

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
AND  
AREA BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH  
JOINT MEETING  
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA**

Monday, February 25, 2002

4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

**MINUTES**

Place: Commissioners' Room, second floor, Durham County Government Administrative Complex, 200 E. Main Street, Durham, NC

Present: Chairman MaryAnn E. Black, Vice-Chairman Ellen W. Reckhow, and Commissioners Joe W. Bowser, Philip R. Cousin Jr., and Becky M. Heron

Area Board of Mental Health—Chairman Harold Batiste Sr.; Thomas Owens, MD; Hugh K. Wright Jr.; Doug Wright; Colleen H. Kilsheimer; James A. Russell; Iowana C. Hagler; Terrance T. McCabe; Karen Crumbliss; Nancye Bryan; and Cynthia M. Wiford

Absent: Phillip T. Golden, Pat Evans, and Rachel Reckford

Staff Present: County Manager Michael M. Ruffin; Deputy County Manager Carolyn Titus; County Attorney Chuck Kitchen; Area Director; Dr. Steven J. Ashby; and Clerk to the Board Garry Umstead

Presiders: MaryAnn E. Black and Harold Batiste Sr.

**Welcome and Introductions**

Chairman Black called the Joint Session to order and welcomed everyone. She asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Chairman Black called on Harold Batiste, Chair of the Area Mental Health Board, to make any opening remarks he might wish.

Chairman Black said the agenda would be followed; additional issues would be added to the agenda if time permits.

**Overview of Mental Health System Reform**

Deputy County Manager Carolyn Titus made introductory remarks concerning the overview of the Mental Health System reform. The main purpose for this portion of the

meeting was to inform everyone equally and go through a very basic overview of the Mental Health reform.

Deputy County Manager Titus asked County Attorney Kitchen to go through the Mental Health System reform legislation that is House Bill 381, Session Law 2001-437.

Attorney Kitchen made a power point presentation, beginning with the required action of State and local governments. He reviewed the following aspects of the legislation:

1. Required Actions
2. The Four Options
3. Single-County Area Authority
4. Multi-County Area Authority
5. Single-County Program
6. Multi-County Program

Before establishing a County program, the Board of County Commissioners must hold a public hearing with notice published at least 10 days before the hearing.

Ms. Titus and Dr. Ashby discussed the Business Plan and its implementation.

Ms. Titus asked Mr. Kitchen to address the current movement afoot. Dr. Ashby spoke about the pilot program.

### **Identification and Issues and Concerns**

The County Commissioners and the Area Mental Health Board members asked questions and made comments to which Dr. Ashby, Deputy County Manager Titus, and Attorney Kitchen responded.

A lengthy discussion was held about various issues and concerns.

### **Meeting with the Legislative Delegation**

Chairman Black made comments about a meeting with the Legislative Delegation. She commented that she was very concerned about the way in which the new mental health plan must be written and what it would mean for Durham County citizens. She anticipated more problems. She said the two boards must decide what issues to discuss with the legislators and that a meeting with them should be planned very soon. Since they would be in town on Monday, it would be best to meet with them for breakfast.

The two bodies decided to have a detailed discussion on Mental Health Reform with the legislators. Chairman Black instructed staff to set up a meeting with the Durham Delegation as soon as possible.

### **Area Director Search**

Chairman Black said the Mental Health Board is in the process of seeking an interim director.

Mr. Harold Batiste, Area Mental Health Board Chairman, said the Mental Health Board was in the process of hiring a new director, but a decision was made to delay the search until the board met with the Board of County Commissioners and the Durham Delegation. The board has not made a decision about an interim director. Hopefully, the decision would be made within two weeks.

Chairman Black advised that if the Mental Health Board decides to appoint an executive director, a broader committee should be put in place instead of a smaller committee. That broader committee should consist of one or two Commissioners, County and Mental Health staff members, a community representative, and the County Manager or his representative.

The Commissioners and the Mental Health Board members asked questions and made comments about the director search. The questions and comments were for a group discussion.

Chairman Black said the resolution would be discussed at the Mental Health Board meeting.

### **Next Step**

Chairman Black said the next step would be a meeting with the Durham Delegation.

The County Commissioners and the Mental Health Board members requested a discussion about the mental health funds not spent in relation to the County's budget deficit. Commissioners Reckhow and Heron were of the opinion that Mental Health should not spend the money due to the County's budget deficit.

### **Adjournment**

Chairman Black adjourned the meeting at approximately 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Garry E. Umstead, CMC