



MENTAL HEALTH LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

May 8th, 2023

12:00 ~ 1:00 PM

Gallatin County Courthouse Community Room and Via Zoom

IN ATTENDANCE:

Voting Members Present- Susan Gregory, Tom Peluso, Linda Gable, Commissioner Brown. I-Ho Pomeroy, Erin Taylor, Lori Christenson, Melaney Swenson, Nicole Madden, Anthea George, John Kudrna, Ryan Mattson, Roper Green, Kelley Wathne, Yvonne Rudman, Eric Szemes

Non-Voting Members Present- Ellie Martin, Edward Szczypinski, Rowen Schuler

Voting Members Absent- Geary Zale, Dezri Rochin, Andrea Lower

Guests- Deputy County Administrator Cola Rowley, Ben Frentsos- Great Gallatin United Way, Kit Davis- SW Montana Prevention, Sophia Fortunato- Health Department

Staff- Mindy Karl

- **Call to Order**- Erin Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting
- **Roll Call**- Mindy Karl took attendance
- **Approval of Minutes**: April 2023
Erin Taylor approved the minutes as distributed
- **Public Comment**- Ellie Martin will be monitoring the chat via Zoom
- **Officer and Committee Reports**

Outreach Committee- Nicole Madden had no significant updates

Membership Committee- Anthea George had no official report.

Ellie Martin introduced her guest, Ben Frentsos. He will be a guest for the next few meetings and hopes that he can attend as a Non-Voting Member in place of Kim Hall.

Accounting- Tom Peluso said there have been no changes since the last meeting.

- **Unfinished Business- Strategic Planning Update**- Linda Gable said she sent out a spreadsheet on survey results. The top results for the group are:
 - analyze and discuss local problems with local service providers, advocacy groups, public officials, and the general public.
 - educating local community.

Linda shared that the current group's membership is about half and half. Half are here because of their job and the other half have had personal experience with mental health issues. She wants to gather more information and knowledge for the LAC and work on how to bring everyone together as a group. A successful group would have involvement from all participants. She would like everyone to be more engaged and to participate.

Some potential obstacles-

- keeping the group on task. Too many personal storytelling during meeting.
- No duplication of work between other organizations.

FEEDBACK- how do you feel about having 3 objectives for the next 18 months?

Linda felt the group needed a starting place and it may be 6 months down the road. A few strategies to think about-

- Develop and outline internal standard operation procedure for the functions and processes for the LAC.
- Connection with local providers, advocacy groups, public officials, and the community as partners in charge.
- Identify and develop educational and awareness opportunities related to mental health.

Nicole- part of the reason we chose the THIRD option was because this is a relatively new group and to be more effective, we need to have a clearer strategy or objective. It's more of a priority for the group.

Linda- with all that is going on, the main objective should be how can this group narrow their focus. We need everyone to step up with input on where you are willing to serve and where your talents can best be used.

Tom said he has been gathering information on work that was done in the past. He has collected information from Western Service Area Authority- 3 binders worth. He is offering it to Linda to look through to see what is appropriate to use. What are the basic needs of the people we want to serve.

Linda would love to see this group next May to put something together to recognize Mental Health Awareness Month. The problem they are running into is that they have tons of good ideas. Her dream is to see the group make effective changes. 5 people cannot do this alone. It is very important to make a plan for the next 18 months.

Susan- the three goals are very good and 3 is a good number. Education area of these 3 is something she can help with. Library construction should be done soon and can provide space for meeting.

Ellie- concerned about the process of the strategic plan and she is curious if the entire committee will be given some brainstorming time to add their ideas to the plan.

Linda- would like to have something in place by August.

Nicole would like to come back to the whole group to get feedback before they put anything on paper.

- **Announcements**

- AmeriCorps Vista- Lori Christenson

Possibility of getting an AmeriCorps Vista- someone that could support and bridge the information between BHC and LAC. Timeline for applying for one aligns nicely with the strategic plan for a January 2024 placement. Recruitment would start in October of this year.

Commissioner Brown thought this was an awesome offer from Lori and the Health Department. She currently has an existing employee that oversees another Vista. It would take some tasks off Erin and Kirsten's plate. The Vista would be allowed and able to help bridge the LAC and BHC together with various information. He thought the LAC could apply for funding from Central Service Authority. Commission might be asked to match some of the funds as well, to get started.

Lori said it's roughly \$8,000-\$9,000

Erin thanked Lori for the offer of a Vista- the goal was to get it for a year. Whatever the position is or does, the idea is to be able to replicate it

Ellie- Greater Gallatin United Way is hosting a Fundraising Gala June 1st and passed out flier.

Continued work on the Awareness Campaign with Healthy Coping- flyer passed out- this is an element of education and awareness- campaign goes through August

Yvonne- May is Mental Health Month and there will be a mental health set up at the mall, May 20th from 9am-2pm.

Commissioner Brown mentioned a class action lawsuit again the state of MT by a family that was negatively affected by the state hospital. He said it is important for the group to think of other families out there that have been negatively affected as well. He said it was worth Googling the announcement and reading about the story. Commissioner Brown also said it would be worth it for the group to look at HB 872 which passed out of the legislature.

- **Adjournment**

Erin Taylor adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting: June 12th, 2023

Erin Taylor, Board Chair