

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY COUNCIL WILL BE HELD ON Wednesday, December 12, 2018, AT 6:30 p.m. IN City Space, 100 Fifth Street, NE, Charlottesville, Virginia 22902.

THE PROPOSED AGENDA IS AS FOLLOWS:

Behavioral Health Work Session

BY ORDER OF THE CITY COUNCIL

BY Brian Wheeler

CITY SPACE –December 12, 2018

Council met in special session on this date with the following members present: Ms. Walker; Ms. Hill; and Ms. Galvin. Dr. Bellamy and Mr. Signer were absent.

Ms. Walker called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Behavioral health system of care work session

Mike Murphy, Interim City Manager, introduced the work session topic for Council. Ms. Kaki Dimock, Director, Department of Human Services described the work session agenda.

Ms. Dimock introduced the first presenter, Elizabeth Irwin, co-chair of the Community Mental Health & Wellness Coalition and Executive Director of the Women's Initiative.

Dr. Judith Curry-El, clinical psychologist and therapist at Women's Initiative, spoke about the Central Virginia Clinicians of Health Network.

Mr. Christian Martinez spoke on behalf of the Creciendo Juntos Mental Health Workgroup.

Mr. Gene Cash, spoke on behalf of the Counseling Alliance of Virginia (CAVA). He described challenges he has faced in his work as one of the few black therapists in the community. He described training he has received from Dr. Ken Hardy and how that has shaped his work as a clinician on issues of race. He said racial awareness and sensitivity are important issues to be included in training for local clinicians. Dr. Hardy conducted a training in Charlottesville in January 2018 and the community has made a commitment to bring him back annually.

Ms. Leigh Freilich, a Clinical Social Work/Therapist, spoke about the Transgender & Gender Non-Conforming (TGNC) clinical consultation group. She said there are many more people that need care than the few specialists that exist in the community can accommodate. She described this as a highly specialized and cross-disciplinary area of care. Ms. Freilich shared that there is a high rate of suicide for transgender and gender non-conforming people. She

encouraged Council to consider funding training, education and mental health care for transgender and gender non-conforming residents.

Ms. Karen Osterhaus, Director of Research and Grants at Region Ten, spoke about health and equity assessments.

Ms. Molly Yates, Director of Integrated Care at Region Ten, spoke about integrated care approaches.

Ms. Osterhaus returned to speak about the nationwide shortage of psychiatrists/prescribers.

Ms. Anna Mendez, Executive Director of Partner for Mental Health, spoke about peer navigation and support. She was joined by Ms. Cyndi Richardson who described the On Our Own peer support program. Ms. Mendez expressed her appreciation for Council's interest in mental health issues.

Ms. Deirdre Creasy, Community-Bases Support Services at Region Ten, described the Community Based Recovery Support Services program she manages in seven public housing communities and Friendship Court.

Ms. Myra Anderson spoke about her personal experience with mental illness and stigma reduction as a person of color. She said there is a greater stigma in the African-American community related to mental illness and as a result they are less likely to seek help. She called for a change in perceptions, a focus on mental wellness (as opposed to illness) and for more culturally competent care. She called for the restoration of a Sankofa Center at Region Ten,

Ms. Susan Morrow, the Drug Court Coordinator and coordinator for the Therapeutic Docket, and Ms. Ashley Bowles, Therapeutic Docket specialist at Offender Aid and Restoration, described the goals of the Therapeutic Docket, a court-administered behavioral health treatment program.

Dr. Denise Bonds, Health Director for the Thomas Jefferson Health District, spoke about Harm Reduction Approaches which include the provision of sterile syringes and disposal of syringes. The City of Charlottesville does not qualify for a Harm Reduction program that includes a needle exchange because of our low rate of opioid overdose deaths. Dr. Bonds described other Harm Reduction efforts taking place in the community. She said, for example, Narcan overdose recovery medication is available for free at the health department.

Ms. Hill thanked all the speakers. She asked how the different groups work together as partners to meet the needs of the community? Ms. Dimock responded and noted that while it may appear some organizations are doing similar work, some do it with a different cultural focus that makes the overlap desirable. She said the organizational equity assessments were playing an important role in the collection of this data.

Ms. Galvin asked about funding gaps and whether Council could receive information on this in January? Ms. Dimock said she could collect that information.

Ms. Walker invited public comment.

Mr. Tom von Hemert, the Thomas Jefferson Area Crisis Intervention Team Coordinator, said this work is a collaboration between law enforcement and mental health coalitions. He noted the jail is the largest mental health agency in community and it is 140 percent over its rated capacity. Mr. von Hemert said over the years TJA CIT initiatives had helped reduce the daily average jail population by 100 inmates. He said the University of Virginia Emergency Department is also operating over capacity and there is only one funded and staffed room with mental health specialists.

Ms. Walker asked the speakers to share their approaches to obtaining and evaluating client feedback.

Ms. Galvin left the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

Ms. Walker adjourned the meeting at 8:34 p.m.