River Forest Mental Health Committee

Minutes May 2nd, 2023 at 6:30pm - In Person Meeting at the River Forest Community Center

Present: Helene Connolly, Elizabeth Davies, Jonathan Howard, MD, Melinda Peterson, Kathryn Schmahl, Kristin Sneeringer, Jessica Starck, MD

Absent: Jean Meister, Phillip Buta, Elizabeth Dunne

Staff: Sarah Schwarting, LCSW, Mental Health Administrator

1. Melinda called the meeting to order at 6:32pm and conducted roll.
2. Public Comments, Cheryl Potts, Executive Director, Oak Park Community Mental Health Board
   * Cheryl has been in this role for two years and approaches her role from a personal and professional standpoint. She works closely with the MHC for programming and events on a regular basis. She shared her organization’s most recent strategic plan and highlighted their focus on prevention and early intervention.
   * She shared that mental health services are hard to access given the high demand and workforce shortage. As an organization, she explained their priorities of workforce development, increased housing options, employer relationship development, collaborative work and networking among agencies.
   * The OPCMHB is developing a plan to respond to mental health emergencies which includes reducing police involvement and providing post-crisis social work support. This plan is being developed at the request of the Village of Oak Park and its police department.
   * Oak Park’s Park District and Community Mental Health Board will soon have shared space, providing resources for physical activity as well as mental health resources in the same space through partnerships with Thrive and NAMI.
3. Melinda moved to approve the minutes from April 4th, 2023, Jonathan seconded and the motion was carried.
4. Township Report from Carla Sloan, read by Helene:
   * The Memorial Day Parade will be held May 29th.
   * The Board has approved funding for youth, senior and mental health services.
   * Celebrating Seniors Week is May 11-18; the sheet of activities was handed out.
   * We are currently interviewing for the clerk position with four potential candidates.
   * Girls on the Rise has 19 girls participating at Roosevelt and 6-8 girls participating at Willard.
5. Mental Health Administrator Report – Sarah Schwarting:
   * The budget for mental health services was approved by the board on April 11, 2023.
   * A documentary called ‘Screenagers’ is in the process of being reviewed by the Positive Youth Development Committee.
   * Parent University was a success with about 100 parents attending of 200 signed up; received positive feedback.
   * The HUB is officially beginning its sunset process with FindHelp on May 4th.
   * The Township was represented at these local events: Thrive’s gala, CSS’s gala and Sarah’s Inn Together We Inspire event.
   * Oak Park held a wellness fair at which a majority of our agencies were represented.
   * Thrive was informed that an LGBTQ group would be of benefit to the community both for children and adults.
   * The behavioral health consortium was held on April 11th, with about 30 attendees. The developmental disabilities consortium was held on April 25th with about 16 attendees, information was circulated to the committee.
   * A D90 report was given to the PlanItGreen committee on April 20th and it was stated that all green projects that can be undertaken at this time have been completed.
   * Sarah is beginning to meet with the Access to Care implementation committee, which is part of the IPLAN process.  Details will be shared with the committee as information becomes available.
6. Addiction Recovery Team ­– Melinda Peterson:
   * Melinda shared reminders about several upcoming community events including the River Forest Memorial Day parade.
7. Other Updates from MHC Members: None
8. Old Business:
   * Sarah followed up about The Village of River Forest’s mental health funding which is limited to Thrive’s crisis response.
9. New Business: None
10. The next meeting will be Tuesday, June 6th at 6pm at the River Forest Community Center followed by dinner.
11. Melinda motioned to adjourn and Jessica seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:16pm.