

## OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Name of Governmental Body: WCMH Legislative and Policy Committee			Attending: Committee members: Nicole Ravens, Mike Lappen, Tyler Van Zeeland, Lynette Studer, Brian Michel, Kimberlee Coronado, Rick Immler, Jeanie Verschay, Alice Sykora, Justin Odulana, Barbara Beckert, Hugh Davis, Kit Kerchensteiner  DHS Staff: Ryan Stachoviak, Maddie Johnson, Teresa Steinmetz, Joann Stephens, Chelsey Myhre Foster  Guests: Jolene Plautz (Marriage and Family Therapist), Ramsey Lee (member of the public), Kathy Markeland (Wisconsin Association of Family and Children’s Agencies)
Date: 12/9/2021	Time Started: 12:30PM	Time Ended: 3:00PM	
Location: Zoom			
			Presiding Officer: Barbara Beckert and Brian Michel

### Minutes

#### 1. Call Legislative and Policy Committee (LPC) Meeting to Order

B. Beckert called the meeting to order and the Committee members introduced themselves.

*Review and approval of the minutes of November 11, 2021*

**K. Kerchensteiner made a motion to approve the minutes of November 11, 2021 as edited.**

**J. Verschay seconded this motion.**

**The motion passed. A. Sykora and M. Lappen abstained.**

#### *Announcements*

There were no announcements outside of announcements from the Wisconsin Council on Mental Health.

#### *Wisconsin Council on Mental Health (WCMH) Updates*

K. Coronado mentioned there is a Wisconsin Council on Mental Health (WCMH) workgroup tomorrow (December 10, 2021) from 8AM-10AM. R. Immler stated this workgroup will focus on budget priorities and strategic planning as well as potential future zoom meetings. R. Immler stated that the Criminal Justice Committee passed a motion and there will be a Rapid Response Executive Committee meeting to discuss potential next steps (AB627, SB595). J. Verschay asked if all sides of the bill were considered and B. Beckert stated that this bill will be discussed during legislative updates. J. Odulana mentioned the importance of considering the minority group in tomorrow's Access and Equity workgroup.

#### *Public Comment*

R. Lee shared public comment about how families are overwhelmed right now and there is a shortage of caregivers. He shared that the Electronic Visit Verification requirements (EVV) are challenging for caregivers. R. Lee is wondering if this Committee would like to send a letter to the Biden Administration. B. Beckert said this topic is not directly in line with this Committee's goal of supporting individuals living with mental illness, but this is in line with advocacy around long term care. B. Beckert thanked R. Lee for his public comment.

#### 2. Division of Care and Treatment Services Updates

T. Steinmetz mentioned that the EVV topic is not in purview of the Bureau, but potentially the Committee could continue to discuss this topic. T. Steinmetz mentioned the Peer-Run Warm line Grant Funding notification was released today, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021. T. Steinmetz mentioned the expansion of Coordinated Specialty Care Services and that a grant opportunity was released in November.

T. Steinmetz stated that the Bureau is recruiting American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funded positions and the Prevention Supervisor for new section. T. Steinmetz said that the Bureau is working to fill vacant positions as this is a nation-wide trend in the workforce.

T. Steinmetz mentioned that the Bureau is also implementing supplemental CAA funding and ARPA funding focuses on crisis positions. T. Steinmetz stated there will be a specific opportunity released early next year to help counties expand their crisis system and support crisis stabilization facilities in Wisconsin (on a regional basis). T. Steinmetz highlighted that the Bureau is looking for long term funding to support the 988 line and that the federal government (SAMSHA) is rolling out a competitive process to apply for funding for crisis call centers across the country (the estimate is that at full capacity, this could be 10 million dollars a year). T. Steinmetz mentioned that the Bureau is also expanding crisis services related to substance use as there is a gap in detox services and crisis related substance use services in Wisconsin. Additionally, T. Steinmetz stated the Bureau is providing Narcan and harm reduction services to help with the overdose epidemic.

B. Michael mentioned that many partners would help support the competitive process for the crisis call center lines and federal funding. T. Steinmetz mentioned that the Bureau would welcome any support.

The committee asked questions about T. Steinmetz's updates. T. Steinmetz's mentioned that the Winnebago Mental Health Institute continues to face a high intake of patients and the workforce shortage continues to impact facilities everywhere. T. Steinmetz mentioned that the turnover in the Bureau is being stabilized. T. Steinmetz mentioned that there is a [DHS webpage that discusses ARPA planning](#).

### **3. Legislative and Policy Updates, Discussion, and Action**

B. Beckert shared updates from M. Herstand as M. Herstand could not attend the meeting. B. Beckert mentioned that only three of the ten additional DSPS staff were approved in the State's budget. The Committee discussed the bill tracker and supporting AB217, SB232. The Committee decided that since the WCMH has written a letter supporting DSPS staff increases in the past, the same letter can be sent out. B. Michel stated he will draft a letter to introduce the letter and share this draft with M. Johnson as the hearing is the upcoming Tuesday December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

B. Michel continued to discuss the bill tracker, specifically AB627, SB595 which discusses whether a person who has experienced incarceration will lose their parental rights. B. Beckert mentioned Disability Rights Wisconsin opposed this bill and submitted testimony. B. Beckert mentioned that the Committee should look at how we can support maintaining the connect between children and parents who are incarcerated.

B. Michael asked how the LPC can support the Criminal Justice Committee letter. R. Immler said the motion being considered will come from the Council, which represents all of the Council Committees. R. Immler mentioned the importance of individual citizens reaching out to their legislators. H. Davis stated in the zoom chat "This is more about punishing parents than protecting children, IMO," when referring to AB627, SB595.

K. Coronado shared in the zoom chat:

"My new article introduces the term Alienation Distraction Tactics and offers a new and improved way to respond when abuses claim alienation. This article puts alienation in an accurate context. I believe protective mothers will be able to use this article to show the mistakes that cause courts to risk children and

misunderstand the fundamental nature of the case. I hope this approach can be the antidote to the alienation poison that has such an outsized influence of courts that fail to understand abuse. Thanks to my friends at the Center for Judicial Excellence for posting my article.

<https://centerforjudicialexcellence.org/2021/11/22/alienation-distraction-tactics-essay-by-barry-goldstein/>

<https://stopabusecampaign.org/2020/11/30/family-court-dangerous-decisions/> “

The Committee took a quick break.

B. Michel discussed expanding TAD MH treatment and how there is bi partisan support for LRB-4556/1. B. Michel also mentioned that more funding would go to mental health treatment courts and that the deadline is tomorrow at noon to contact legislators. B. Beckert stated in the zoom chat that LPC has supported this issue in the past. J. Verschay is wondering how the LPC can further support the Legislature.

R. Immler stated that the WCMH has supported TAD expansion (both related to mental health and expansion in the past).

**B. Michel made a motion to recommend that the Wisconsin Council on Mental Health supports LRB4556/1 (TAD Expansion) and LPC will draft a letter for consideration by the Council.**

**K. Kerchensteiner seconded motion.**

B. Michel volunteered to track this piece of legislation.

K. Coronado suggested making a white paper on certain topics to show what the WCMH stands for.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

B. Beckert discussed adding seven additional DSPS positions and that the Council sent a letter on this topic in March. M. Herstand said he would write this letter in an email to the Chairpersons prior to the Committee meeting. The Council wrote a letter about funding additional positions.

H. Davis shared in the zoom chat - “I'm concerned about the amped up bureaucracy burdening our committee, impeding the process of weighing in on items of importance. To respond to legislative action/inaction, I think we need to be agile. The legislature can and has acted rapidly and without public input. Would anyone be interested in talking about a different model for committees? I'm thinking about a structure that is outside of the bureaucratic structure but can still send recommendations to committees and also respond independently. If you're interested, email me. [hugh@wifamilyties.org](mailto:hugh@wifamilyties.org)”

**B. Michel moved to revise the DSPS Support letter to the Joint Finance Committee by asking for seven additional positons and then re-send the letter to the Co-Chairs and Members of Joint Committee Finance Committee.**

**L. Studer – seconded this motion.**

**The motion passes unanimously.**

B. Beckert stated M. Herstand invited the Wisconsin Office of the Commissioner of Insurance to speak at the next Committee meeting. B. Beckert suggested focusing on strategic planning at next meeting

## **9. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 3:00PM.

Prepared by: Maddie Johnson on 1/13/2022.