

MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING – November 19, 2013, 12:00pm

Board members present were: Bob Faw, Carl Eby, Susie Mosness, Jerry Mahlum, Dan Tronrud, Al Buerkle, Joel Broster, Jessie Connolly, John Ronneberg, Diane Ronneberg, Gloria Weiss, Jean Duffey, and Chelsie Fuchs

Susie Mosness called the meeting to order.

Gloria Weiss, MHC-LCPC, reported her client numbers have increased even further from the last meeting. She has been involved in doing an anger management group in Billings for the last month. The clients do 20 hours of sessions and 20 hours of homework, while definitely focusing on the mental health issues. She continues to be in Hardin once a week and here in Big Timber once a week. Everyone in Billings is getting computers in their offices and have begun typing their own progress notes and assessments. She has not started yet, but plans to very soon. She is excited to start out new electronic records system coming soon.

Jean Duffey- questioned whether or not mental health will be covered under the new Obamacare and a small discussion was made on this topic. From the sounds of it, mental health will be covered under this new government insurance.

Diane Ronneberg-Lutheran Church, reported that she is very happy to have Pastor Joel with us. They have been very busy with the church and also reported that ESAA has not received any of their funding to her knowledge.

John Ronneberg-ESAA and Ambulance Crew, reported that the Ambulance crew has had some tough calls the last couple weeks. ESAA is having a meeting next Tuesday. They are getting a lot of requests for funding in the 28 supported counties. There have been two Mental Health First Aid courses recently up in the northern counties and they were a huge success. If we do another MH First Aid course here in Big Timber then we would need to raise around \$4000 to do so. John also reported on the ESAA funding that was due July 1st and it is still not there.

Al Buerkle- Superintendent of schools, reported that he would still like for Gloria to come to a morning staff meeting and present to the staff on services offered by MHC. He recently visited with the principal from Miles City about the suicide prevention program that they have been using. It has been some time since Big Timber has had a presentation totally about suicide. He also reported that they have a couple kids involved in cutting who were reported by their friends and they are doing some in school counseling for that.

Dan Tronrud- Sweet Grass County Sheriff, also reported on the ambulance crew staff stress issues they have had lately, in dealing with tough situations. The Sheriff's department has had a lot of kids coming in lately in need of talking to about behavioral issues with their families. He has dealt with one gentleman from the Mental Health Center recently who is no longer able to seek counseling here due to some hostile encounters in the MHC office. They have had multiple transfers to the Psych center in Billings recently and another case with white slavery where the woman was transported as well. They also transported one to the Hope House in

Bozeman at the request of the client. The Hope House is working with Gallatin Co. Sheriff's Office and they now have a mental health strike team that goes on mental health case calls. Another of the Sweet Grass County Officers was sent to complete the CIT training recently. The mental health trust board issued \$530k this year to mental health programs around the state. They are getting a lot of requests for money in right now but they only issue once a year.

Jessie Connolly- Sweet Grass County Justice of the Peace, reported that mental health clients are having an impact on her staff. In the last week they have had two clients hinting towards suicide and her employees are having reactions to this. She is aware of the issues and is going to visit with her staff on these issues. Being on the same page helps out a lot when dealing with these type of clients.

Pastor Joel Broster- Lutheran Church, stated that he is getting familiar with the community. He came from a large downtown church and the people in this community have been very good to him.

Carl Eby- Clinical Director of the Mental Health Center, reported on the Mental Health Center being in region 3 out of 4 regions in the state of Montana and cover 11 counties. Sweet Grass County doesn't have a case manager, but Gloria has taken over part of that role with some of her clients who are in need of case management. Carl also reported on the VA contract as they were five months behind in paying MHC. Today they owe \$249k and they have slowly begun to pay. The Mental Health Center does approximately \$50k of services a month with VA clients. He also reported on the Mental Health Service Plan or MHSP which a program for people who have no funding for services, have an SDMI (severely disabling mental illness), and are below 150% poverty level. The state cut our funding in half this past legislative session and this program has had to cut back tremendously on the clients that it services. MHSP also includes a pharmacy program and a prescriber portion that was not cut in the last session. They are also working on a SDMI waiver through Medicaid to be able to spend Medicaid dollars on mental health services. There are currently 800 slots served by this waiver statewide. MHC has around 200 of those slots. The state is trying to expand to 1200 more slots and also the diagnostic criteria that has to be met to qualify for this Medicaid waiver.

Susie Mosness- Sweet Grass County Commissioner reported that they had a meeting on October 30th with the Governor's staff. They toured the Crisis center, the Rainbow House, the main center, and the HUB. The Governor's staff visited all four regions in the state. Susie had a really positive feeling that things will start rolling with mental health funding.

The next meeting will be held on **March 18, 2014** at noon in the Commissioner's Office.

Submitted by: Chelsie Fuchs, Big Timber Secretary