

*****PENDING - SUBJECT TO CHANGE*****

**MINUTES
CENTRAL UTAH COUNSELING CENTER
AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING**

DATE: May 8, 2024

PLACE: 1170 S College Ave
Richfield, UT 84701

TIME: 4:30 PM

PRESENT: Commissioner Scott Bartholomew, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Ralph Brown, Commissioner Trevor Johnson, Commissioner Marty Palmer, Commissioner Sam Steed, Nathan Strait, Richard Anderson, Anna LaDamus, Chad Williams, Jared Kummer, Holly Kunzler, Jace Ellsworth, Christian Matthews, Matt Church

EXCUSED: Lynnette Robinson, Julie Lynn

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Scott Bartholomew to approve the minutes of the March 13th, 2024 Authority Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dennis Blackburn. Votes by voice included Commissioner Scott Bartholomew yes, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn yes, Commissioner Ralph Brown yes, Commissioner Trevor Johnson yes, Commissioner Marty Palmer yes, and Commissioner Sam Steed yes. Motion carried.

II. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT:

Richard Anderson presented the fiscal year (FY) 2024 financial report. The county match change agenda item will be discussed in the tentative budget section later in the meeting. Additional funds were received for the mobile crisis outreach team (MCOT) that will help offset the lack of funding. Bear River Mental Health sent \$185,000 and Salt Lake County \$310,000 of their excess MCOT funds. Salt Lake County gave over a million dollars away to other agencies. A lot of their funding goes to the Huntsman Mental Health Institute (HMHI), and they are struggling to fill new MCOT. Rural areas need more funding to handle the distances. Richard will request an additional \$490,000 next year for a second MCOT. This year, additional MCOT funding was transferred to transportation. Nathan Strait stated HMHI handles 988 calls and tries to resolve as many on the phone as possible. They try not to refer many to MCOT so they receive credit for the resolution. The Center has given law enforcement and hospitals in the area direct phone numbers to MCOT. Salt Lake County does not have that luxury. Everything must go through 988. Richard stated with 83% of the year gone, revenue is 70% mental health (MH) and 71% substance use disorder (SUD). He anticipates Medicaid making the revenue whole by the end of

the fiscal year. There has been a shift in funding and services to the SUD side. The split used to be 80% MH and 20% SUD. The Center is now responsible for SUD residential treatment that is over \$100,000. Commissioner Dennis Blackburn asked what the Other SUD line item is. Richard believes it is a catchall for SUD revenue received that does not fit any other category. Wages and fringe benefits are both 84%, which is very close to the target. Travel is 78%, which should come close to 100% after the National Conference expenses come through. On the expenditure side, Richard initially budgeted \$110,000 for SUD residential but only \$12,000 was spent the first year. He budgeted \$100,000 this year, and \$102,000 has already been spent. The Center will no longer work with Castle Ridge Behavioral Health in Castle Dale after some concerns. Inpatient looks great, however, claims will continue to trickle in. There are not many pending. Excluding capital, MH expenditures are 73% and SUD 92%. A percentage point on the MH side is much larger than on the SUD side due to the difference in total budget amounts. Richard budgeted \$4 million this year in capital for the administration building in Gunnison. This will not happen until next year. \$1.9 million has been taken from reserves for the Richfield clinical building. An additional \$150,000 to \$200,000 will be pulled to complete that project. It is scheduled to be finished in the middle of July, which is later than planned. A low offer was made on the current Richfield clinical building. Administration countered. After this meeting agenda was posted, a counteroffer was received for \$125,000 less than the Center's counteroffer. Nathan and Richard's low is \$50,000 lower than the counter they originally gave. Commissioner Trevor Johnson asked if there is any other interest in the property. Richard stated it was looked at for a restaurant and eye doctor. The restaurant went quiet, and the doctor would rather build. Commissioner Ralph Brown thinks the doctor moved into a strip mall. Nathan and Richard will counteroffer the \$50,000 less than the original counteroffer and let them know it is the lowest they are willing to go.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ralph Brown to approve the financial report as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marty Palmer. Votes by voice included Commissioner Scott Bartholomew yes, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn yes, Commissioner Ralph Brown yes, Commissioner Trevor Johnson yes, Commissioner Marty Palmer yes, and Commissioner Sam Steed yes. Motion carried.

III. APPROVAL AED PURCHASE:

Richard stated he teaches classes at a gym in Nephi where a young person had a cardiac event. This opened his eyes that the Center needs automated external defibrillators (AED) in each office. He reached out to former Commissioner Darin Bushman to see if any funding was available due to the cost of the devices. The former commissioner stated there is not currently funding available, but he is looking to add this to his budget next year. Commissioner Dennis Blackburn asked if the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has any funding. Richard stated he did not check federal funding. Zoll has the least expensive version. He proposes the purchase of 10 AEDs for a total of \$18,576.50. Commissioners Scott Bartholomew and Dennis Blackburn agreed that if the devices save one life, they are worth it. Commissioner Dennis Blackburn asked about the expiration dates. Richard stated the patches have expiration dates, and the batteries have a five year shelf life. Commissioner Sam Steed asked if training is required. Richard stated licensing requires cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training, and this will be added to that. Commissioner Scott Bartholomew asked if Richard could provide the

training. Richard stated his certification has lapsed, but the American Heart Association and American Red Cross both offer the training. It will be incorporated into annual CPR training if the devices are approved. Commissioner Ralph Brown stated he thinks the price is economical for 10 devices.

A motion was made by Commissioner Scott Bartholomew to approve the purchase of 10 AED devices for \$18,576.50. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sam Steed. Votes by voice included Commissioner Scott Bartholomew yes, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn yes, Commissioner Ralph Brown yes, Commissioner Trevor Johnson yes, Commissioner Marty Palmer yes, and Commissioner Sam Steed yes. Motion carried.

IV. PERSONNEL ACTIONS:

Jace Ellsworth stated there have been three resignations and three new hires since the March meeting. Ashton Seely was a therapist intern in Nephi who resigned to work for Sandstone Psychology in private practice. The Center really wanted to keep him but could not compete with Sandstone's offer. They operate out of an office at Central Valley Medical Center, and most of their clients are in Payson. Carter Jensen was hired as a full-time therapist intern in Richfield. Sisilia Vakautakakala was a full-time office/case manager in Ephraim who resigned to go back to school. Jennie Fullmer was a full-time case manager in Richfield who resigned for other employment. Isabella Mecham was hired as a part-time custodian in Nephi. Avery Wells was hired as part-time maintenance in Ephraim. There are some open positions that will hopefully be filled prior to the next meeting. Nathan stated the three MCOT case managers will be moved back to the teams, which will help fill those two open positions. Richard stated one of the benefits of working for the Center is the benefits. Employees who resign tend to look at salary only. The tentative budget keeps this in mind to try not to fall behind so staff can be recruited and retained.

V. FY2025 TENTATIVE BUDGET:

Richard stated he normally presents a balanced tentative budget. He has intentionally not done that this year for a couple reasons. The county match will change before the budget is finalized in June. Capitated Medicaid projections are in and look good. Richard is very pleased with what the actuaries are doing by taking the data the Center provides along with trends to set rates. The employees on leave of absence (LOA) play a role in why the budget is not balanced. Counties have to match state dollars at 20%. Some of those funds are used to pay Medicaid match, which is roughly 34%. Some state funding is targeted for Medicaid match. The state sometimes uses county population to split funding. The Center is just under 4% of the state population. The Center receives 2.7% of some of the funding streams. An urban-rural differential is also taken into consideration because transportation costs are much larger. Medicaid expansion has been included in the calculation, which is strange because it does not require a match. Another issue is data comes from the Provider Reimbursement Information System for Medicaid (PRISM), which is inaccurate. There is a proposal to base the pot of state money on the match the Center pays. Any changes to this changes the county match. Richard presented the old method that includes funds that do not require match based on PRISM data. The Center is the only agency that would not receive any of the new money. As it sits right now, the county match would go down by \$12,000. The budget shows the county match going down by that amount, even though it is not

set. The acuity factor helps maintain funds. One of the issues with a prepaid system is eligibility rises and falls over time depending on the economy and other factors. If the Center sees an influx of clients and dollars, the rates adjust down. If eligibility starts to drop, the rates also decrease. There is a core group of individuals the Center has to serve regardless of the rates. The acuity factors include this group of individuals to help stabilize and normalize the funding so there are not big swings from year to year. The amount projected is \$7.445 million MH and \$1.977 SUD. Richard requested \$7 million in MH for FY2025. The projections are \$400,000 more than requested in MH and \$30,000 for SUD. These projections will show in the tentative budget. Nathan stated Richard does not ask for anything unreasonable, and the actuaries see that. Some of the centers did not get close to what they were asking for. Richard stated one center was a million dollars short. Nathan thinks this is a credit to Richard. Richard stated he will present two budget versions. The first version includes the employees on LOA as if they will return to work in July. The difference from one year to the next was shown. Medicaid fee for service is down. Richard is unsure if that is related to PRISM or issues with the electronic health record. This should rebound before the end of the year as PRISM gets corrected. The budget was created as if the issue will not be fixed. There is \$1.5 million for the administration building. The contractor used \$200 per square foot but thinks it should be closer to \$180. Commissioner Ralph Brown thinks it will be closer to \$200 as that is what he has been seeing. Richard put a little in the budget for furniture as well. The proposed revenue will not change in the two versions and shows the projected \$7.445 for MH and \$1.977 for SUD. The Center is a service organization so most of the funding is spent on staff in wages and fringe. There is a difference of \$812,000 from one year to the next. This factors in additional staff needing to be hired, employees on LOA, and a 4% cost of living adjustment (COLA). The state is doing a 5% increase, Bear River Mental Health 5.75%, Northeastern Counseling Center 5%, Wasatch Behavioral Health 4%, and Weber Human Services 3% with a 1% anniversary date increase. There will also be a proposal for a 1% increase for any staff who make under \$25 per hour. Richard knows the commissioners worry about the spread in salaries. Richard also worries about compression so he is looking at both those issues together. Travel is fairly basic. The legislature made a joint resolution that the 1% decrease in the state retirement system should go to salaries. Commissioner Marty Palmer stated Tier 2 employees will have to pay 0.07% to their own pension. Richard stated it is strange because they have a 1% decrease on one side but a 0.07% increase on another. It is two different areas of the system that must be accounted for separately. With the employees on LOA, the budget is negative \$421,774.39. Pulling these employees out creates a positive \$222,000. Richard thinks the Center cannot afford to pay these employees next year without some adjustments to the budget. Commissioner Trevor Johnson asked how many staff are lost per year due to not being as wage competitive. Chad Williams stated Ashton Seely's offer was not even close to what the Center could pay him. Richard stated the target is to be average within the state system and not compared to the private sector. Nathan stated the comparison is with other behavioral health centers in the state that offer similar benefit packages. The private system does not have as many benefits. Jace stated the benefit package is what retains employees. Richard stated the consumer price index (CPI) came in at 3.8% today. The proposal is a 4% COLA with 1% for those making under \$25 per hour. The CPI is almost 4% plus the 1% the legislature wants back in salaries. A 5% COLA not including the employees on LOA would still be a positive \$144,000. Nathan stated it makes sense to consider 4% and 5% COLAs. This is just a proposed budget. The balance that will be presented in June will be balanced, and the commissioners can

decide what to do. Commissioner Scott Bartholomew stated the counties do not receive these federal dollars, but everyone knows what they have approved for wages and percentages. If they give the Center a large increase, the county wants that same increase. He encouraged administration to keep the increases as frugal as possible for their benefit. Maybe they could do something like bonuses that do not reflect in the initial wage. Richard stated he understands how difficult it is for the commissioners. They approved a 10% adjustment to therapists in the past because the Center was falling behind. That is the compression. A flat amount has been discussed because a loaf of bread costs the same for every employee. The average increase is probably 6% if the 10% therapist increase is included. It is incredibly interesting how everything changed during the pandemic. Inflation is driving some of this as well. Commissioner Marty Palmer stated both state retirement tier contributions decreased by 1%. Richard agreed but stated the amount the employees have to pay is a different portion that the employer cannot legally pay. The 1% is what the Center pays into the system, and this was reduced for all agencies in the state. Commissioner Dennis Blackburn stated at some point they need to include the benefits in there. Richard stated job offers include a list of salary and benefits and what they are worth. A \$60,000 per year therapist earns over \$100,000 per year when benefits are included. The newer generation only cares about hourly rate and time off. Commissioner Marty Palmer stated they have 19 Tier 2 employees in Juab County and offered a match of 2% that only 9 opted into. Richard stated the finance directors in the state discuss pay scales. The Center does a percentage point pay scale. Others do steps and grades. Richard is not sure how the counties do it. Some of the finance directors pointed out that even though the counties might not do a COLA, the steps come with increases. Hopefully that is not lost in the conversation. Commissioner Trevor Johnson stated it is difficult in his county because they do not pay what the power or cement plants pay. Commissioner Marty Palmer worked for Nephi City for 34 years, and there were several years the insurance increased so much that a raise was not given. Richard said that has happened at the Center. The insurance renewal this year was very good at 1.8%. Commissioner Ralph Brown stated his county renewal decreased. Nathan stated the Center is more closely aligned with the medical profession than the state road crew. It is a different group of people who are harder to recruit and retain. When looking at the budget, those with advanced degrees need to be taken into consideration. Law enforcement does not necessarily require an advanced degree to be a patrolman. They are still hard to recruit and retain, but there is a difference. It is not an apples to apples comparison. Administration understands the commissioners get questioned and are cognizant of that and will take that into consideration. Commissioner Marty Palmer asked what medical insurance the Center uses. Richard stated the Center is with the Public Employees Health Plan (PEHP) and will move from Dental Select to Delta Dental.

VI. AREA PLAN APPROVAL:

Jared Kummer thanked the commissioners for what they have done to help retain therapists at the Center. The area plan is a three year project. Jared completed the largest portion of it last year. There were three additions this year to try to support whole person health that looks at physical and emotional health together. The first addition is looking at a screening tool for housing, finances, education, domestic violence, etc. to connect clients with case managers for core needs. The second addition is adding client physician names in the electronic health record. Ultimately, working more with client primary care physicians is only good for the clients. The third addition is a book update that provides a panoramic view of a person's life such as

environment, physical health, emotional health, etc. The book has a new addition that the Center needs to adapt to in regard to documentation. The book is \$160. Richard stated the clinical side of the area plan is a three year plan, but the financial side is completed every year based on the budget. Nathan stated an approval is needed with a signature. Richard stated the document will be sent via DocuSign if the area plan is approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dennis Blackburn to approve the area plan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ralph Brown. Votes by voice included Commissioner Scott Bartholomew yes, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn yes, Commissioner Ralph Brown yes, Commissioner Trevor Johnson yes, Commissioner Marty Palmer yes, and Commissioner Sam Steed yes. Motion carried.

VII. LEAVE OF ABSENCE RATIFICATION:

Jace stated Lauren Miller requested to extend her leave of absence to June 30th, which aligns with the other staff on leave of absence. A vote was taken prior to the National Conference via email that needs to be ratified in this meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Scott Bartholomew to ratify the prior email approval of Lauren Miller's leave of absence extension to June 30th, 2024. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dennis Blackburn. Votes by voice included Commissioner Scott Bartholomew yes, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn yes, Commissioner Ralph Brown yes, Commissioner Trevor Johnson yes, Commissioner Marty Palmer yes, and Commissioner Sam Steed yes. Motion carried.

VIII. GRAMA REQUEST:

Nathan stated a Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA) request was received last week from Annie Knox, who is a reporter from KSL. She requested all notices of claim the Center received in 2023 relative to the carbon monoxide exposure. The Center did receive an additional claim in January of 2024. Nathan reached out to Annie by phone and email to let her know of the additional request. Annie sent a second request and thanked Nathan for being upfront with her. Commissioner Ralph Brown asked if Nathan waived the fee, and Nathan stated that he did. Nathan stated the records provided did have personal health information redacted, which is an expectation in GRAMA. The names of the employees who filed the claims were included, but the health consequences of what they are facing were redacted to protect their privacy. Annie has not requested a reason for the redaction or appealed the documents sent. Nathan does not know the intent behind the request. Annie told him she would be back in touch with him for further questions. Richard stated Annie requested the expedited five days. Commissioner Trevor Johnson asked if the commissioners needed to do anything, and Nathan answered no. Richard stated just the three notices of claim were sent.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Commissioner Scott Bartholomew to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing pending or threatened litigation and/or the character, professional competence of employee(s), property, or strategy session as provided by Utah Code Annotated §52-4-205. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dennis Blackburn.

Votes by voice included Commissioner Scott Bartholomew yes, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn yes, Commissioner Ralph Brown yes, Commissioner Trevor Johnson yes, Commissioner Marty Palmer yes, and Commissioner Sam Steed yes. Motion carried. Roll call of those in attendance included Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Scott Bartholomew, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Ralph Brown, Commissioner Trevor Johnson, Commissioner Marty Palmer, Commissioner Sam Steed, Nathan Strait, Richard Anderson, Jace Ellsworth, and Matt Church.

A motion was made by Commissioner Marty Palmer to move out of Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sam Steed. Votes by voice included Commissioner Scott Bartholomew yes, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn yes, Commissioner Ralph Brown yes, Commissioner Trevor Johnson yes, Commissioner Marty Palmer yes, and Commissioner Sam Steed yes. Motion carried.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION ACTION:

Not needed.

XI. MEETING SCHEDULE:

The next Authority Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 12th, 2024 and will include the Budget Hearing.

XII. OTHER:

Nothing to report.

XIII. MATTERS FROM THE BOARD:

Commissioner Scott Bartholomew stated he would like it known that Nathan has his full support in his actions. Commissioners Ralph Brown and Trevor Johnson agreed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Scott Bartholomew to acknowledge the commissioners support of Nathan Strait in his actions. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ralph Brown. Votes by voice included Commissioner Scott Bartholomew yes, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn yes, Commissioner Ralph Brown yes, Commissioner Trevor Johnson yes, Commissioner Marty Palmer yes, and Commissioner Sam Steed yes. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ralph Brown to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marty Palmer. Votes by voice included Commissioner Scott Bartholomew yes, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn yes, Commissioner Ralph Brown yes, Commissioner Trevor Johnson yes, Commissioner Marty Palmer yes, and Commissioner Sam Steed yes. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Julie Lynn, Accountant