

	<h1 style="margin: 0;">Mental Health Advisory Committee</h1> <p style="margin: 0; color: red;">Minutes – July 2, 2024</p>
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Members Present	Members Absent	Ex-Officio and Staff Present	Ex-Officio and Staff Absent	Guests
Bill Ellis	Jennifer Grinnell	Meredith Peace	Michael Mayer	Ziva Azhdam
Michelle Grigsby-Hackett	Tami Mark	Jordan Satinsky		Melissa Bell
Stephanie Joseph	Alan Orenstein	Kelly Gruitt		Jeffrey Innocente
Susan Kerin		Samar Khleif (Dr. Santiago)		Dorne Hill
Marissa Leslie				Kat (Student)
Garrett Mannchen				Laura Mitchell
Libby Nealis				Justin Saffar
Celia Serkin				

- I. **Welcome** – The meeting came to order at 7:02 p.m. Libby Nealis chaired the virtual meeting. The attending members constituted a quorum
- II. **Discussion of FY26 Budget Priorities** – Libby gave an overview of the priority recommendations from the Legislative Subcommittee for FY26. They included on

budget priority and several other non-budgetary priorities. MHAC members approved the Put in a google doc It was approved by unanimous consent.

**III. Discussion of Meeting with Dr. Bridgers** – MHAC has asked to meet with Montgomery County’s Chief of Health Services to discuss concerns about advocacy and our priorities. Samar Khleif noted that Dr. Bridgers teaches on Tuesday nights so may be unable to attend the MHAC meeting. Separate meeting might be warranted. Behavioral Health Director Monica Martin would like to attend. The next step would be to provide an agenda of discussion topics.

**IV. Old Business**

A. **June Minutes** – The June minutes were unanimously approved with no edits.

**VI. New Business.**

A. **BHCS update** – Samar noted that Maryland had just issued a six-month pause on New Enrollments of Select Provider Types to Address Potential Fraud, Waste, and Abuse. She did not expect this to be a concern for Montgomery County because there are not current workforce shortages for these provider types. Samar also shared a Kudoboard for former BHCS Director Dr. Santiago so that MHAC members can send him well wishes for his retirement. She also said that there are updated COMAR regulations related to the licensing and billing for crisis and stabilization services (e.g., stabilization centers and mobile crisis units).

B. **AODAAC** – AODAAC is off during the summer but they elected Elyse to be their Chair again. AODAAC did send a letter to County Council, the School Board and the School Superintendent expressing concern about letting go the Schools’ medical officer due to budget cuts. MHAC voted and approved (with one abstention) to send a similar letter.

C. **Suicide Prevention Coalition** – Celia Serkin shared that the June 25<sup>th</sup> meeting had two presentations. One was with Mindoula, a behavioral health tech company and the other was with Caring Matters which provides healing for family members who have lost a loved one by suicide or substance use. There was also a discussion about how to engage primary care providers and faith leaders to provide support (e.g., motivational interviewing) related to suicide. Susan Kerin shared that SAMHSA has a resource for faith leaders on the issue. Laura mentioned a program called Good Grief that also supports families that have lost a loved one due to behavioral health conditions.

D. **CAYAS Subcommittee Report** – This subcommittee had a presentation by Dr. Jonathan Dalton, Center for Anxiety and Behavioral Change about school avoidance concerns. Kelly Gruitt noted that MCPS also has worked on this issue and is a resource (since Dr. Dalton is in private practice and in high demand).

E. **MHAC Elections** – Elections will occur in September. Both the Chair and Vice Chair (Libby and Michelle Grisby-Hackett) are eligible to be reappointed. Any nominations (including self-nominations) should be sent to Pamela Abramson and Diane Lininger. Meredith Peace agreed to be on the

nominating committee. Pamela will ask if Jennifer Grinnell would also agree to be on the nominating committee as she has in the past.

- F. August Meeting** – Mental Health Advisory committee does not meet in August. The next meeting will be September 3 at 7pm. This will be a virtual meeting.

## **VII. Announcements**

- A. Diane's Return** – Diane is tentatively scheduled to return back to work later this month. Libby thanked Pamela for supporting MHAC during this interim.
- B. Research** – Bill Ellis offered to do research on best practices around the country and where Montgomery County stands in comparison.
- C. Montgomery Goes Purple** – This will occur on August 29<sup>th</sup>. Both the overdose awareness and recovery event will occur together. The location will be the County Executive Building.

- VIII. Meeting Adjourned** – The meeting ended at **9:01** p.m.