

**Meeting Minutes of  
The Governor's Council on Behavioral Health  
1:00 PM - May 10, 2011**

The Governor's Council on Behavioral Health met at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 10, 2011 at the Anchor Recovery Center, 249 Main Street Pawtucket Rhode Island.

Members Present: Rich Leclerc, Chair, Richard Antonelli, Sandra DelSesto, Jim Gillen, Chaz Gross, Joseph Le, Bruce Long, Lisa Lunt, Anne Mulready, Fred Trapassi, Reed Cospers and Elizabeth Earls.

Ex-Officio Members Present: Sandy Woods, Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF); Michelle Branch and Roberta Richmond, Department of Corrections (DOC), Denise Achin, Department of Education (DOE); Colleen Poselli, Department of Health (DOH); Sharon Kernan, Department of Human Services (DHS), and Craig Stenning and Charles Williams, Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH); Kathleen Grygiel, Office of Rehabilitation Services.

Guests: Alice Woods, Vivian Weisman, Joy Vandreuil, Leslie Miller, Sharon Morello, Earnest Steadman, Tom Coderre, Pat Taylor, Ian Knowles, Marion Cleveland, Thomas Magill, Robert Marshall, Michael Rizzi, Gina Rivera, and Doug Hash from the Mayor's Office.

Staff: James Dealy, Connie Cirelli and Lisa Stevens

Once a quorum was established, and introductions were made, the Chair, Richard Leclerc, called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. Richard entertained a motion to accept the minutes of April 14, 2011. Elizabeth Earls motioned to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by Anne Mulready. Richard called for a vote to approve the minutes, all were in favor and the minutes were approved as written.

Rich then welcomed Pat Taylor from Faces and Voices in Recovery who travelled from Washington DC to attend and present at this meeting.

**Updates from BHDDH:** Charles Williams presented. Bill #S-0722 will be heard before the Senate tomorrow. It is a disability employment bill which would provide employment opportunities to DD agencies as well as MH agencies. It will create competitive worksites, giving a preference in some types of work to those with disabilities. Craig Stenning made note that it is rare that a piece of legislature is as significant as the one being presented. It changes the State's purchasing process so that organizations that employ individuals with disabilities will be given a preference for contracts. It also means that some individuals who receive supports from BHDDH may now obtain mainstream employment, making room for other people needing supported employment services.

SAMSHA is initiating changes to both the Substance Abuse and Community Mental Health Block Grants. *Attachment I.* BHDDH will now have the option of submitting a single combined block grant. SAMSHA has changed the submission date for both grants to Sept 1<sup>st</sup>. Effective with this application, the Block Grant plans will run for two years, although this year's plan will run for 21 months. The Department has decided to submit a combined application. SAMSHA is also discussing releasing a Prevention of Substance Abuse Formula Grant this year.

The Health-Homes initiative is progressing. The recent conference call with SAMSHA went well.

**Recovery Support Services Presentation:** Craig introduced this presentation. He emphasized that creating a person-oriented system of care is extremely important to recovery. This approach looks at each individual and sees where they are in their life. Centering only on clinical treatment does not

provide the tools to continue recovery, such as housing, peer support, natural supports, day care, transportation, etc., and ultimately may defeat the gains made in treatment.

Craig went on to talk about how rewarding the work of the Recovery Rally is to him and how much he enjoys working with RICares and the people that organize the Rally each year. He noted that Rhode Island's was named the number one recovery rally in the United States this year.

Ian thanked Craig for the introduction. He then introduced Jim Gillen and Tom Coderre, both RICares board members, and Pat Taylor.

Pat is the Executive Director of Faces and Voices of Recovery and has been with them for about 8 years. She gave a brief history of Faces and Voices of Recovery, which was founded 10 years ago as a national movement for recovery, and is currently moving toward national accreditation. One of Faces and Voices of Recovery's goals is to develop networks and systems to treat addiction as a public health crisis. Its web address is: [www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org).

Pat noted that there are over 20 million Americans in long-term recovery, showing that it is possible for people to get well. FVR works is exploring how to help people manage their illnesses just as they would cancer or other chronic conditions. Recovery support services help people sustain their recovery over time. *Attachment II*

Pat stressed that the criminalization of addiction causes discrimination against people in recovery, making it hard for them to get their lives back. Policies need to be changed to stop this type of discrimination. Faces and Voices of Recovery have been working on the reality of recovery, taking the anonymity out of it and developing the Recovery Bill of Rights. Former Senator Patrick Kennedy and former Congressman Jim Ramstad have been big supporters of the Recovery Bill of Rights. Shifting from treatment to recovery focus will help people in recovery make the most of their lives by treating them as people with a health condition. Advocating for recovery support services through health reform will help people who have previously been excluded.

Building leaders and organizing community resources for people to come to, like the Anchor, will help people in recovery become active participants in their care. This is a tremendous opportunity for health reform.

Ian Knowles spoke about how community organizations affecting policy, his experience with becoming an advocate and the need to de-stigmatize people in recovery. RICares's initial priority is to become more actively involved in the recovery initiative by becoming active on many boards/committees. Ian highlighted the importance of sober housing networks like ATR and Ocean State Coalition, which help residents receive active encouragement and support in their recovery. The National Association of Recovery Residents is meeting this month in Atlanta.

RICares' Annual Legislative Day's purpose is to express its thanks to legislators who have supported its work. This year's Representative is Pat Serpa. This year, RICares is pushing for legislation to eliminate the question, 'have you ever been convicted of a felony', which has blocked access to jobs and services for many individuals in recovery, from application forms.

Jim Gillen spoke about Anchor Recovery Center bringing recovery out of the shadows and on to Main Street (literally). Anchor received a ROSC grant, which increases its work within the Dept of Corrections. Through the grant, Anchor gives funds for recovery coach development and has hired a

full time employee. Anchor offers many different types of recovery meetings, open mic sessions and many other types of supports so that people can come together and be connected. Everyone that comes to Anchor feels welcome. Jim announced that this year's Recovery Rally will be co-sponsoring Waterfire on September 10<sup>th</sup>.

Tom Coderre spoke about the importance of recovery support systems and of the power of real personal stories in helping people understand recovery. . He also spoke about all that he lost through active addiction and how he was able to regain his life.

Liz Earls stressed the importance of achieving real parity between behavioral and physical health services and of being vigilant about how health plans implement parity. Pat mentioned the mental health parity blog.

Pat mentioned that Jim Gillen is being awarded the Vernon Johnson Award from Faces and Voices of Recovery this year.

Rich Leclerc thanked all for their presentations.

**Block Grant:** This application is due by the end of August. SAMHSA is requiring a new, re-prioritized planning process involving the Governor's Council. Rich asked for volunteers for the Block Grant Planning Committee, which Jim will staff. Volunteers can contact Jim at [jdealy@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:jdealy@bhddh.ri.gov).

**PATH Grant - Riverwood Project for Homelessness:** The PATH application must be in by the end of this month. Public comment is encouraged. All Governor's Council members and anyone else who volunteers to do so will be sent a copy of the application. Anyone interested in reviewing this application can email Lisa at [lstevens@bhddh.ri.gov](mailto:lstevens@bhddh.ri.gov).

**Social Host Law:** Bruce Long spoke about legislation being considered that will remove the education component from the Social Host Law. This educational component targets the host of the underage drinker. Charles noted that the Social Host Law was amended to add people aged 18-21 as hosts. Charles said that the bill will be heard today and is being supported as is. The Department's problem with the educational provision is that it has been unable to find a demonstrably effective curriculum for this target group. It continues to look for an evidence-based model, but researching and certifying a new EBP will require a source of funding. Bruce felt that developing the education component will decrease the need for other services. He asked the committee to object to removing the education component and ask BHDDH to develop an education program for the Social Host Law. Craig mentioned that if this committee wanted to take a position it could submit it to OHHS.

Joseph Le supported the idea of prevention but felt he needed more information. Bruce motioned that the Governor's Council on Behavioral Health take a position in favor of restoring the educational component piece and moving it from the DOH to BHDDH, giving the Department a timeline of six months to develop an educational component. The motion was seconded by Lisa Lunt. Sandra DelSesto started discussion, cautioning that whatever training is created must be evidence based for it to be effective. Rich called for a vote. All were in favor and the motion carried.

**Old/New Business:** No old or new business was discussed.

Upon motion being made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for **Thursday, June 9, 2011 at Barry Hall in room 126, 14 Harrington Road, Cranston RI 02920.**

Minutes respectfully recorded and written by:

Lisa Stevens  
Secretary, Governor's Council on Behavioral Health