

Town of East Haven, CT
East Haven Counseling & Community Services Commission
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
January 28, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.
595 Thompson Avenue, East Haven, CT 06512

The East Haven Counseling & Community Services held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at 7:00 P.M., at 595 Thompson Avenue, East Haven, CT 06512.

Meeting Called to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. Roll Call.

C.C.S. Chairman, Mr. Matt Abbott, Mr. Juan Montalvo, Ms. Sandra Enders, Ms. Samantha Batson – all present. Ms. Marianne Cesare – Absent. Also in attendance was Ms. Beth Trotta, LCSW, BH Care Director.

2. To consider and approve minutes from December 3, 2013 meeting.

Mr. Juan Montalvo made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Sandra Enders seconded. All in Favor. Motion Approved.

3. Ms. Beth Trotta, Program Manager to update commission on current clinic situation.

Ms. Beth Trotta goes over the Monthly data for December report for 2013. (See Attached Report). Active case load is at 202 clients. In-Kind services provided this month for the Department of Education was 4.25 hours.

Mr. Juan Montalvo makes a motion to go into executive session at 7:12pm to discuss in-kind services. Ms. Sandra Enders seconds the motion. All in Favor. Motion Approved.

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Mr. Juan Montalvo makes a motion to return to the regular meeting at 7:22pm. Ms. Sandra Enders seconds the motion. All in Favor. Motion Approved.

Ms. Beth Trotta addresses the current budget that will be presented. Ms. Trotta states that as of October 1st the whole mental health system will be switching to new coding system, the ICD 10 and the DS 5. This is a system for billing and diagnosing. Our billing system does not have the ability to support the new coding system therefore we need a new billing system. In addition to that, this is mandated through the affordable health care services and will move toward an electronic health record in addition, should you not go toward an electronic health care record they will deduct 1% of all your Medicare and Medicaid remittances and our Medicare and Medicaid are about 80 – 90 % of the clients we serve. This would be a really big hit to us.

For the past 6 months I have been looking at various systems and a host of things we can do. We find ourselves in a position where the mayor has said we need to reduce our budget by 3% at a time that this needs to be done. I have been working on the numbers and there is no wiggle room to reduce. Our telephone system also had broken and we have to spend \$1500 on a new telephone processor. That will be coming out of this year's budget. We just need the ok to make the line item transfer. I wanted to make all of you aware that this is happening. One of the things that is in our favor, as of Dec. our income \$ 134,000 which is the amount of money we had at the end of the fiscal year last year. We certainly have been working at increasing our income; however the cost of running our agency is \$590,000. I have done a lot of research and have come up with a billing system that is not the best but will work, it will allow us to e-prescribe which is another one of the mandates for the affordable health care, we will still be able to use a clearing house so that will allow us to continue submitting bills to the clearing house and they will take care of that. It will also include an electronic health record that will meet our needs not only for now but

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in the future as well, so the cost of the new billing system will be \$304.00 a month if accepted in our budget.

There are two main ways we can go about this, we can buy a software disk and we can pay \$1500 - \$1600 for the disk, but we would have to buy a disk for every one of the users including the bookkeeper or there is a system that is more on the cutting edge which is a better way to go is called a cloud based system, it does not have a disk attached to it, each individual logs onto the cloud based system instead of buying separate disks. The cloud system is very safe and encrypted and they have to abide by HIPA guidelines. The nice thing about the cloud if any changes come along the system processes it and updates vs. a disk we would have to keep buying to update the system. The cloud system will allow our data to be transferred smoothly. Some manual work will have to be done by our staff into "Care Paths" which the name of the system but overall should be a smooth transition. Just to let you know as well the system we really liked was over \$1000 a month.

There is no contract, its month to month billing, no down payment and the first 30 days are free and they bill every month and if you decided you do not want to do it any more you just give 30 days' notice and no cancellation penalty. There will obviously be a learning curve to the new system but we will be in compliance and much more efficient. Mr. Matt Abbott asks Ms. Beth Trotta if even without this mandatory billing system you would have been able to cut your budget by 3%. Ms. Beth Trotta states that no, I even went into the budget and cut misc. items such as petty cash in half from \$400 to \$200 I went through all of the budget and did all of those things and the budget was still \$3,000 more than it was last year. Last year, I low balled the budget and there is nothing more to cut now. I will be presenting a graph during my budget presentation that shows how much money we have, how much money we will lose if we are not able to bill with the new system and what will lose in money by having to pay the 1% penalty

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etc. Right now we are not computerized so this is another advantage that will be great way to become a more efficient office for our clients with such things as scheduling, and it supports a client portal. A client can log onto a “tightly controlled” of course system, they can receive an email reminder of appointment, they can fill out required e-forms, and client services can leave email messages for the therapists etc. I am hoping to get an approval because I would like to begin the practice period. I would like them to run dual systems by July 1 so when the switch if flipped Oct. 1 we are ready and are accustom to using the system.

4. Commission Comments.

None

5. Public Comment.

None

6. Discuss and approve any other matters that may come before the commission.

Mr. Matt Abbott wanted to summarize a portion of the executive session regarding CCS doing some advertising mentioning services for the residents of EH and just to make the public aware that we are an open center at their service for counseling needs.

7. Adjournment.

Mr. Matt Abbott makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m. Ms. Sandra Enders seconds the motion. All in Favor. Motion Approved.

Temple Smith
East Haven Counseling & Community Services Commission Clerk