

**HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 13, 2018  
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Rockville City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Shelagh Van Saanen, At-large Member, Chair	Laurie Gira, Caregiver Member
Ciriaco Gonzales, At-large Member	Jen Lafferty, At-large Member
Joyce Lipman, Consumer Member	Deborah Moore, Consumer Member
Joel Nantais, At-large Member	Julie Pelletier, At-large Member
Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Member	Denise Thomas, Caregiver Member (by phone)
Eric Wang, At-large Member	

**Members Absent:**

None

**Staff Present:**

Councilmember Beryl Feinberg, HSAC Council Liaison  
Carlos Aparicio, Community Services Manager, HSAC Staff Liaison  
Sarah Dickinson, Community Services Program Analyst

**Guests Present:**

None

**Re: Call Meeting to Order**

Shelagh Van Saanen, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Carlos Aparicio, Community Services Manager, introduced Jen Lafferty, the new At-large Member to the Human Services Advisory Commission.

**Re: Community Forum**

No discussion.

**Re: Approve January 9, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Discussion deferred.

**Re: Guest Speaker: Diane Beaver, Vocation Director, Cornerstone  
Montgomery**

Two staff members of Cornerstone Montgomery were in attendance: Ann Peyer, Director of Vocational Services, and Diane Beaver, Program Manager, Vocational Services. Ann introduced the organization as the largest, most comprehensive mental health organization in Montgomery County. Cornerstone Montgomery is a result of the merger between St. Luke's House and Threshold Services about five years ago. With the move to deinstitutionalization in the 1970s came the recognition of the importance of community-based mental health services. The organization's current model includes three hub sites: headquarters on Taft Court in Rockville and offices in Bethesda and Silver Spring. Each site has a clinic and vocational services, and additional services are provided in the community. The organization's programs include:

- Supportive living teams work with people living independently or with family who need extra support to function, including socialization, medication, etc.
- Residential programs include approximately 70 properties with varying levels of support and care.
- Day programs operate at each hub location teaching socialization skills, cooking classes, etc.
- An artist provides training for clients, some of whom have gone to art school or display their work in the organization's offices and local museum.
- Health Homes works to address health issues that contribute to a shorter lifespan for individuals with mental health conditions. The Health Homes team serves as a liaison between clients and health care professionals to ensure that clients understand the steps necessary to improve their health and quality of life.

The application process includes a form filled out by prospective clients. Clients must be eligible for the public mental health system based on certain diagnoses. Most clients receive Medicaid, but it is not a requirement. Some programs have waiting lists, which staff are working to eliminate. Residential services require an application through the Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA), which manages housing in Montgomery County for individuals with mental health issues. No program is currently in operation for family members: this is provided by NAMI, but Cornerstone has also identified this as a need. 413 of the 1,700 current clients of the organization live in Rockville.

Approximately 600 people have been served this fiscal year to date through the vocational programs, of which about 62% are employed. The individual placement service model takes into account clients' job experience, skills, and career goals when determining appropriate placements. The program's job placement rate is about three to four times the national average for people with mental illness, and the average job tenure rate is over two years. Staff actively pursue clients who disengage from services to accommodate their preferences and schedule when possible.

The organization is funded primarily through Medicaid, supplemented with grants. The staff has expanded twice in the past two years, and additional demand remains. Referrals from the justice system have increased with the creation of mental health courts. Community members can get involved in many ways, as detailed on the organization's website, [www.cornerstonemontgomery.org](http://www.cornerstonemontgomery.org).

**Re: Approve January 9, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Ciriaco Gonzales, At-large Member, moved that the January minutes be approved, and Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Member, seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**Re: Community Services Division Report**

Carlos Aparicio, Community Services Manager, provided the following updates regarding the Community Services Division:

- Staff attended the *Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)* program's kickoff for 2018.
- *Holiday Drive* major donors were recognized at the Mayor and Council meeting on February 5.

- Following a visit to George Washington University for Latino Youth Development Program participants, youth development staff have set up additional *college and vocational program tours*.
- Meetings are underway to align the three organizations administering the *Children of Incarcerated Parents (CHIP)* program.
- Carlos was among the *youth services bureau* program representatives lobbying the state legislature regarding the importance of funding behavioral health services for youth.
- The city communicated with Rockville Housing Enterprises in responding to the *Fireside Park Apartments* fire. Most displaced families were housed within two days, and plans are underway to use special activity funds to provide Target gift cards for affected families.
- City staff are working on plans to institute a lifeguard *job training* program for low-income youth development program participants.
- The *ACT healthy parenting program* is underway for inmates at the Montgomery County Pre-Release Center.

**Re: Advocacy for Human Services Requirements for Rockville Real Estate Developers**

Shelagh Van Saanen, At-large Member and Chairperson, expressed that multiple business in Rockville have gone out of business recently due to significant rent increases. Shelagh asked that real estate developers be required to provide funding for human services, job training, or affordable housing. Joel Nantais, At-large Member, expressed concern that companies would pass along the costs for such requirements to their customers to maintain their profit margins. Councilmember Beryl Feinberg stated that requirements are in place for the provision of Moderately Priced Dwelling Units and green space in new residential development, but none such as Shelagh envisions. Carlos Aparicio, Community Services Manager, recommended that any subcommittee addressing this issue perform research and review practices of comparable jurisdictions. Debbie Moore, Consumer Member, supported Carlos' suggestion that a city staff member knowledgeable about current requirements be invited to speak to the commission. Joel emphasized the importance of clarifying the scope of the HSAC's goal and requests on this topic.

**Re: Content of Human Services Advisory Commission Testimony to Mayor and Council**

Carlos Aparicio, Community Services Manager, reminded the commission that the HSAC traditionally testifies to the Mayor and Council regarding human services needs and funding during the city's budget process. One member typically writes the testimony and another delivers it at a meeting. Debbie Moore, Consumer Member, volunteered to write up the testimony. The budget public hearings are scheduled for March 19 and April 9. The City Manager's proposed budget is scheduled to be available on February 16. Carlos offered to send out the text of the commission's testimony from the past couple years. Multiple members agreed on the importance of advocacy for affordable housing for those at all income levels. Councilmember Beryl Feinberg stated that testimony during the budget public hearings ought to be directly related to FY 2019 funding, and commission members may opt to speak at a meeting at another time to provide updates on topics other than the budget. Members suggested that the testimony include success stories as well as information about waiting lists and unmet needs. Councilmember Feinberg asked that Carlos send out the page of the City Manager's budget with the proposed

caregiver grant amounts to commission members to inform their testimony. Laurie Gira, Caregiver Member and Grants Manager of Community Ministries of Rockville, offered to work with Debbie to write the testimony.

**Re: Old Business**

- **Caregiver Task Force:** Carlos Aparicio, Community Services Manager, informed the commission that the Mayor and Council appointed all members of the task force, and Carlos will send out information to all appointees and set up the first meeting.
- **FY 2019 City of Rockville Budget Process:** No further discussion.
- **FY 2019 Caregiver Grants:** No further discussion.
- **Montgomery County Budget:** The \$120 million shortfall in the Department of Health and Human Services is planned to be covered through salary savings in vacant positions of contractors. A solution for the FY 2019 budget has not yet been determined. Carlos recommended that Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Member, provide Nonprofit Montgomery's talking points to the commission by email prior to the next meeting.

**Re: Other Items**

Councilmember Beryl Feinberg invited HSAC members to consider applying to participate in the forthcoming Boards and Commissions task force. The expression of interest form is available on Rockville's website.

**Re: Plan Agenda for March 13, 2018 Meeting**

- City staff speaker re: Rockville real estate developer requirements
- Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services budget

**Re: Adjourn**

Ciriaco Gonzales, At-large Member, moved that the meeting be adjourned, and Debbie Moore, Consumer Member, seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.