

VTMHCA Meeting Minutes, Montpelier, VT
1/15/2010

Members Present: Heather Pierce, Diane Tatro, Kraye Grymonnt, Scott Earisman, Barb Nielsen, Caryn Feinberg, Evy Smith

Reviewed and Approved Nov. 6, 2009 minutes

TREASURER's REPORT: Barb presented on the treasurer's report.

Heather suggested a format for the meeting agenda/minutes to include following categories: Topic, Discussion & Decision, Action steps, Accountable Person.

TOPIC: Health Care Reform and need to hire lobbyist

Discussion:

Scott presented on Legislative Committee: discussion ensued around hiring of lobbying firm, Zatz & Renfrew who represent 15 healthcare groups. Fee for VTMHCA would be \$1500 in combo with VPA at \$1500 for total \$3000.00 (discounted from \$5000.) They have data that parallels our interests and will provide written reports & testimony. Staff includes 4 interns. Excellent track record of assimilating and synthesizing complexities of health care issues. Their expertise can protect our profession and is a good investment and this was unanimously agreed by board members present.

Heather asked Scott to call Alex Forbes and find out if they could meet with VTMHCA board and also provide them with the board emails and find out where check is to be sent.

Accountable Person: Scott agreed to this.

Discussion: Diane shared a perspective regarding Rodger Kessler and his connection to Blueprint for Health. The model of the Blueprint is moving away from fee for service and seeks to integrate various specialties all under the Primary Care practices, i.e. mental health counselors, substance abuse counselors... Some discussion about rate of pay differentials based on medical office vs. private practitioner location, which is likely over next few years. Rodger Kessler reportedly suggested that Professional Organizations speak with "one voice". We think we are doing just that.

Discussion from last meeting repeated the issues that Susan Besio is dealing with around staff changes at OVHA and Medicare/Medicaid payor issues and she assured us that these matters are on her radar.

Heather shared that the AMHCA lobbyist is advocating on HR 3962 section 1309 for MFT & LCMHC to be eligible for billing Medicare. Lots of chaos on the federal level with this issue. Suggestion to keep emails going to Peter Welch continually... Caryn suggested listserv update on this and have a "cut and paste" statement that members could readily send to Peter Welch.

Accountable Person: Heather agreed to provide the "cut and paste statement" and will send it along with the link to Peter Welch's site.

More Discussion on Health Care Reform: Scott discussed David Fassler's 26 Questions to the gubernatorial candidates and the loss ratio and mental health issues along with the Vt. State Hospital changes. He informed us that Ken Liberto, is stepping down from directing the VMHA.. Scott also attended the Joint Senate Healthcare Committee meeting which had about 90 advocate voices rise up in support of universal health care single payor model. The VT. Worker's Center had a presence as well. It was a showing of Human Rights campaign with lots of inspiring stories shared. It was suggested by Heather that perhaps Gail Zatz & Virginia Renfrew be in contact with the VWC, if they are not already.

Diane added to the Legislative report that Lori McGovern from Magellan was asked about the bundled code payment issue of paying flat rate for both 90801's and 90806's. BISHCA has told insurers that they need to address this and split it out. There is still no clarity as to the actual specifics on how much the split will be. Let practitioners know that they should look at the RA's and compare the payments received for 90801's, 90806's, 90808's and 90847's and decipher who is bundling and who is not bundling a and let BISHCA know.

Accountable Persons: This will be written out and sent to listserv by Caryn & Diane. Diane also informed us that the Huffington Post has contacted Alex to do an article on loss ration and apparently she is being interviewed today, as we speak...

Diane reported further that she contacted Julie Clements at AMHCA and they plan to keep this issue on the front burner and offered to reprint the interview that Alex had with the Huffington Post in the Advocate.

Upcoming Legislative Dinner to be attended by Heather, Diane, Caryn, Scott. Bon Appetit!

TOPIC: Nominating Committee question

Discussion: whether to get a Nominating Committee underway. We reviewed the bylaws on this matter. Caryn suggested that the board simply do the nominations. Some discussion about whether to change the bylaws to match the president's term. Most past presidents served for 2 years; current understanding is serve 1 year with mentoring year of president elect. Bylaws state that 2/3 of members present at the annual meeting vote is required to change the terms. This matter will be addressed at the June 2010 Annual meeting agenda.

TOPIC: Membership Committee

Discussion: Brainstorm ensued on how board can increase membership

There are increasing demands esp. in the legislative component of the work and this is too much for the board president to take on. Issues of membership numbers, recruitment, informing membership all that is done for the profession behind the scenes by the board along with the benefits of membership. Discussion around efficacy of newsletter (electronic vs. paper). Question raised as to the cost benefit ratio of having a newsletter go out to members and beyond to build membership. This led to decision to have the

Membership committee reconnect and review the idea of a newsletter. Krave offered his services.

TOPIC: Annual Meeting

Discussion: about upcoming Annual meeting conference topic: ETHICS. Diane suggested a post card go out to all licensed clinicians in VT to “Save the Date” and telling people to check our website for late breaking details, CEU’s etc. Krave and Caryn completed this task.

Conference Committee: Caryn shared that she has received a few ideas for speakers...Dr. Ron Miller to address the Historical and Current Trends on Ethics; another suggestion was to address Cyber Counseling and the Age of Technology with regard to Electronic Medical Records and the like.

Accountable Person: Evy agreed to check with the attorneys at FAHC on possible speakers.

Heather asked about putting the bylaws on CD for ease of making changes and general safe keeping.

Act 129--Final point regarding report by Steve Kappel; we did not find it to meet our needs. We need to speak to BISHCA about making the report transparent.

Next meeting is March 12, 2010 at 9:00 am-11:30 am at Krave’s house.

Respectfully Submitted by
Evy Smith