**SAARA OF VIRGINIA**

**Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**June 10, 2017**

In Attendance: Jim May (Treasurer), Laura Minnick (Secretary), Alethea Lambert (Vice

President), Alonza George, Mark Blackwell, Larry Almarode

Absent: Carl Gerster (President)

Others Present: Marjorie Yates (Acting Executive Director)

Quorum Present: Yes

1. **Alethea called the meeting to order at 10:15 am**
2. **Minutes from 05/13 meeting not available.**

Marjorie reported that the minutes were drafted, but perhaps not saved. She reported that she would investigate and attempt to unearth them.

**III. Affiliate and Organizational Reports**

SAARA of the Peninsula:

Alethea announced that SAARA of the Peninsula is gearing up for its annual Suit Drive in conjunction with the Men’s Wearhouse. The Drive starts in July and ends in September. She reported that attendance is up at the support groups due to the inclusion of mandated individuals. As a result of SAARA of the Peninsula’s Strategic Planning Retreat, tasks have been assigned to new Board members, relieving the burden of work for the President and original members. SAARA of the Peninsula’s goal is to find and provide venues for Peer Recovery Support volunteer hours to go towards certification. One identified venue is Hope in Motion in Virginia Beach.

SAARA of Central Virginia:

Laura reported that the SAARA of Central Virginia has spent the majority of its effort on Strategic Planning. All products have been completed, and will be presented to the SAARA of Virginia Board at the next meeting. Laura reported that she attended the Bon Secours Brain Fair, and that the doctor who presented there emphasized alcohol as the most widely abused drug. Laura pointed out that this doctor would be a good resource for future SAARA events.

Jim added that the members of the Board of SAARA Central Virginia find the monthly meetings to be a safe and supportive environment that encourages participating, and that this has driven the membership.

SAARA of Northern Virginia:

Mark reported that the affiliate is in a position now to find interested stakeholders and start monthly meetings. He added that the NOVA affiliate will be included in Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board Recovery Month activities as a partner. Recovery Month activities will include a showing of “The Hardest Hit”, and a Resource Fair featuring Opioid Use Disorder resources.

Mark announced that the DBHDS funds for Region II will no longer exist as of the end of June. He added that Fairfax County will be closing a Recovery Center. New Centers will be opening and based on the SAARA Center model, not the traditional “drop in Center” model that has been used in Fairfax County.

Friends 4 Recovery Whole Health Center:

Larry reported that the Center is focusing on building more community connections. The Center will celebrate its 8th anniversary on July 22nd. Friends now has a grant writer, and has expanded its mission to include Substance Use Disorder services. Their programming continues to be strengths based and trauma-informed. Larry appeared at two community events on behalf of Friends 4 Recovery: a Mental Health Awareness Event at Lighthouse Church on Brook Road, and the Brain Fair at Redskins Park.

R.B.H.A.:

Jim reported that R.B.H.A. is neck deep in getting full implementation of North Campus, and that they are now a certified Medicaid Provider for Substance Use Disorder services. He reported that R.B.H.A. is continuing its partnership with MOB storefront, an organization that provides art classes for RBHA clients. MOB has recently gained a presence in Highland Park. The partnership has produced fashion wear and posters.

Winners Circle:

Alonza announced that the Winners Circle now meets twice a week, and is serving the co-occurring population. The Winners Circle has entered into a contract with a company called Ovation. As a result, the Winner Circle will staff three concession stands at VCU, with 5 more to follow. The organization will be a presence at Hope Fest, which takes place on June 17 at Pine Camp. Hope Fest is a community resource event, where 200 bicycles will be given away. It has been going on for 8 years. SAARA will have a table at the event.

**III. Financials**

Waiting for Jeff Tuck, the Board perused the May financials. The Board discussed our current Web Designer, Sledgehammer Designs, and the need to re-evaluate our contract. Larry reported on an alternative web designer he uses that costs $1200 a year, called MOPRO. Marjorie added that while the web design and price are an important issue, just as important is assigning responsibility for creation of the website content. She suggested that she be responsible for the Center and programming content of the website in the future, while the new Executive Director would be responsible for the advocacy content. Alethea said it sounded like a viable plan.

Mark reminded the Board that the updating of the website should be an immediate priority of the new Executive Director. He added that any and all contracts should be renewed according to SAARA’s fiscal year.

Jeff announced that the general ledger accounts need to be cut back. (There are too many.)

Jim stated that employee expenses are not allocated properly in the financials. All employee expenses are currently showing up as SAARA Center expenses when they are not. As a result, the RBHA/SAARA Center account is in the hole, and the DBHDS funds are showing as too high.

Jeff stated that Adams, Jenkins and Cheatham will be filing SAARA’s tax return extension on August 1. They will clear up the balance sheet for the audit, also the fixed assets.

**IV. Advocacy Update**

Marjorie reported that the crux of her advocacy efforts has been towards the DBHDS Evidenced Based Practices grant. The grant came out in May 2017 and does not have a dollar amount attached. The RFP asks for awardees to traverse the state and expose PRS’s to SA and MH Evidence Based, Emerging, and Promising Best Practices in ten, two day seminars over eighteen months. SAARA and Friends 4 Recovery will be partnering to create a proposal. They have enlisted the services of Christine Flavin of Bottle Tree Consulting as a grant writer and evaluator.

Marjorie handed out information on the grant. She explained that one day of the two day seminar would consist of Larry presenting on WHAM (Whole Health Action Management), Smart Recovery, and the Temple University Toolkit database. She, Marjorie, will be presenting MAT (Medically Assisted Treatment)/MSR (Medically Supported Recovery) for Peer Recovery Specialists on day two.

She reminded the Board that on June 19th, Fell Cadwallader and Blair Jennings of Meaningful Trainings will be presenting the MAT/MSR Training at the SAARA Center, and that there are 20 spots in the training for coaches, and four for trainers. She added that SAARA has been given permission from Meaningful Trainings to franchise the MAT/MSR Training.

Mark suggested that SAARA be the lead on the grant instead of Friends 4 Recovery, as it has a long-term standing as a statewide organization.

**V. DBHDS Review**

Jim said that he, Alethea, and Laura met with Susan recently, on the day of the interview panel for the Executive Director recruitment. Jim said he emphasized with Susan that our initial response to the DBHDS Review was preliminary, and that a more fleshed out document would follow. He added that he sent an amended, proposed budget to DBHDS. Laura Peters and Brittany Cox have been reviewing Policies and Procedures documents for potential use by the Board. Jim reported that Susan Pauley was pleased with SAARA’s work with the ED recruitment process, and that we need to draft the next reiteration of the DBHDS Review Response sooner, rather than later.

**VI. Ginger Acey Award**

Marjorie passed out copies of Carl Gerster’s nominating letter for the Ginger Acey Award. She reported that she spoke to Jim Philbrick to get bio information for Carl, and also information about Carl’s work with SAARA Bay Counties for the letter. VATARP has accepted the nomination, which is the sole nomination. Carl will be awarded at the VSIAS Awards Luncheon on July 18th. At the same event, Jim will receive the Visionary Leadership Award.

**VII. Update, Executive Director Search**

Jim reported that the Board received 25 applications for the Executive Director position, which were audited and scored. Jim said he considered it a successful recruitment, and that he was very impressed by three candidates. He said a second round of interviews would follow.

**VIII. Closed Session**

*At 1:05 p.m., a motion was made and passed that the SAARA Board goes into Executive Session pursuant to Code 2.2-3711 for personal matters not related to public business. The Board came out of Executive Session at 1: 25 p.m.*

*The result of the Closed Session was the appointment of Larry Almarode as a member of the SAARA of Virginia Board of Directors.*

**IX. Appointment of New President**

After a discussion, a motion was made to appoint Alethea Lambert as the President of SAARA of Virginia. The Board voted and approved her appointment. Mark nominated Jim as Treasurer of SAARA of Virginia. The Board voted and approved his appointment. Jim nominated Mark as Secretary of SAARA of Virginia. The Board voted and approved his appointment.

**Next Board Meeting:**  To be determined by the Board.

**The Meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.**

**Minutes by Marjorie Yates,**

**Acting Executive Director, SAARA of Virginia**

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