

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
TRENTON PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of Trenton Psychiatric Hospital was held on **Thursday, June 15, 2023**, pursuant to notice duly given. In conformance with the Public Open Meetings Law, notice of the meeting has been sent to The Trenton Times, The Trentonian, Newark Star-Ledger and the Secretary of State and a notice placed on the bulletin board of Trenton Psychiatric Hospital.

<u>Present:</u>	<u>Excused:</u>
***Carolyn Torre - RN, MA, APN Chairperson ***Neil Weisfeld, Esq. ***Maureen Lebel – MSW, PhD.	Susan Rubino, MD Patricia Carr-Vice Chairperson

TPH Staff Attendance:

Maria Christensen, CEO; Intikhab Ahmad, M.D., Clinical Director; James Hollen, Deputy Chief Executive Officer -Operations (DCEO); Julie Van Houten, Chief Nursing Officer; Frank Miller, QI Director; Timothy Loesch, Raycroft Complex Administrator; Towana Wilkins, Business Manager

Guest:

Mary Jean Weston, MSW, DMHAS-Regional Coordinator, Office of Community Services.

ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER/MINUTES APPROVAL:

Roll call was conducted in-person. The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. Minutes from the May 18, 2023, meeting were approved with no changes.

BOARD REPORT:

June Monthly Report:

- Dr. Lebel remarked positively on the slightly increased number of discharges.
- Dr. Lebel expressed concern about an increase in the number of assaults in May. She said that this was discussed in the Violence Prevention Committee, but noted that the trend for incidents overall, over the past several years, is downward.
- Dr. Lebel praised the reduction in restraint use, both in number and in duration. Dr Ahmad added that he is organizing a restraint work group which will strive to encourage keeping time in restraints to no longer than necessary.
- Mr. Weisfeld noticed a significant increase in the number of minor injuries, on the assault report; Dr. Ahmad believes this can be attributed to improved reporting.
- Mr. Weisfeld and Ms. Torre both asked about implementation of the DOL grant to Thomas Edison, granted in May, which aims to provide workforce development opportunities to nursing students in partnership with TPH; Th. Ed. has not yet reached out to set up a meeting.
- Mr. Weisfeld commented on the low admission rate in May. Dr. Ahmad explained that for some months, a larger proportion of patients with legal issues (KROL; IST) were being admitted to Ancora; he expects TPH will receive more of these patients in the summer.
- Ms. Torre praised the delinquency rate, at 0%, again, in May.
- Ms. Torre asked the outcome of the PSCU site visit on May 16th: they reviewed staff deployment and therapeutic programming. Recommendation: redo staff badges, some of which are blurry.
- Ms. Torre asked for an explanation of the nature of two A plus level incidents; Dr. Lebel has not yet received an explanatory report from Quality Improvement for the Incident Review Committee; this is slated to occur, going forward.
- Dr. Ahmad reported that there were 12 graduates of the Stepping Stone Substance Use program.

AUXILIARY REPORT:

- None at this time

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **Incident Committee – Dr. Maureen Lebel**

During May, the monthly report showed 135 assaults, the highest monthly total this year. Three percent of assaults (4) resulted in moderate injuries, 39 percent (53) resulted in minor injuries and 58 percent (78) resulted in no injury. As per the DOH website report of State Psychiatric Hospital Incidents, three patient to patient assaults at TPH resulted in moderate injuries. The total application of restraints for May (36) was the lowest thus far in 2023 as was the total duration (56.32 hours) of restraint. During May, there were two incidents at the A+ level, down from 5 in April.

Dr. Ahmad will be presenting information from the May 23, 2023, Violence Prevention meeting. Some particulars include: the system wide trendline clearly shows that occurrences of violence are going down; peaks in incidences of acting out are frequently a function of “outliers” (a small number of patients caused the majority of assaults); within the last 24 months 44 percent of assaults resulted in no injury; the majority of incidents occur between 3pm and 8pm with peaks at 5pm, 8pm and 8am. Effective interventions include distracting the patient with activities, separating individuals at risk, providing rewards for kindness behaviors, placing patients at risk under close observation and long-acting medications.

- **Legislative Committee – Mr. Neil Weisfeld**

I. Bills Affecting Mental Health Services

The Committee continues to monitor the following bills. Actions taken since the Committee’s last report appear in boldface (thus).

A5096/S3511:

Corrects terminology regarding alcohol use and substance use disorder

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Benjie E. Wimberly, Verlina Reynolds-Jackson (D), Anthony S. Verrelli ; Senators Vin Gopal (D), Brian D. Stack (D)

Approved by Assembly Health Committee 11-0 on March 9. Passed by the Assembly 71-2 on May 25. Referred to Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee June 1.

A2764/S1068:

Increases Medicaid reimbursement for certain evidence-based mental health services

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Sterley S. Stanley (D), Sadaf F. Jaffer (D), Daniel R. Benson (D); Senators Joseph F. Vitale (D), Vin Gopal (D)

Approved by Assembly Human Services Committee 9-0 on February 9, referred to Assembly Health Committee. Referred to Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee January 31 (2022).

A4275/S3461:

Establishes ombudsman for mental health and addiction services

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Angela V. McKnight (D), Benjie E. Wimberly (D), Daniel R. Benson (D); Senator James Beach (D)

Approved by Assembly Health Committee 12-0 on February 13, referred to Assembly Appropriations Committee. Referred to Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee January 12.

A4615/S1153:

Requires state to help develop graduate medical education programs in behavioral health care

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Louis D. Greenwald (D), Verlina Reynolds-Jackson (D), Ellen J. Park (D)

Approved by Assembly Higher Education Committee 12-0 on February 13, approved by Assembly Appropriations Committee 10-0 on February 23, passed by the Assembly 78-0 on February 27. Referred to Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee February 28. Approved by the Senate committee 8-0 on May 11.

A4755/S3261:

Permits behavioral and mental health providers to operate in homeless shelters

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Yvonne Lopez (D), William F. Moen (D), Shanique Speight (D); Senator Renee C. Burgess (D)

Approved by Assembly Housing Committee 6-0 on October 13, approved by Assembly Human Services Committee 9-0 on December 8, passed by the Assembly 77-0 on December 15. Approved by the Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee 8-0 on January 19. Amended version passed by the Senate 36-0 on March 20. Amended version passed by the Assembly 74-0 on March 30. Signed by the Governor May 15, *P.L. 2023, ch. 62*.

A3514/S704:

Prohibits mental health professionals from disclosing mental health notes to health insurers

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Clinton Calabrese (D), Angelica M. Jimenez (D), Reginald W. Atkins (D); Senators Richard J. Codey (D), Anthony M. Bucco (R)

Approved by Senate Commerce Committee 4-0 on May 16 (2022), passed by the Senate 38-0 on June 16 (2022). Referred to Assembly Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee June 16 (2022).

A508/S2668:

Establishes annual cost-of-living adjustment for mental health, substance use disorder, and developmental disability services

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Daniel R. Benson (D), Carol A. Murphy (D); Senators Linda R. Greenstein (D), Joseph F. Vitale (D), Vin Gopal (D)

Referred to Assembly Human Services Committee January 11 (2022). Approved by Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee 7-0 on October 6, referred to Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee.

A1700/S524:

Creates mental health diversion program to divert eligible persons from criminal justice system.

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Annette Quijano (D), Raj Mukherji (D), Reginald W. Atkins (D); Senators M. Teresa Ruiz (D), Sandra B. Cunningham (D)

Approved by Assembly Judiciary Committee 4-0 on September 29, referred to Assembly Human Services Committee. Referred to Senate Judiciary Committee January 11 (2022).

A1924/S3031:

Mandates reimbursement of mental health treatment for domestic violence by health insurers

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Lisa Swain (D), Daniel R. Benson (D); Senators Vin Gopal (D), M. Teresa Ruiz (D)

Referred to Assembly Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee January 11 (2022). Referred to Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee September 22.

A4604/S682:

Mandates suicide prevention training for mental health practitioners

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Kevin J. Rooney (R); Senators Anthony M. Bucco (R), Vin Gopal (D)

Referred to Assembly Health Committee September 22. Referred to Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee January 11 (2022).

A4540/S1153:

Mandates mental health evaluation of all adult and juvenile animal cruelty offenders ("Shyanne's Law")

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Angelica M. Jimenez (D); Senator Joseph F. Vitale (D)

Referred to Assembly Agriculture and Food Security Committee September 22.
Referred to Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee
January 31 (2022).

A4618/S3122:

Creates online job portal for behavioral health care workers and online externship and internship portal for health care students

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Roy Freiman (D), Carol A. Murphy (D), Louis D. Greenwald (D); Senator Andrew Zwicker (D)

Approved by Assembly Labor Committee 9-0 on December 8, approved by Assembly Appropriations Committee 10-0 on February 23, passed by the Assembly 78-0 on February 27. Referred to Senate Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee February 28. Approved by the Senate committee 8-0 on May 11.

A1336/S1965:

Creates Behavioral Mental Health Advisory Board in Department of Human Services

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Gabriela M. Mosquera (D), Gary S.Schaer (D), Pamela R. Lampitt (D); Senator Kristin M. Corrado (R)

Referred to Assembly Human Services Committee January 11 (2022). Referred to Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee March 3 (2022).

A2286/S1522:

Eases practice restrictions for advanced practice nurses

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Nancy F. Munoz (R), Mila M. Jasey (D), William W. Spearman (D); Senators Joseph F. Vitale (D), Troy Singleton (D)

Referred to Assembly Health Committee February 7 (2022). Approved by Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee 7-0 on December 15.

A2875/S528:

Creates Behavioral Health Services Task Force

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Daniel R. Benson (D); Senator Joseph F. Vitale (D)

Referred to Assembly Health Committee February 28 (2022). Referred to Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee January 31 (2022).

A1847/S255:

Allows diversion from criminal prosecution of some people affected by mental illness

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Ellen J. Park (D); Senators Shirley K. Turner (D), Brian P. Stack (D)

Referred to Assembly Community Development and Affairs Committee January 11 (2022). Referred to Senate Judiciary Committee January 11 (2022).

A1950/S1950:

Includes substance use disorder among conditions sometimes justifying involuntary commitment

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Raj Mukherji (D), Gabriela M. Mosquera (D), Angelica M. Jimenez (D); Senator Nilsa I. Cruz-Perez (D)

Referred to Assembly Human Services Committee January 11 (2022). Referred to Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee March 3 (2022).

A3675/S3574:

Creates START pilot program for people with dual diagnoses

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Anthony S. Verrelli (D), Raj Mukherji (D), Daniel R. Benson (D); Senator Jean Stanfield (R)

Approved by Assembly Human Services Committee 9-0 on June 9, referred to Assembly Health Committee. Referred to Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee February 9.

A3750/S143:

Enhances suicide prevention and treatment

Sponsors: Assembly reps. Kim Eulner (R), Marilyn Piperno (R); Senators Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. (D), Linda R. Greenstein (D)

Referred to Assembly Health Committee May 2. Referred to Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee January 11 (2022).

A4604/S682:

Mandates suicide prevention training for mental health practitioners

Sponsors: Assembly rep. Kevin J. Rooney (R); Senators Anthony M. Bucco (R), Vin Gopal (D)

Referred to Assembly Health Committee September 22. Referred to Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee January 11 (2022).

A5283/S3939:

Requires professional licensing boards to adhere to national averages in processing licensure applications

Sponsors: Assembly representatives P. Christopher Tully (D), Gabriela M. Mosquera (D), and Louis D. Greenwald (D); Senator Joseph A. Lagana (D)

Referred to Assembly Labor Committee March 9, approved by the Committee 9-0 on March 23.

A4619/S3596:

Makes temporary health profession licenses, as established during the COVID pandemic, a permanent option

Sponsors: Assembly representatives Herb Conaway, Jr. (D), Sterley S. Stanley (D), and Louis D. Greenwald (D); Senator Fred H. Madden, Jr. (D)

Referred to Assembly Regulated Professions Committee September 22 (2022), approved by the Committee 5-0 on January 12. Referred to Senate Commerce Committee February 13.

II. Note on Other Developments:

The Legislature continues to consider the Governor's budget for FY24. Much of the controversy over the budget involves the issue of property tax relief for seniors.

Primary elections for all seats in both the Senate and the Assembly took place on June 6. Only a few elections were contested.

Respectfully submitted, Neil E. Weisfeld, Chair

- **Schulley Trading Post – Mr. Weisfeld:**

Mr. Weisfeld inquired with concern about the deficit of nearly \$5,000 attributed to the Schulley Trading Post in May. Mr. Hollen explained that this was a result of overdue bills that had been paid by check since February; sent by internal mail for posting, they were found, undelivered. So, the checks were reissued; this was all money due to vendors supplying STP.

- **Therapeutic Environment Committee – Ms. Patricia Carr**

Recent Accomplishments:

- Purchase of trees to replace removed trees

Currently in Progress:

- Avante-Garden Day - April 28, 2023 -All day outdoor event
- Planting activities
- Arts & Crafts
- Music
- Poetry reading
- Trees along hill where greenhouse one should be removed

Projects Waiting in the Wings (depending on timing/funding):

- The outdoor awnings Lincoln Complex
- Pave the driveway from parking lot up to storage sheds.
- Smart tv hooked up to the internet, to view educational Horticulture videos.

- **Wish List:**

- Potting shed roof insulated
- Lower panels in greenhouse four should be replaced (they are getting brittle and developing holes)
- An additional greenhouse
- A new classroom building
- Mr. Hollen and Dr. Christiansen commented on the very successful Annual Open House held on 5/12/23 by the New Leaf gardeners, as noted in the Rehab. Report. Sales to staff for the day totaled \$455.00.

- **Welfare Fund – Ms. Torre**

At the May meeting, the Board approved Mr. Hollen's suggested budget for 2024 of \$47, 250. Since that time, TPH has been awarded surplus funds for 2023 through DOH, which along with the remainder of 2022 surplus funds, totals nearly \$5.8 million. This makes possible the purchase of much- needed equipment including furniture, copiers, computers, android phones, carpet, a sprinkler system, passenger vans, food service equipment and the completion of much-needing projects like road paving and sewage system repair. This leaves the Welfare budget untouched, so the Board can consider patient-centered activities/materials to which that money might be directed.

**Report from Ms. Mary Jean Weston, MSW, Regional Coordinator
Office of Community Services, Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS)
(June 15, 2023)**

1. Mental Health Services at Shelters:

Governor Murphy signed a law that allows Mental Health services at emergency shelters. The law will make mental health services accessible to people who otherwise may not have the means to seek treatment on their own. "If the program is in a shelter, they will have to be no cost. And not only no cost, but no barriers to getting in," according to Connie Mercer, CEO of the New Jersey Coalition to End Homelessness. "It's hard to quantify how many unhoused people in New Jersey have mental health issues because many are afraid to self-report." <https://whyy.org/cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/whyy.org/articles/new-jersey-homeless-shelters-provide-mental-health-services/amp/>

2. Opioid Settlement Funds:

The state of New Jersey will be receiving at least \$641 million of opioid settlement funds over the next 18 years. The state will receive half of the funding, and the other half will be provided to participating county and local governments. The Murphy Administration is interested in the opinion of NJ citizens about how the funds should be used. The New Jersey Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council is holding listening sessions to hear from the public. For details on the Listening Sessions, go to [DHS-OCflyer_v2 \(nj.gov\)](#).

3. DMHAS Recent Funding Awards:

- a. Prevention Services for Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered or Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth in New Jersey Middle or High Schools
- b. Open Access to Medications for Opioid Use Disorder in Homeless Shelters
- c. Residential Services for Individuals Discharged from Nursing Facilities

4. 988 Update:

- a. DMHAS 988 Staff recently made a presentation on 988 to the New Jersey Commission on American Indian Affairs. The Commission serves as a liaison among the three state-recognized NJ tribes (Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Indians, Powhatan Renape Indians and the Ramapough Lenape Indian Nation), the Inter-Tribal People, and the State and Federal governments. Inter-Tribal People refers to American Indian people who reside in New Jersey but are members of federally and/or State-recognized tribes in other states. The Commission is empowered to develop programs and projects to further understanding of New Jersey's American Indian history and culture.

Inclusion of Tribal communities in all aspects of 988 services has been a requirement of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA – federal funder) and Vibrant Emotional Health (Vibrant – 988 Lifeline national administrator) from the beginning. With this in mind, DMHAS 988 staff are also meeting with leaders of the Commission to learn how the 988 system in NJ can best serve tribal community members in crisis.

5. RFPs from DMHAS;

- a. Request for Proposals for Independent Peer Review. DMHAS is seeking credentialed substance abuse professionals to provide Independent Peer Review (“IPR”) for quality and appropriateness of treatment services of substance use treatment facilities funded by DMHAS. For more information, see [Independent Peer Review \(IPR\)](#).

More Information on these funding opportunities and other RFPs is available at:
<https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/provider/funding/>

COMMUNICATIONS: – There were no communications this month.

OLD BUSINESS:

No Old Business currently

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Frank Miller is retiring. The Board and the Staff offered their thanks and congratulations and wished him well.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC – There were no comments from the public.

Timothy Loesch Raycroft Complex Administrator: presented a status report on Raycroft.

Mr. Loesch reported on challenges in the unit, including managing staff shortages, and dealing with contraband. He described the satisfaction of having succeeded in discharging patients with long patient stays, including one of over three years. He discussed the positive effects of an art therapist working with patients to create a mosaic that maintenance is framing and that will be hung. He has developed in-house sports tournaments for Level I patients who can’t leave the building. Over time, the assault level has been coming down in Raycroft.

Annual Report

Mr. Frank Miller presented the annual report and addressed all Board members' questions. The report is a public document and can be shared. A copy of the report is attached.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 9:30 a.m., in person at TPH.

The Board asks that copies of the July report be mailed when it is completed rather than waiting to distribute it along with the August report immediately before the September meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Torre RN, MA, APN, FAANP
Chairperson

CT



Trenton Psychiatric
Hospital Annual Rep

