NJAMHAA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes: January 16, 2013

Prepared by Shauna Moses, Associate Executive Director

Present: J. Michael Armstrong, Jim Cooney, Bob Davison, Alan DeStefano, Manny Guantez, Deborah Hartel (via conference call), Chris Kosseff, David Lazarus (via conference call), Linda Leyhane, Harry Marmorstein, Dan Martin, Joe Masciandaro, Deborah Megaro, John Monahan, Bob Parker, Paula Sabreen, Pete Scerbo, Bill Sette, Greg Speed

Absent: Anthony DiFabio, Joe Kadian, Jim Lape, Harry Postel, Robert Schober, Vicki Sidrow

Guests: Jim McCreath (via conference call), Gary Van Nostrand

Staff and Consultants: Shauna Moses, Randy Thompson, Debra Wentz

1. Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was m/s/p. The financial statements were m/s/p, pending audit, with one abstention. The employee handbook changes were m/s/p.

2. President’s Report

Dan reported that, as part of the rate setting project, a meeting was recently held with residential treatment providers; 84 attended, including 25 from the addiction treatment field. They provided feedback on the template, which will be revised soon, and discussed unique services and outliers. All members are encouraged to complete the template and send it to Randy Thompson to inform NJAMHAA’s advocacy about rate amounts and what costs they should cover. Similar meetings will be held with other types of providers.

Debra stated that the fiscal workgroup of the Department of Human Services’ (DHS) Administrative Services Organization Steering Committee will be reconvened soon and will receive two models for the transition to Fee for Service (FFS), and their feedback is requested. Concerns were shared about the transition. Chris Kosseff offered to invite representatives from the New York Visiting Nurses Association, which is farther along in this process, to a Board meeting.

It was suggested that NJAMHAA and members advocate for significantly higher rates that what the costs are as a way of factoring in accruals, capital expenditures, etc.

Dan noted that work continues on the Rapid Cycle Action Plan, Scorecard and priorities.

3. CEO’s Report
Debra identified several challenges and assured members that NJAMHAA will continue to support members as much as possible. She stressed that everyone must advocate to ensure that behavioral health services are not traded off in budgetary decisions. She announced that NJAMHAA has a core group in its Partners in Advocacy program and training is planned for February 4, 2013.

Debra noted that Senator Tom Kean, Jr. agreed to co-chair a Mental Healthcare and Substance Abuse Treatment Caucus. Efforts continue to secure a Democratic senator and Assembly members from both parties. [Since then, Sen. Kean decided to decline due to other priorities. Staff will identify and reach out to other Senators.]

4. Public Policy Committee

John Monahan provided the background on the Integration Committee’s proposal for a certification to provide integrated care that would be added to providers’ existing licenses from DHS. Individuals from DHS and the Department of Health have expressed interest. Board members were encouraged to send feedback on the proposal. It was noted that the new certification would allow providers to bill for services delivered by Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs).

Debra noted that NJAMHAA is working with Medicaid staff to resolve issues and concerns regarding the changing CPT codes.

Debra reported that the position statement about discharges from psychiatric hospitals has been approved by the Public Policy Committee and the Board. A motion was seconded and passed to share the position statement with DHS Commissioner Jennifer Velez and, if needed based on the response, present it to legislators and write an op-ed piece. [Several NJAMHAA members will meet with Commissioner Velez and other DHS staff on this issue on March 20, 2013.]

It was noted that the Charitable Immunity Act and the recent issue of a member agency being deemed not protected under the act is part of a broader trend, and that NJAMHAA needs to learn more and continue to monitor the issue before possibly developing recommendations. David Lazarus offered to research the matter. It was noted that with the system moving to FFS and changing business models, this Act may further affect how courts perceive community mental health centers.

Regarding workforce development, Chris reported that he will meet with the dean of UMDNJ’s School of Nursing to develop creative solutions to support existing nurses to become APNs. He invited others to attend the meeting. Chris also noted that Commissioner Velez indicated she is discussing Medicaid reimbursement with Medicaid Director Valerie Harr. Chris anticipates passage of a bill that would eliminate the requirement for APNs to collaborate with psychiatrists.
5. Finance and Administration Committee

Pete Scerbo and Deborah Megaro shared highlights of the committee’s proposal for the Board to accept electronic voting. A motion to accept electronic voting for issues that affect the entire membership was seconded and passed. [Following this meeting, NJAMHAA learned that the New Jersey Nonprofit Corporation Act is not clear on electronic voting rules; therefore, it was decided that NJAMHAA will not proceed with electronic voting.]

Board members were encouraged to participate in a meeting about proposed Bylaws changes on February 4, 2013.

Debra shared a proposal for an associate membership to allow county mental health administrators and drug/alcohol treatment coordinators to receive NJAMHAA Newswire, NJAMHAA News and member rates to conferences as part of their joint membership with NJAMHAA and the National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Directors. These members would not be permitted to participate on NJAMHAA’s committees, vote or run for the Board. It was suggested that NJAMHAA offer the subscriptions, but not membership. A written proposal was requested.

Chris Kosseff shared a request to cease NJAMHAA’s public stance on open access/open formularies. Chris’ position (attached) states, “In this difficult world, it is our ethical responsibility to use the limited funds available to maximize the care we are able to provide. Using more expensive treatments when less expensive equivalents exist is tantamount denial of care for others...Our expertise is not studying the relative effectiveness of generic versus trade medications or developing strategies to ensure the best value decisions are made regarding cost controls on prescribing practices. We must continue to advocate for funding for our services and work toward a cost-effective system that allows all people to get the treatment they need.” A motion was seconded and passed with two abstentions to remove NJAMHAA’s statement on this issue from the website and its Public Policy Platform.

It was agreed that blind copies would be used in simple electronic polls to minimize the number of e-mails people receive. However, it was noted that it is helpful to have visible copies for more complex issues to allow for sharing ideas and feedback through e-mail.

Next Board of Directors Meeting: Wednesday, March 20, 2013, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at NJAMHAA

Next Public Policy Meeting: Wednesday, April 17, 2013, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 from 12:15 p.m. to 2 p.m.