

Brookings City/County/School Mental Health Task Force
May 13, 2019

A meeting of the Brookings City/County/School Mental Health Task Force was held on Monday, May 13, 2019 at 12:00 p.m. at the Brookings City & County Government Center. Present: Mary Beth Fishback, Nikki Eining, Craig Pahl, Sylvia Buboltz, Andrea Bjornestad (arrived at 12:10 PM), Debra DeBates and Angela Boersma (arrived at 12:06 PM). Also present: Brookings County Commission Department Director Stacy Steffensen, and SDSU Graduate Student Michael Dunn.

Co-Chairperson Fishback called the meeting to order.

A motion was made by Eining, seconded by DeBates to approve the agenda for the May 13, 2019 City/County/School Mental Health Task Force meeting and the minutes from the April 29, 2019 City/County/School Mental Health Task Force meeting. All members vote "aye." Motion carried.

Fishback suggested that they work on what recommendations they will present from the Task Force, prioritize those recommendations and then pull in data and slides to support those recommendations.

Boersma arrived at 12:06 PM.

Pahl asked to review the mission statement. Fishback said the adopting charter says, "The purpose of the Task Force on Mental Illness is to complete a comprehensive needs assessment, create a roadmap of services currently available to the mentally ill, and to propose improvements to the current services available to people with mental health issues in our community."

Eining said a recommendation should be to support United Way financially so they are able to continue to make the Mental Health Resource Guide available. She said Heidi Gullickson, through 211, asks for funding and that continued financial support will help make the Resource Guide available and successful.

Bjornestad arrived at 12:10 PM.

Pahl said the prevalence question was answered through the survey. He said the Brookings area is not different from anywhere else when it comes to the prevalence of mental health concerns. Fishback said technically they don't have that information based on the survey, but the background data with the literature review, along with the survey, supports that objective.

Eining said the comprehensive needs assessment could be made available on the city, county and school websites. Fishback said Dunn is putting together info-graphics that can be used.

Eining asked about the service providers' forum. Bjornestad said she could send out a brief survey to providers to have for the June 4th presentation.

Eining also discussed the coalition group that has formed. She said she will send out information on upcoming meeting dates. Fishback asked if Eining could draft a couple slides on the coalition to put in the presentation. Eining said the coalition has been successful, but there is no representation from the city or county. She said she would like to recommend engagement in that group, but she also questioned the balance between having this be a public committee versus a community coalition. Pahl said the advantage of the coalition is that it is a community-based group that doesn't have as strict of rules as a city or county-based committee would have. Boersma said if the Task Force becomes a standing committee of the city and county, there would need to be a level of transparency, along with city and county staff requirements. Pahl said getting elected officials involved with the coalition would also be a hook for funding. Eining asked

how to get those officials involved. Buboltz said it is hard for entities to be passionate and dedicated to this effort. She said there needs to be a good faith effort put forth.

Fishback said other key areas that were discussed as potential recommendations were that data from the survey shows a gap in service and provider availability and a need for additional school counselors.

The group discussed the issues and concerns with the licensing requirements for students graduating with degrees in this field. Bjornestad said getting enough providers isn't an easy fix. She said students can't establish a private practice right out of school. Fishback said there is an issue with finding people and then paying them enough to stay. Boersma said local elected officials can be advocates in talking to legislators to try to get this process changed.

Pahl said another recommendation is appointing members to the Hospital Board that have a mental health background. Eining said a recommendation should be continued support of Crisis Intervention Training. Pahl also asked that a recommendation be a campaign about the stigma of mental health.

The next meeting was set for Monday, June 3, 2019 at 12:00 PM.

Fishback declared the meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Stacy Steffensen