

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES**

Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.
Zoom - Virtual Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

Christopher Yendt called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Present: Lindsey Marois, Dawn Shickluna, Chris Ventura, Christopher Yendt, Tara McKendrick (ex officio)

Regrets: Matthew Mahler

Absent: Andrew Bassingthwaighte

Guests: Judy George, Heather Gillespie, Bruno Lizzotti

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT

No conflict of interest was declared.

AGENDA

Moved by: Chris Ventura

Seconded by: Lindsey Marois

That the Agenda for the Board Meeting of September 24, 2020 be adopted as circulated.

Carried.

PRESENTATIONS

The President invited Heather Gillespie, Director of Service Quality and Capacity, to speak about the impact that COVID-19 has had on clinical services. Heather reviewed the service delivery changes that were initially implemented in March. She then described the month-by-month decisions that were made, and processes that were developed, to provide modified services

while complying with public health recommendations and new legislation. She also identified the ongoing impact that the changes have had on the clinical staff.

When questions were solicited, Chris Ventura enquired about any advocacy efforts involved in supporting justice clients. Many of these clients have limited access to technology for virtual court sessions or detention centre visits. Heather stated that Kelly Falconer attends the Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee meetings and this group has sent correspondence.

Chris also enquired about the source of funding for the Brock counselling which started virtually in September. Tara stated that this funding comes from a David S. Howes grant, through the Niagara Prosperity Initiative. Since the funding expires in 2021, other alternatives will need to be explored. Chris offered to look into this, since he is on the Alumni Association at Brock.

Tara thanked Heather for the summary and acknowledged the efforts of the clinical staff.

Judy George, Manager of Business Operations, then spoke about the relatively minimal impact that COVID-19 has had on agency finances. All funding, except for fundraising revenues, continued to flow as before. One-time funds were received for mandatory pandemic payroll payments. The remote work resulted in some savings in relief coverage costs as well as in travel expenses. These savings were offset by additional costs for IT and PPE. Tara noted that a good relationship with our funders has allowed for some flexibility in what can be done with the funds.

Finally, Bruno Lizzotti, Manager of People and Wellness, reviewed the impact that COVID-19 has had on human resources at the agency. Emergency powers were granted in April which allowed for the reassignment of staff, so that the newly required 24-hour coverage could be provided at the Glendale residence. Bruno spoke about the open communication with the bargaining unit executive. Mandatory training about infection control and proper use of PPE was implemented. Daily screening protocols were introduced. Bruno echoed Heather's comments about change fatigue. While there is no metric, he indicated that fatigue was felt by leadership and frontline staff.

Tara thanked Bruno and the entire senior leadership team for the outstanding work that has been done over the last six months. Heather, Judy and Bruno left the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Moved by: Lindsey Marois

Seconded by: Dawn Shickluna

That the Minutes of the Board Meeting held Thursday June 25, 2020 be adopted as circulated.

Carried.

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- **September 24, 2020 ED Report**

The Executive Director reported that between 80 and 85% of her time is spent at Niagara-Ontario Health Team (N-OHT) meetings. She has been invited to attend training in advanced leadership. CMHA Niagara was nominated to be the fund manager to hold moneys in trust for the team. One-time implementation funding will come forward in October or November, but it will belong to the N-OHT.

The Mental Health and Addictions Transformation Collaboration (MHATC) has evolved into being a working group of the N-OHT. It is expected that this will free up some time. The Executive Director has submitted an expression interest in being a co-lead.

The pandemic will have a significant impact on fundraising, particularly since there will be no Women and Wellness event. Andrea Waters, Fundraising and Communications Coordinator, is working with Loud + Clear to pivot the Someone in Your Circle campaign for potential third-party fundraising events. Board members are encouraged to forward ideas and/or network connections to Andrea.

A group of CMHA staff who identify as racialized have invited all staff to join in community dialogues about race. It is hoped that the impact will be a shared understanding that will start a transformation and provide better support to all clients. Chris Ventura stated that he was very pleased to see the work being done on the antiracism efforts.

New space is being acquired at Welland Avenue in December. It is expected that this will alleviate some of the current restrictions on space due to COVID. It could also allow for additional partnerships that may evolve with the N-OHT.

A new CMHA Ontario Division by-law is being developed. It will address branch compliance with branding guidelines.

Lindsey Marois thanked the Executive Director for putting together the concise summary. Chris Ventura had two questions. He asked whether it would be appropriate to draft a letter to the MPP about the justice access issue. The Executive Director responded that she would want more information from Kelly Falconer about her advocacy efforts. There is much that is beyond our control and there are a lot of people advocating, but it may be that there can never be too much. The Executive Director deferred to the President. Christopher Yendt agreed that this is an area in which the Board would likely want to provide advocacy, but added that there are no parameters about how the Board would do so. He stated that it may be better that staff, rather than Board Members, be prepared to go to Queen's Park, if necessary. It should come first from senior staff, and then be escalated as appropriate. The Executive Director added that part of the one-time funding was to help those who don't have access to technology. The agency may be able to provide the space and the technology to justice clients. She will obtain clarity about the system and keep the advocacy piece in mind.

Chris Ventura's second comment concerned the toll on staff if COVID-19 continues to exist for another two years. The Executive Director responded that the emphasis has to be about protecting psychological health as well as physical health. She added that the biggest challenge will be back-filling shifts for on-site work. Change, itself, is not new. The "COVID-newness" issues, such as which mask to wear, will start to normalize.

The President thanked The Executive Director for her report and added, for the benefit of Chris Ventura, that each heading on the ED Report corresponds to the Strategic goals.

Moved by: Chris Ventura
Seconded by: Lindsey Marois

That the ED Report of September 24, 2020 be accepted.

Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

2020-21 Annual Agenda Calendar
Notes from July 10, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting
Notes from August 12, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes from 2020-09-08 Committee of the Whole Meeting

Moved by: Chris Ventura
Seconded by: Lindsey Marois

That the Consent Agenda information be received.

OTHER BUSINESS

The President reported that Matthew Mahler had a joyous reason to send his regrets. He and his wife welcomed a third daughter on Sunday. Congratulations will be sent by the President on behalf of the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

Lindsey Marois moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

Recorder Margaret Rankin

President Christopher Yendt