7/13/23 session with OEM

Pat explained the shortage of DRCCs across the state and in Cape May County. The Division is currently offering the initial training series which will be repeated in the fall. Currently two people are taking the course. The state has offered 30,000 to counties to plan a recruitment effort as statewide the numbers are down. Pat will follow up.

Collaborative Support Programs

Majken asked Jen Zoyak to present information on the MH recovery center that is now located in Rio Grande. The name of the program is the Learning Recovery Community Wellness Center. Jen said the center is where the Branches used to be in the Village Shops on Rte 47.

It is across the parking lot from the Cape Regional Recovery Center and close to the new location of the Branches. The center has a shower, computers, support groups and is run by peer support staff. The grand opening is scheduled for October. More information will follow.

MAC Update

P. Devaney reported that the MAC may have to do a budget modification to cover increased salary costs and the MAC may have to pick up part of the costs. So, P. Belasco presented the FY23 budget modification that was in the meeting package for approval. This modification would move a total of \$957.16 of unexpended monies from the ODC and training lines to the Salary line to cover part of the increased salary costs due to a retroactive contractual adjustment. Dave Grusemeyer made the motion to approve. Rev. Dawson seconded. Motion carried.

Senate Bill # 3929

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the content of the bill which would extend the holding time that screening can keep an involuntary committed person beyond the present timeframe of 72 hours. The bill would extend it another 72 hours. The bill and its Assembly counterpart are on the Governor's desk for signature. There is significant disagreement in the system regarding whether the extended time will really help the situation. Many of the consumers who have difficulty getting admitted to an inpatient unit have co-morbid conditions such as medical, ID/DD, homelessness etc. that challenge the operation of the unit and there is no additional funding to assist in care for these individuals. The mental health system is so underfunded and residential programs that can provide an interim placement for a stabilization period are not available/funded. More pressure to develop these types of programs is needed to right size the system.

Public Response

Coalition for a Safe Community:

Rev. Tom Dawson spoke about the community events that are sponsored by the Coalition. In August there will be back pack giveaways in Woodbine and Wildwood. The back packs will be full of school supplies and other goodies. Also on August 28th, Unity in the Community will be held at the Cape May County Zoo starting at 4pm. There will be music, food, giveaways, vendors and games. These events are very popular and important to the community. A flyer is attached to the minutes. Rev Dawson also spoke about the FBI Academy exposure that the youth he serves are getting. It is a unique experience for many of them.

Adjournment

Chairperson Majken Mechling adjourned the meeting at 6:55pm.