

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF GUILFORD COUNTY
WORK SESSION**

Greensboro, North Carolina March 13, 2017

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed Work Session at 3:00 PM in the Blue Room of the Old County Courthouse, 301 West Market Street, Greensboro NC.

Present: Chairman Jeff Phillips; Vice Chairman Alan Branson; Commissioners Justin Conrad, Alan Perdue, Kay Cashion; Ray Trapp (in at 2:47); and Carolyn Coleman (in at 3:30)

Absent: Commissioner J. Carlvena Foster

Also Present: County Manager Marty Lawing, Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier, County Attorney Mark Payne; Clerk to Board Robin Keller, Victoria Whitt, CEO Sandhills Center; Anthony Ward, COO Sandhills Center; Dennis Williams, NCDHHS – Interim Liaison for East Point, Trillium and Sandhills LME; Budget Director Michael Halford, members of the community and members of the Media

I. Welcome

Chairman Phillips called the meeting to order at 2:13PM and welcomed those present.

Commissioner Perdue stepped out of the meeting at 2:15PM

II. New Business

A. Mental Health Update

County Manager Marty Lawing reviewed the work session agenda. Lawing introduced members from Sandhills Center LME

Anthony Ward, COO Sandhills Center LME reviewed with the Board Mental Health services prior to 2001 through present.

Ward reviewed the capitated management care system as the vehicle for service provision in Medicaid. He reviewed the 2011 accelerated implementation of the Medicaid waiver system.

Phillips questioned the terms and positions of the County representatives on the Sandhills advisory board.

Ward reviewed that Sandhills Center covers 9 counties, over 1 million residents and 192,000 clients on Medicaid.

Phillips questioned how their call number is published.

Ward noted that they have their phone number published and on their website. He noted that there is a process called “No wrong door” That if you are in a crisis and walk into a provider’s office they can begin services without receiving authorization.

Phillips questioned if they have a presence on the internet as well as through other media for those seeking access to mental health services.

Ward stated that they have recently updated their website to improve search engine optimization.

Ward reviewed the services provided by Sandhills. He noted that Sandhills does not provide direct services with the exception of a call center.

Phillips asked how many staff are on site to answer calls and hours of operation.

Ward reviewed the two levels of customer service at the call center that they offer. He noted that the first level is through customer services and general questions and appointment assistance, he also noted that they have licensed clinicians who also answer calls that require immediate support.

Commissioner Trapp in at 2:24 PM

Phillips asked for elaboration as to a crisis number staffing as well as an administrative number.

Ward reviewed that the state developed a cost model for the number of individuals you are seeing and the formula as to how much should be spent on services.

Ward noted that there are 631 current Mental Health providers under the Sandhills catchment area.

He stated that hospitals are a part of the network as well as residential treatment providers, independent treatment providers, agencies designations such as Youth Focus, RHA, Monarch etc.

Ward stated that they have 120 staff in Guilford County at the local office. He stated that the largest presence is at West End and in Greensboro.

He noted that the 9.6M that Guilford County provides does not go to administrative functions but solely to providers. He stated the administrative costs are paid through the state and Medicaid dollars.

Lawing asked for additional information as to being admitted into the provider network.

Ward, stated that the network of providers falls back to the 1915 Medicaid waiver. He stated that the majority of providers signed up to be providers. Ward reported that if you are not in the network, you cannot serve Medicaid members.

Phillips questioned how the County compares as to how many clients are served in comparison to the larger counties and their expenses.

Ward stated that if you look at the 9 counties per capita – Guilford County's is the highest. He stated that if you look at the per-capita expenses across the state those counties that were single county providers, such as Johnston County, Wake, Cumberland and Mecklenburg have traditionally higher per-capital rates. Ward stated that because of this the County receives additional services such as ARCA for detox, as well as the Daymark located at Wendover Center, a 24/7 hour crisis center in an additional 8 am -5 pm crisis center in High Point.

Ward stated that if you look across the state – the long term treatment center is similar to Wake County and Mecklenburg County; those counties also offer 24/7 crisis presence.

Trapp shared that he has some concerns with providers. He shared concerns with the location of members not receiving mobile crisis care based off of their residents.

Ward shared that there is no limitation as to where a member lives other than that they do need to be in Guilford County. Ward reviewed the complaint processes with the Board.

Trapp shared concerns that ACT teams are not service residents in low income housing communities.

Trapp reviewed concerns with crisis response in these communities and Schools. He expressed concerns with the number of days before referral, approvals appointments are made for those in immediate crisis.

Commissioner Perdue in at 3:05 pm.

Ward stated that they have a 72 hour or 14 day time frame to access to services.

Trapp asked if they could get a synopsis on statutory issues.

The board discussed involuntary commitment protocols.

Philips asked about the potential for merger with any other LMEs.

Mr. Williams, with the Department of Health and Human Services shared that they contract with Sandhill's for state programs and that there were considerations of potential mergers but those discussions were placed on hold.

Phillips questioned compatibles between the counties and LME service provisions.

Williams stated that there are times the legislature will give the state funds to pilot some additional programs. He noted that some of the pilots are trying to address opioid abuse. He noted that you will see some differences between the counties due to these pilot projects.

Commissioner Coleman in at 3:20PM

Ward reviewed current operational comparisons. He discussed how they monitor where the members reside and how many providers they have available. He stated that the top Guilford County provider is Monarch as they are a 24/7 care provider.

Trapp questioned the diversity of the providers.

Ward stated that they use a standard application form for provider membership into the network, and they do not track those numbers.

Ward noted that they have seen a 10% increase in outpatient services in the last year without an increase in local dollars.

Ward noted that the County dollars provide 7% of the overall Mental health dollars spent in Guilford County services, with 10% being State dollars. All other funds are reimbursed through Medicaid dollars.

Coleman asked about the average per person that is paid for services.

Ward stated that in Crisis and emergency services they served 950 individuals. Ward stated that they see 1500 monthly. He reviewed the annual service dates.

Coleman asked what we spend per capita versus the other counties.

Ward noted that the county is provided at a higher rate, but those rates provide additional services than the other counties in the catchment area.

Coleman asked about the methadone treatments being provided in Guilford County.

Ward noted the steady increase in opioid addictions.

Coleman questioned if a homeless person would be eligible for Medicaid.

Ward stated that it would depend on the person.

Phillips asked about open access versus appointments.

Ward noted that they are increasing the number of members seen with open access, however on the day they come in it may be an hour or two to be seen.

Commissioner Coleman questioned services available for children.

Ward reviewed the array of services available for juveniles.

The board discussed exploring models for services for the school system.

Victoria Whitt shared that they have now made some savings that they are able to invest into pilot projects. She shared that she hoped the take away would be to look at the 9.6M and see how the county would like to continue investing and to take some of the savings on new projects.

Mr. Williams provided an update regarding MCO's and LME's. He stated that the direction of mergers has not been at the forefront of the discussions. He stated that the lack of Medicaid expansion, there will be limited access to resources in North Carolina. There is discussion of Nash County to move into Trilium. He stated that the role of the LME's with the division of DHHS. He stated that their role is to ensure that the County's contract with LME is meeting contractual obligations.

Phillips asked that the board review the board members who represent the County at Sandhills and to look at process and practices of the providers and look for potential improvements, rethinking priorities relative to MHL services for Guilford County citizens as to how to or not re-appropriate those dollars. Phillips stated that he would like to create a sub-committee and would like to include the HHSV committee to help work through that

Chairman Phillips appointed himself, Perdue, Trapp and Cashion to the Mental Health Sub-Committee. He shared that he would hope that the role of the sub-committee would be to bring back recommendations and suggestions to the full board. Chaired by Commissioner Perdue.

B. Board Priorities

Coleman stated that employee income should be a priority. She questioned if that item was in the outline provided.

Lawing reviewed the priority item that discussed "becoming the employer of choice" with the goal to offer competitive compensation and benefits.

Coleman asked for additional language to be added to help clarify the priority item.

Halford advised that all of these items presented by staff may not be in the budget, but the goal of the work session is for the Commissioners to review the proposals and gain consensus on those goals and priorities that they would like staff to work toward in the future.

Lawing reviewed the goal for interns.

Conrad questioned if these would be across the board or by department. Lawing shared that the goal would be to have it across the board through the county.

Trapp questioned the CNA pilot program and asked for an update.

Public Health Director Merle Green shared that the pilot program has been a huge success. However, she noted that it has been an eye opener as to the constraints placed on service levels of CNAs. The CNA under their scope of practice cannot administer any medication that requires special training such as insulin or an inhaler.

Green shared that the Good Samaritan act allows non-medical providers to provide medication dispensement.

Green stated that they are working with the NC board of nursing to re-assess at the roles of CAN's as those guidelines are decades old.

Phillips noted that Commissioners could speak with local legislatures to help make amendments to the standard practice rules.

Perdue stated that the scope of work can change. He stated that they would like to see staff prepare a matrix that needs to be provide, who mandates the service and who can provide it. He stated that they can go back and assess the level of care needed and the rules that need to be changed.

Phillips questioned MHL services in the schools, and what the required certifications are needed to address those immediate needs.

Green stated that an RN can provide medications.

Phillips asked if there are counseling services or therapeutic services that can be provided in the schools.

Heather Skeens, Social Services Director, stated that a child has to have a diagnosis to have MHL services provided at a school. A licensed therapist is normally one who would manage and diagnose the behavior.

Phillips stated that they would be looking for any overlaps in order to help find efficiencies

Lawing continued to review the priorities with the Board

Coleman spoke to the need for re-entry programs and support and allowing those with felony backgrounds to work at animal shelter, parks, etc.

Phillips discussed the concerns with moving the 16 and 17 year old detainees with the younger detention population due to pending legislative changes and how that would impact the County.

Doug Logan, Court Alternatives Director, shared that the County facility has a pod layout making it more conducive to segregation by age, size, or other detainment factors for the children to ensure safety concerns are met. He noted that can separate the juveniles based on age, but they would need to decided how many counties that they would serve as a catchment for. The County would need to consider size or potential expansion of the detention center.

Cashion commended Mr. Logan on the work at the Juvenile Detention center. She encouraged a tour of the center for the Commissioners so that they would have a better understanding of the services and needs of the Detention center.

The board discussed status of the City of Greensboro's plans with the Bryan Park soccer complex.

Conrad asked if this would not be a part of our capital project plan?

The board discussed the leased properties at the farm.

Robert McNiece, Facilities and Parks Director, stated that the majority of the property roughly 700 acres.

Coleman left the meeting at 5:13.

The board discussed the feasibility of water in the Northwest of the county. Lawing reported that they received three engineering proposals and that they should be making a recommendation for a firm to start work in April.

The Board reviewed the county wide gigabit project noting that Northstate will be expanding gigabit connections in the county.

Perdue wanted to add cable access as a priority goal. County Manager Lawing agreed that it could be included, though there are limitations beyond county control.

Lawing stated that the revision of priorities will be prepared for board in April.

Commissioner Conrad motioned that the Board approve the priorities as amended throughout the discussions. Motion seconded by Commissioner Phillips; general consensus to approve the board priorities.

There being no further business the board adjourned at 5:19PM

Jeffrey M. Phillips, Board Chairman

Robin Keller, Clerk to Board