

MINUTES

BOARDS OF BENTON AND FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Special Bi-County Board Meeting
Thursday, February 25, 2016, 1:30 p.m.
Benton County Justice Center
Commissioners Conference Room, 2nd Floor
7122 W. Okanogan Place, Bldg. A
Kennewick, WA 99336

Benton County

Present: Chairman Shon Small
Commissioner Jerome Delvin
Commissioner James Beaver
County Administrator David Sparks
Clerk of the Board Cami McKenzie

Benton County/Bi-County Employees Present: Lexi Wingfield, Personnel Manager; DPA Ryan Lukson; Clerk Josie Delvin; Adam Fyall, Sustainable Development; Deputy Administrator Loretta Smith Kelty; Kyle Sullivan, Human Services Manager; DPA Ryan Brown.

Franklin County

Present: Chairman Rick Miller
Commissioner Brad Peck
Commissioner Bob Koch

Franklin County Employees Present: Jerrod McPherson and Carlee Nave.

Discussion on Future of Human Services

Commissioner Bob Koch said he welcomed the opportunity to meet again outside Franklin County to be able to make a decision.

Ken Roughton and Troy Wilson, Greater Columbia Behavioral Health, summarized the results of the committee created to review the behavioral health delivery system in Tri-Cities. Mr. Roughton said the working committee met weekly for the last two months, it was very well attended, and the results were in the packet.

He said it included all current services provided by local providers as well as a wish list of services for gaps in the system that were not contractually required but desirable and necessary services. Additionally, whatever decision the Commissioners made, these were important pieces for the system development goals and guiding principles and it was a good opportunity before 2020 to map out the system creating one everyone agreed was reasonable and efficient.

Commissioner Peck discussed whether the current system met the requirements, if the plan could be rejected by the State, and if adding to the system would require additional revenue or reallocation of funds. Commissioner Koch said there was a chance they would accept their plan and would not reinvent the wheel if they had a system that was working.

Mr. Roughton said they recommending hiring a consultant to oversee the process as the next step.

Chairman Small asked about Medicaid services and Crisis Services and Mr. Roughton said Benton-Franklin Counties had a contract for providing crisis services (Medicaid or not) and it was the only county(ies) in this RSN that did that. However, statewide there were still some counties that provided the service.

Commissioner Peck asked about the pro and cons of the County providing the service and Mr. Roughton indicated it was true that some years ago a lot of services were provided directly from counties. However there was a belief that non-profits could provide a better service and the trend was not to have counties provide the services. He said from the perspective of consumers they should not see a difference.

The Boards agreed to allow some time for comments from members of the working committee.

Barbara Mead, Lourdes Health Network, discussed the system of care meeting with the RSN and her ideas for the role of the consultant. She said it could be very helpful in strategic planning, developing a clear vision for the future, and would help develop the nitty gritty work plan. She discussed the importance of quality, integration efficiency and effectiveness and provided stats; she said it was important for the Commissioners to know there was a strong demand for mental health services in the community.

John Serle, Lourdes, said it was important to provide a simplification for clients to navigate the system and having one integrated system benefitted the clients to the extent they could obtain some economies of scale. He said he saw the consultant acting as a facilitator in this collaboration and they wanted to support the mission of what the Commissioners were trying to do in the planning process.

Rochelle Brunson, Lutheran Community Services, said they had a strength based perspective and a great deal of collaboration from the participants who were involved in the planning process. She said the ideal was to make sure no one noticed a change but the Boards should know that the providers were dedicated and strong in the community, and however it played out they would continue to be there.

Gordon Bopp said from the consumer point of view, funding was tied to measuring outcome and one of the biggest shortcomings was housing options and integration of services. He said it was also important to find an effective way of initial diagnosis of an individual's needs and to stop treating people with mental illnesses as criminals.

Commissioner Peck asked what he saw as the immediate need if there were additional funds. Mr. Bopp said they needed to have a consolidated crisis response, have the necessary treatment, and

provide housing because it was inadequate. He said he had long supported the 1/10 sales tax for mental health and would encourage the Boards to pursue that.

Barbara Mead stated that Lourdes Counseling Transition Unit was a 24/7 facility with 16-crisis beds (jail diversion) and separate unit with 32-psychiatric beds.

Chairman Miller said the priority of sales tax was all over the place but he felt that if they could get the plan in place they might have better efficiencies and use of the money.

Fred Yapuncich, President of NAMI Tri-Cities, thanked the Boards for allowing him to be on the committee so he could interact with all the providers and said he was excited about being part of the process. He said that Crisis Response, Housing, and LFO's were all important elements and he saw this work as important and they should take what they had and build upon it.

Rick Weaver said he was part of the planning process and that Benton-Franklin Counties had good opportunities and providers but frankly were not very well organized. He said this was an opportunity to revamp the contracting mechanism because they currently were not getting the best bang for the buck.

Carol Moser, BF Community Health Alliance, said she was excited to be part of the committee. She indicated there were gaps and supportive housing was critical to get people back on their feet. She said they saw mental health needs even in elementary schools and there were innovative models they could adopt as well as provide general community education.

Dana Otis, Supportive Housing, talked about the different kinds of housing available and the staffing levels to assist the client and help them integrate back into the community.

Judith Gidley, Community Action Committee, said there were a multitude of housing options and they were different in one way or another. She described the different types available and the criteria but said the bottom line was there was not enough and not enough affordable housing.

MOTION: Commissioner Delvin proposed that the Benton Franklin Human Services engage a qualified person to help design and implement a plan that was a complete behavioral health system of care in Benton and Franklin Counties. The plan would build on the principles and work of the workgroup that had been meeting recently. The plan would prepare Benton and Franklin Counties for the significant changes to the health care system. It would be expected that the consultant would work closely with Kyle Sullivan, Human Services Manager, in developing the plan and would continue to seek input from providers, advocacy groups, the RSN and other allied providers, such as law enforcement, jails, and courts.

Commissioner Peck asked if Commissioner Delvin would consider a friendly amendment to look to the committee to create clearly articulated and specific deliverables for the consultant so nothing was overlooked.

Commissioner Delvin agreed and also suggested they add a timeline to make sure they were moving forward. Mr. Roughton from the audience suggested the deliverables could be done in two meetings.

Chairman Small said he also wanted to amend the motion to state the consultant would be Rick Weaver since he had been with these providers since the beginning.

Commissioner Koch said he could not agree with that because Mr. Weaver could not possibly be a provider if he were the consultant.

Commissioner Peck said if Mr. Weaver were to state he was not interested in being a provider then he would not have an objection.

Commissioner Beaver seconded the motion as originally stated, and not amended, requesting the Committee bring back an RFP.

Discussion

Commissioner Beaver thanked everyone and applauded the efforts of the group and said he was encouraged by the group.

The motion was amended to include deliverables and a time frame.

Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: Commissioner Peck moved to approve a motion that mirrored the one as moved by Benton County to include moving forward with hiring a consultant, the deliverables and timeline. Commissioner Koch seconded and upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:13 p.m.

Clerk of the Board – Benton County

Chairman