

MORRIS COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
ADVISORY BOARD – MARCH 10, 2011

**I. Call to Order and Approval of February 10, 2011 Minutes –**

LaJuan Tucker, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:25 p.m. There was a motion to approve the February minutes as distributed. The motion was approved with three abstentions and no opposition.

**II. Welcome and Introductions –**

LaJuan welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

**III. Chair Report – No Report**

**IV. Presentation – NewBridge Services – Bob Parker, Executive Director**

NewBridge Services is a nonprofit provider of behavioral health and education program and services, helping bring balance to people's lives through:

- Counseling – for families, children and adults. NewBridge offers a broad spectrum of services including prevention services, individualized counseling, and specialized intervention for serious mental illness.
- Youth – Designed for pre-school aged children through young adults. Services include a variety of life-enriching educational and counseling programs in areas such as: respecting others, resolving conflict, developing life skills, stress management, healthy living, career counseling, GED and job placement.
- Seniors – New Bridge SAIL, (Senior Assistance for Independent Living) is a program targeting seniors that focuses on improving their daily life by providing resources to help them remain in their own home and services to enable them to achieve balance in their lives.
- Substance Abuse – New Bridge's Substance abuse programs focus on children, parents, educators in an effort to heighten substance abuse awareness. Services include: evaluation, education; counseling; referrals; training.
- Housing – NewBridge offers a creative and innovative approach to housing that provide the most appropriate level of service with the goal of increased independence. Their housing program includes a full continuum of services from residential care to permanent independent housing.

By listening to the needs of the people in the community, NewBridge is continuously offering the highest quality programs based on these needs. Many of their services are county-wide. New Bridge receives significant funding from both the State and the County.

Brochures were distributed and anyone seeking further information may call New Bridge Services at (973) 839-2520.

## **V. Subcommittee Reports**

### **Funding – Gregg Benson**

One proposal was received in response the Request for Proposal from the State of New Jersey Division of Mental Health Services for Supportive Housing Services for Persons at risk of homelessness or hospitalization. The proposal received was from the Mental Health Association of Morris County (MHAMC). A request was made by Gregg to empower the funding subcommittee to review this proposal for Morris County (there will be various proposals received throughout the state) and put together a letter of recommendation. The MHAMC is requesting \$445,000 to serve 18 individuals. A motion was made to empower the funding subcommittee to review the proposal and then draft a letter of recommendation to Division of Mental Health Services (DMHS). All were in favor with no abstentions and no opposition. The motion was passed.

### **Planning – Laurie Becker**

Ms. Becker would like to have a meeting to review the Grant-In-Aid (GIA) funding priority summary in preparation for the 2012 Request for Applications (RFA) process.

### **Legislative/Advocacy – Laurie Becker**

Ms. Becker had a second planning meeting for the Public Forum. The Forum will be on June 2 from 5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the Ukrainian Cultural Center in Whippany. The title this year is “Many Faces of Recovery – Self Help and Beyond”. The focus of the forum is self help. Peter Basto will be the facilitator. There will also be a personal story shared. Deb Ward, John Robbins (Morris Plains Self-Help Center), Valerie Fox and others are on the Planning Committee. Many self help groups will be represented at this event. Ms. Becker encouraged all to attend this MHSAB sponsored event, stating that it is a good chance to hear from the people that we serve.

Mr. Benson added that it is great to hear the benefits the people have received from various services available. Ms. Tucker also mentioned it is a great time to see everyone and listen to them talk about their experiences.

### **County Alliance Steering Committee (CASS) – Steve Nebesni**

The CASS had a meeting on February 14 and ironed out some issues regarding the by-laws. The by-laws will be submitted for approval at the March 14 meeting. The Madison Alliance will come to that meeting and give a presentation on how their programs are going.

## **VI. Staff Reports:**

### **Mental Health Administrator – Laurie Becker**

Morris County will be hosting a Disaster Response Crisis Counselor (DRCC) Education Day on April 26 at the Public Safety Training Academy. This event will include an overview of the State and County mental health emergency response system and then provide a training on responding to the needs of

Veterans after a disaster. Ms. Becker explained that the DRCC is a relatively new credential from the State and there are approximately 55 DRCC's on the Morris County response team. DRCC training is provided by NJ Division of Mental Health Services Disaster and Terrorism Branch. If an emergency occurs that overwhelms the traditional system, the DRCC's are called up to respond. Ms. Becker and partners will give an update and overview of how this system works and coordination with other response teams. Anyone interested in the DRCC credential is welcome to attend the April 26 event. An objective is to increase number of DRCC counselors. It is not necessary to have an advanced degree.

Laurie will be part of a NJ Mental Health and Addictions Agencies (NJMHAA) presentation on April 5. This presentation is on Partnerships for Seniors and is one of Family Service of Morris County's many programs. Ms. Becker will talk about the origins and purpose of the Cross Systems Review Committee and how the Senior Intensive Support program grew out of this committee.

The 2011 Morris County Co-Occurring Conference will be held on June 24 at the Ukrainian American Cultural Center. This will be a professional conference and CEU's may be obtained.

**Municipal Alliance Coordinator – Steve Nebesni**

There will be a Natural High Skating Event on March 24 from 6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m. at the Mennen Skating Arena. Freeholder Murphy will kick off the event. Matt Bellace will facilitate the natural high raffle. Admission and skate rentals are free. Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult. Pre-registration is required. There is a limited capacity and there are already 200 registered so please sign now if you want to attend. Please go to <https://morriscountynj.wufoo.com/forms/natural-high-2011/> or call 973-285-6860 to register.

*A Parents Who Host Lose The Most* campaign is being implemented countywide from May 14 – June 30. The Morris County Partners in Substance Abuse Prevention is partnering with Morris County Prevention is Key for this campaign with the support of the Freeholders. There will be a proclamation issued at the May 11 Freeholder meeting.

**Addictions Service Administrator – Laurie Becker and Gregg Benson reported for Beth Jacobson**

Chapter 51 Award from Division of Addiction Services (DAS) was received for 2011. Chapter 51 subgrants will be signed soon.

Part of the Governor's 2012 proposal includes changes in how detox funding is managed. The current system of allocating dollars to the counties provides the most effective and most cost efficient methodology for delivery "on-demand" medically and clinically necessary detox services while at the same time

monitoring dollar and service utilization. The current system already operates on a fee-for-service basis with medical and clinical necessity decisions appropriately being made by the approved treating facility and licensed professionals delivering care.

As part of the Governor's proposal the whole pot of money for detox funding would be centralized and managed by the State. Centralizing this service statewide significantly interferes with the necessary access to immediate services for our clients. The nature of the illness demands immediate attention and accessibility which is paramount to engaging the client in treatment and facilitating readiness to change.

There is not a system in place for managing these services at the State level. The Division of Addiction Services (DAS) would need to develop that system at a higher cost which would likely require a diversion of direct service dollars to fund the development of an unnecessary process.

Mr. Benson distributed bullet points supporting keeping detox funding within the County service infrastructure. Mr. Benson asked the MHSAAB to vote to support this rationale and to submit these points at the Addictions Service Directors Association meeting on March 11 to include in one advocacy letter to Commissioner Velez from the Association. This will be a statewide discussion and it is important to express a collective concern. There was a motion to empower Ms. Jacobson to write a letter on behalf of the MHSAAB using these bullet points to express concern over the centralization of detox funding. Motion was made and all were in favor with no opposition and no abstentions.

## **VII. Joint PAC Report – Charles LaRussa**

The current census at Greystone is 438. Family Service gave out information on the First Step Program and the Intensive Senior Support Advisory Committee. There will be a class on April 21 on Understanding Mental Health and Substance Abuse in Senior Adults and another class on May 12 on Domestic Violence: Abuse in Later Life. They are trying to get CEU's for both classes.

Discussion ensued about articles on the mentally ill. There was a woman with mental health issues who killed her own child. Bob Parker stated that articles like this often give those with mental health issues a lot of negative feedback and stigma. Ms. Becker commented that there is a need for more community education. There is also a great concern for children of parents who refuse treatment.

There also was discussion about the Cross Systems Review Committee data collection project. Ms. Becker commented that this task is challenging because of the diversity of providers but that progress is being made. Beth Jacobson is overseeing this project.

## **VIII. State Liaison Reports:**

### **Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services: Theresa Wilson**

Earlier they put out a Request for Information (RFI) for the Involuntary Outpatient Commitment Law. The response was due on February 15. They are compiling reports and will give a summary back in the near future.

There are two Requests for Proposals (RFP) out for supportive housing. There is supportive housing needed (70 beds) for consumers at risk of homelessness and hospitalization. The final award will be made on March 31, 2011. Anyone interested can check the division website at: [www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhs/home/index.html](http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/dmhs/home/index.html).

There is also a proposal for supportive housing (45 beds) for individuals discharged from psychiatric hospitals or long term institutions. This proposal is due on March 16, 2011.

The State is sponsoring Mental Health and Addiction Consumer and Family Forums at various locations throughout New Jersey to get input on the merger. Morris County's Forum was held last week at the Morris County Library in Whippany.

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie introduced a \$29.4 billion budget cut that demands many concessions from state workers, as well as cuts in spending and taxes. The Governor wants a more structural budget with no gimmicks and no one time credits. For more information on the Governor's proposed budget please check the state website at [www.state.nj.us](http://www.state.nj.us).

The Division of Disabilities will receive \$10 million for the Olmstead Act.

The Division of Mental Health will receive \$2 million in their budget to begin instituting the Involuntary Outpatient Commitment (IOC) Law. It is law and previously there was no ability to implement this law since there was no funding attached to it. This funding should get the ball rolling for the State to begin the process. This is really just to begin the planning and this is not involving the county as of yet.

## **IX. Old Business – None**

## **X. New Business – None**

## **XI. Open to the Public –**

Valerie Fox stated that this was a very interesting meeting.

Charles LaRussa stated that he was at one of the DMHS/DAS Merger Focus Group meetings last week and it was good to see folks from all over there. Our county seems quite a bit ahead of many others since some counties were bringing

up issues we faced years ago. This is due in part to much cross training in this county.

Ms. Fox suggested that cross training be mandatory for the new merged DMHAS. Mr. Benson said that they would have to contract this type of training out since many are not knowledgeable in this area. This would be quite costly to bring in trainers throughout the state. There has been talk of this for years. Fortunately Morris County is ahead of many counties. Ms. Cutaneo wishes to thank all those who do this work every day and recognizes that it is very hard work. There are many positive changes that have come about in the last several years due to the hard work of many people.

**XII. Adjourn –**

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Mocarski  
Program Development Aide

**Mental Health Substance Abuse Advisory Board**  
**Attendance**  
**Thursday, March 10, 2011**

**Members Present**

Gregg Benson  
Charlie Berman  
Karen Cutaneo  
Susan Tietjen  
LaJuan Tucker  
Barbara Ward  
Deborah Ward  
Charles LaRussa

**Affiliation**

Citizen Representative  
Citizen Representative  
Citizen Representative  
Citizen Representative  
Prosecutor's Office  
Citizen Representative  
Citizen Representative  
Citizen Representative

**Members Absent**

Carol DeGraw  
Margaret Himsl  
Lauren Hirtes  
Fran Libasci  
Marcy McMann  
Spiro Milonas  
David Walker

**Affiliation**

United Way of Morris County  
Citizen Representative  
Citizen Representative  
Citizen Representative  
Citizen Representative  
Citizen Representative  
Citizen Representative

**State Staff Present**

Theresa Wilson

**Affiliation**

DMHS

**County Staff Present**

Laurie Becker  
Mary Jo Buchanan  
Pat Fetzer-Mocarski  
Steve Nebesni

**Affiliation**

MCDHS  
MCDHS  
MCDHS  
MCDHS

**Public and Guests**

Charisse Avoletta  
Valerie Fox  
Bob Parker  
John Robbins  
Mike Armstrong

**Affiliation**

Probation  
Consumer  
NewBridge Services  
Citizen Representative  
Community Hope