

**Division of Public and Behavioral Health**  
**Bureau of Behavioral Health Wellness and Prevention**  
Behavioral Health Planning and Advisory Council Nominating Subcommittee

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**MINUTES**

**DATE:** August 31, 2017

**TIME:** 10:00 a.m.

**TELECONFERENCE:** (888) 363-4734 / Access Code: 3865799

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Ali Jai Faison  
Alyce Thomas  
Dawn Walker  
Rene Norris

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

Barbara Jackson

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Dr. Katherine Souza  
Dr. Karen Torry Greene  
Peter Gochis  
Jennifer Sexton  
Christy McGill

**SAPTA/STATE STAFF PRESENT**

Susanne Sliwa  
Raul Martinez  
Joan Waldock

APPROVED

**1. Introductions, Announcements, and Roll Call**

Ms. Norris called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. A quorum was established.

**2. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**3. Approval of Minutes from June 13, 2016 Meeting**

Mr. Faison moved to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2016 meeting. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**4. Interview Candidates over the Phone**

Ms. Norris asked that each candidate tell what their experience in mental health in Nevada has been.

Dr. Jennifer Sexton stated she did her clinical training at the University of Nevada, Reno in the early 2000s. While living in Arizona, she worked with Maricopa County Adult Probation. When she returned to Nevada in 2016, she began working with the Nevada Department of Corrections (NDOC), where she has been the clinical supervisor for the NDOC's inpatient mental health facility at the Northern Nevada Correctional Center and has supervised the stepdown structured care units for a little more than one-and-a-half years. She would be taking the criminal justice seat on the Council.

Peter Gochis explained he had been with vocational rehabilitation for 11 months, serving in Sparks, Reno, and Carson City. Before that, he worked for the Bureau of Disability Adjudication, making decisions about who was eligible for Social Security Disability. He said that a significant percentage of his caseload was made up of individuals with mental impairments of some kind.

Dr. Greene reported that she has been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker since 2001, and that she was currently licensed in three states. She earned a doctorate in Behavioral Health. Her specialty has been integrated care for people with serious mental illnesses. She was in private practice for 15 years and has been overseeing behavioral health needs for Medicaid fee-for-service recipients through the Health Care Guidance Program, working hand in hand with Medicaid. While relatively new to Nevada, she has been building an understanding of the laws here.

Ms. McGill began that she was with the Department of Education (DOE). Before that, she spent about 16 years in rural Nevada, doing community organizing. She helped Healthy Communities establish a peer-to-peer program using AmeriCorps. She looked at several different kinds of prevention and intervention programming throughout Lyon and Mineral Counties and was able to find money to fund it throughout the area. She worked on starting a school-based social worker program and on creating a community health worker program to help with the workforce shortage issue in rural Nevada. She also worked with policy regarding volunteer paramedicine for rural Nevada. She helped set up the sequential intercept model for Lyon County, which then spread to other counties, implementing the Mobil Outreach Safety Team (MOST) program that paired a social worker with law enforcement and the Forensic Assessment Services Triage Team (FASTT) program that intentionally provided mental health services to the jails. She added that in her current position, she has been blessed to be able to help get social workers into schools. This year, the DOE has worked on establishing policy helping their federally qualified health centers and social workers work together and giving them the ability to bill Medicaid. They also have been trying to make sure that schools have good strong Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) programs and partnerships.

Dr. Souza earned a master's degree at UNR in 1997 and a PhD at Oregon State University in 2001. She has been a licensed marriage and family therapist for 14 years. She stated she has been active in the behavioral health and substance abuse fields for 22 years. She described her wide breadth of experience: outpatient services at Community Chest in Virginia City, children's behavioral services; inpatient and Residential Treatment Center (RTC) experience at Mesilla Valley Hospital in New Mexico; group home work at Briarwood North, for juvenile sex offenders; work with juvenile detention in New Mexico; Job Corps; and private practice. She thinks these experiences have given her a helpful perspective on behavioral health and Medicaid policy. She also has had experience in nonprofits, state, and for-profit settings. Most of her career has been spent working with the low-income Medicaid population. She has also trained and mentored interns and supervised licensed therapists. She has taught at several universities. She has had both clinical and administrative responsibilities in the field. She said that she was currently responsible for 19 employees and about 400 patients per month. She has served on boards; task forces, including the Washoe County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Board; Nevada Rural Children's Mental Health Consortium; and the Doña Ana County Behavioral Health Consortium. She has become familiar with the statistics of Nevada mental health, appreciating the opportunity to talk more about behavioral health and substance abuse. She has been working at the Human Behavior Institute in Reno. She has worked directly with patients experiencing substance abuse, to help with their recovery and has supervised substance abuse councils. She also created an outpatient substance abuse program.

**5. Discuss Membership Vacancies and Recommend Candidates to the Behavioral Health Planning and Advisory Council**

Ms. Norris pointed out that Ms. Sexton would fill the Department of Corrections position. Mr. Gochis was with vocational rehabilitation. Dr. Greene would be filling the "advise in development of the Medicaid plan" position as a third-party Medicaid contractor for the state. Ms. Norris added that Ms. McGill would be filling the Department of Education position, but asked what position Dr. Souza would fill. Mr. Martinez was not sure, as she did not go through the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Agency (SAPTA) office. He assumed that one of the members of the BHPAC had given her information about the Council. She turned in an application with Ms. Haag of the Office of the Governor. Mr. Martinez stated that he would check with Ms. Haag about Dr. Souza's application.

Ms. Norris stated that the Council had its own application for consumers and family members interested in serving on the Council to fill out and submit to the Council first, before being sent to the Governor's Office. Ms. Sliwa said that state employees did not need to fill out that application. Ms. Norris agreed, stating that the department for which they worked recommended them and the Council sent their names to the Governor's Office for an application. Mr. Martinez said there was no record in SAPTA files of such an application. Ms. Norris stated there should be an application on file for every member of the Council, showing whether they were consumers, family members, in the mental health field, working with substance abuse or co-occurring, or if they were community providers. It was important to know, as the bylaws required that the makeup of the Council be over 50 percent consumers or family members. She stated that Dr. Abi-Karam applied directly through the Governor's Office as a community provider. Ms. Sliwa asked how many providers were on the Council. Mr. Martinez replied that Ms. Orton was considered a provider, as she was a mental health care provider for veterans. Ms. Sliwa pointed out that the Council was currently seeking to fill consumers and family members and state-appointed seats—which would include Ms. Sexton, Mr. Gochis, Ms. McGill, and Dr. Greene. Mr. Martinez added that Ms. Amber Neff of the Housing Division of the Department of Business and Industry was a candidate, but was unable to be part of today's meeting. Those five turned in their applications

to the Governor's Office. Ms. Sliwa stated there was an application that was only for consumers and family members.

Mr. Faison wondered if there were specific questions to ask of candidates. Ms. Norris replied that they usually had candidates' applications in front of them and asked four questions of each candidate, assigning a time for each candidate to call in so that could interview them individually. She said they needed to recreate the application for consumers and family members, but needed to put forward the names of the applicants filling the state positions. Mr. Faison pointed out that one of the Council's downfalls has been its inability to obtain quorum. He mentioned that every candidate would have a background that qualified them to be on the Council, but they needed to attend the meetings. He would like to ask candidates if they had the time and dedication it would take to commit to attending meetings so that the Council could move forward with its agenda. Ms. Norris agreed that could be one of the questions for all candidates. State employees or contractors on the Council would attend meetings as part of their jobs. She said they wanted to make sure that the families and consumers had a voice at the meetings. Ms. Sliwa said the Council had no control over the state employees except, if they did not attend meetings, the Council could speak to their supervisors.

Ms. Norris asked for a motion to vote to approve Ms. Sexton, Mr. Gochis, Ms. McGill, Dr. Greene, and Ms. Neff to the Governor's Office as candidates to fill the state positions. Ms. Thomas so moved. Mr. Faison seconded the motion. The motion passed. As there was no open spot on the Council for another community provider, they would keep Dr. Souza's application on file for if spot opened up in the future.

Mr. Faison asked what other vacancies existed on the Council once these five became members. Mr. Martinez said there currently nine consumers and family members on the Council. The bylaws specify there be 23 members, so 12 of them had to be consumers and family members, meaning there were 3 openings. Ms. Sliwa pointed out the Council needed a family member of a child receiving care and a co-occurring. Ms. Sliwa asked Mr. Martinez for a complete list of which category each Council member represented.

Ms. Walker stated that if she found her application, she would send it to Mr. Martinez. Mr. Martinez clarified the process for approving candidates for consumers and family members—the Council provided an application, the candidate completed it, then they were individually scheduled for teleconference interview. Ms. Norris replied they individually scheduled times 10 to 15 minutes apart in a single teleconference. The Subcommittee discussed the candidates immediately after their interviews, then moved on to the next candidate. At the end, there would be more discussion and the candidates would be rated to decide which ones would be put forward to the entire Council. After the Council would vote on them, then the candidates would fill out the Governor's application. Once the Governor's Office appointed them, they would be considered members. State employees or contractors would not be considered members until the Council heard back from the Governor's Office.

**6. Discuss Date for Next Meeting and Propose Agenda Items**

Mr. Martinez suggested they meet again in three weeks so they could abide by open meeting laws. He said he would send a doodle to set up a time for a meeting on September 18. Ms. Norris said they would go over the application and the questions to ask candidates.

**7. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**8. Adjourn**

Ms. Thomas made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Faison seconded the motion. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

APPROVED