

**Minutes: Board of Directors Meeting**

**2000 Mecklenburg Street, Richmond, VA**

**Saturday, February 23, 2019**

**Present:** Jim May, Alethea Lambert, Nick Yacoub, Laura Minnick, Melba Gibbs,

**Staff Present**: Kathy Harkey, Kelsi Sober

**Guests:** Cheryl DeHaven, Susan Pauley

**Absent**: Barry Travis

**Call to order**

Called to order by Alethea Lambert at 10:15 am.

**Introductions**

Board, Staff and Guests went through introductions. Welcomed guests and new Communications and Development Specialist Kelsi Sober.

**Executive Director Report**

Executive Director Report was handed out listing the things that have been done between 12/08/18 and 02/23/19.

Kathy did not include extensive information from the bill chart in the ED report because this information is available on the SAARA of Virginia website. Kathy did bring a hard copy current bill chart to the board meeting in case board members would prefer to view advocacy progress that way. Kathy reported that over 50% of the bills supported by SAARA passed the House and Senate. If a paper copy of the bill chart and legislative summary was included in the ED report, it would have made the report very large. A link for most recent bill chart is available on the website making the chart easily accessible. Kathy advised that the General Assembly session ends today (2/23/19). The bill chart showing conclusive information will be updated this coming week and available on the website. Jim May suggested a broken-up bill report of the final chapters of the session. Example; bills that were approved, opposed bills that did or did not get through, etc. Kathy is pleased to find that other advocacy groups were completely in line with SAARA on opposed and supported bills. A lot of our partnership organizations followed SAARA’s lead on bills. They worked closely together to discuss bills and whether we wanted to invest any effort.

A fact sheet was developed that can be accessed on resource library from the website.

We are still actively involved on the VSIAS board. Kathy has networked with VSIAS and will be leading a workshop at their conference this coming July.

SAARA recently participated in a legislative aide advocacy training discussing how advocates approach issues and move forward in the advocacy process and the importance and need for substance use disorder legislation. SAARA was provided as a reputable resource for questions and information on substance use disorder.

Kathy mentions that we are still apart of the Community Coalition of Virginia.

We have a good outline for advocacy training and need to start the writing process.

Attendance at the College of William and Mary went well. SAARA participated in sessions with college students and discussed how they can help advocate for substance use disorder and how they can help address the problem.

During the period when SAARA did not have an ED, Trish White at SAARA Roanoke became discouraged with SAARA’s lack of affiliate support. Kathy would like to reconnect with Trish and introduce her to SAARA Roanoke affiliate leaders. Cheryl DeHaven will also encourage Trish to work with Roanoke partners. Kathy wants to meet in person to rekindle the relationship and bring Trish back into the folds.

Advocacy follow-up actions were not discussed but listed on the ED report.

Robin with ‘On Our Own’ is in full support of a SAARA affiliate in Roanoke. She is going to have limited involved with affiliate activities in the region.

Charlottesville is doing well. We have several good people interested in starting a SAARA Charlottesville affiliate.

Covington is an area heavily hit by addiction. Sheriff Hall and his wife are very interested in working with SAARA. Kathy will be meeting with them in March or April. They will have other potential partners attending. The goal is to gain a partner in Covington.

Bristle is having a big event in April. They asked Kathy to attend and meet with additional partners about a SAARA affiliate. According to Susan, a good person in the Bristle area to reach out to is Marlene. Susan will provide Kathy contact info for Marlene.

The Williamsburg affiliate needs a jump start. Kathy is working on identifying partners and building partnerships.

Kathy discussed having SAARA campus affiliates and connecting with Collegiate Recovery. The Association of Recovery in Higher Education website (ARHE) is a good place to research. We need to determine who on the college campus to reach out to for more information.

Kathy created a one-hour PowerPoint presentation as a tool for affiliates. It provides affiliates with a community education tool to promote SAARA, SUD, and Advocacy awareness. Jim May recommends we put the SAARA logo on every slide/page of the PowerPoint. Jim May also recommends establishing a ‘speakers bureau’ consisting of well-grounded senior members who are comfortable with public speaking. The group will represent and speak on behalf of SAARA at events, etc. This will be very useful as affiliates ask Kathy to speak at events in their communities but Kathy cannot always be there in person.

Kathy would like everyone to be within an hour of an affiliate. Kathy would like to provide each affiliate with a SAARA flash drive that holds affiliate tools such as the affiliate toolkit, PowerPoint, letterhead, SAARA affiliate logo’s, etc.

**\*\*Action Item: Kathy’s deadline for the written process on advocacy training is September 1st, 2019.**

**\*\*\*Action Item: Create a broken-up bill report and make it accessible on the website.**

**\*\*\*\*Action Item: Kathy to meet with Trish to reconnect and build relationship.**

**\*\*\*\*\*Action Item: Susan to provide Kathy contact info for Marlene from Bristle area.**

**\*\*\*\*\*\*Action Item: Research ARHE and find out who to connect with at college campuses.**

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*Action Item: On the Affiliate Tool PowerPoint, add the SAARA logo to each slide.**

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*Action Item: Develop a ‘speaker’s bureau’ with people to speak on behalf of SAARA at events.**

Susan explains there is no guarantee that there will be a renewed contract with DBHDS. If we are not able to justify SAARA as a sole source, then we will face the RFP process and it is competitive. We need to have a conversation about what can be done at this point to extend the contract. The reason Susan is concerned is because she is hearing things that she has not heard before within the network. Susan explains that it is very important to be specific in the RFP process. We need to be thinking and working on how we can make ourselves standout and show that we are the appropriate agency to get the job done.

Jim May motioned to have Lisa Bitez join the board. Melba Gibbs seconds. ***Voted and Approved***

Jim May motioned to adopt SAARA of Roanoke Valley as an affiliate. ***Voted and Approved***

Jim May motion to accept the previous minutes except the first paragraph which he will revise. Melba Gibbs seconds. Minutes accepted as amended. ***Voted and Approved***

**Vendor Contract Review**

Relationship with B2L Consulting, Becky Lanier, is going well. Kathy and Becky divide and conquer during the GA session. Board did not review B2L contract at today’s meeting. Tabled for next meeting.

**\*Action Item: Review Becky’s contract at next board meeting.**

**Financials Reporting**

Jim May led discussion over the financials and reviewed the balance sheet. According to Jim May, the balance sheet has wild mood swings due to multiple funding sources being contributed at different times. It appears to be the highest balance that we have ever had but that will likely change in coming months. We received grant revenue this month. We also received a $5,000 donation. We are uncertain of what the 275 figure is. Jim May is questioning what the ‘Unrestricted AliveRVA’ class is. Jim May is concerned with the over budget costs for Alive RVA. AliveRVA is spending too much on housing assistance. The funding source may be eliminating housing assistance. Jim May questioned ‘Operating Reserve Policy’ and the plan was approved at previous meeting.

**\*\*Action Item: Jim May will be reaching out to Jeff to find out what the 275 figure is.**

**\*\*\*Action Item: Jim May will be reaching out to Jeff to discuss what the ‘Unrestricted AliveRVA’ class is.**

**Next Agenda**

Discussion of Whistle Blower Policy has been moved to the next meeting.

Vice President Michelle Brooks will not be coming back. Discussion of finding a new vice president will take place at the next meeting.

Jim May suggested we consider allowing video conferencing for the members who live an hour or more away.

**\*\*Action Item: Jim May to reach out to IT Tech to find out if we have the technology and capability for video conferencing.**

**Board Development**

Melba Gibbs discussed having a Virginia State Police Officer join the board and others are interested as well. Dr. May recommends both Kathy and Melba meet with candidates and obtain resumes.

**\*\*Action Item: Melba Gibbs- Set up meeting with emergency services to identify a potential board member.**

**Grants and Funding**

According to Cheryl, SAARA can only apply for the Community Innovation Grant every two years. Kathy suggests the state apply for it and split the grant between established SAARA affiliates. Cheryl thought that was a good idea.

**Affiliate Reports**

**Bay Counties**

Barry was not present to provide update.

**Nova**

Nick discusses how they are amplifying their message through social media. He explains the importance of social media engagement with partners and similar services. We can share their content on Facebook to continue as an online source of advocacy. SAARA Nova wants to replicate AliveRVA in the future. They are currently working on a recovery podcast. Nick feels they are getting to political and thinks they need to get away from the political stance and focus on the fact that substance use disorder can happen to anybody. Jim recommends Nova get access to a bigger meeting room and invite local delegates to attend and learn more about SAARA. Nick suggested making a YouTube video anyone can use that has the SAARA logo in it. For example; A go-pro capturing a few guys enjoying some skiing with a clip of them discussing how that is possible due to being in recovery.

**\*Action Item: Nick to obtain access to bigger meeting room and invite local delegates to attend meeting to learn about SAARA.**

**Central Virginia**

Laura explains that meetings have been hit or miss because of the weather; however, some have been very well attended. Jim explains that Kathy came and educated a full room of people on the bills before the general assembly. The group was eager to learn more and requested to be on the mailing list. There are two new members at the local affiliate who are coming in as family members of people who are in long term recovery. Laura is working on a speaker list and is making sure we have on-going connections with other community resources.

**Peninsula**

They are receiving many calls about interest in the organization. Alethea believes it is because of social media engagement. The ‘Where You At’ group is their all recovery group that is meeting twice a month at the methadone clinic. Alethea mentions that mainly Peer Recovery Specialists are attending and that the group is populated by SAARA members. On March 30th they will be hosting an event that is focused on bringing in Motivational Interviewing for the Peer Provider as well as include discussion on ethics. There will be a $50 registration fee and they will be providing snacks. It will be held at the Hampton - Newport News CSB. Alethea announces that they will begin providing a peer layer recovery focus group at a local jail. It will consist of providing living skills to help prepare inmates upon release. They recently received a donation of $1,015. In April, they will be attending a big community festival that they go to every year. They tend to get a lot of table visitors. According to Alethea they are currently made up of ten active members who are living in long term recovery. Alethea explains that strong leadership and commitment are a part of the success of the organization as well as adjusting the strategies to meet the needs of the specific community.

**\*\*Action Item: Laura Minnick requested Alethea come to one of their workshops and be a speaker.**

**Meeting adjourned on Saturday, February 23, 2019 at 1:06 pm.**

**Next Meeting is Saturday, April 13, 2019 at 10:00 am.**

Minutes Recorded by Kelsi Sober.