

Observer: Pat Blumen**Meeting began: 7:03 pm****Meeting Ended: 8:45 pm****Members Present:** Karin Ruetzel: Chair; Mike Pierce: Vice-Chair; Rebecca Feiler, Jessica Sales, Jackie Haimes, Irene Zaya, Sandi Johnson, George Hall**Staff Present:** Jessica Wingader, Sarah Flax

Minutes of previous mtg. approved after discussion of elimination of letter to Steve Hagerty by city as budget considerations are not within the purview of the MHB. As MHB considers NU contribution to be separate from the city budget, will revisit next mtg.

Jessica Sales invited Social Workers from Dist. 65 schools to speak to the MHB about unmet needs and equity issues. Reps: Paula (Chute/Washington), Margaret (Nichols,) Jennifer (Oakton) and Margaret by letter (Dewey)

Summary of Social Workers' Presentation:

Chute has largest number of LatX students & refugees: need special language services Arabic, Swahili & Spanish; Difficult to access services if no private insurance; closest hospitals are Chicago Lakeshore and St. Elizabeth's in Chicago. Nichols has large bilingual population, refugees, undocumented, special program for autistic; highest number of psych. hosps. In 25 yrs,, some kids with multiple hosps. Lack of follow-up post-hosp. due to lack of mental health resources locally including psychiatrists to prescribe meds. Disadvantaged are unable to navigate the difficult system without assistance: affects black and brown children more. Many have PTSD: local providers tend to use interns for unfunded patients and the students turn over when rotation is complete: PTSD cases need continuity. Oakton has highest # of homeless. Kudos by all were given in particular to City of Evanston outreach workers, CASAS, Centro Romera, Moran Center, St. Francis Drop-In Emergency Services, Family Institute, YOU and JCB when they are involved and have appropriate staff. Apparently, Erie's child worker left and has not been replaced. In general, not doing a good job of breaking cycles as 3 generations of families have gone through the system with the same problems.

Recommendations:

School-based services, assessment, case management, home visits, parent-coaching (instead of counseling to reduce stigma) ,mentoring, clinic for meds. Perhaps, school partner with a nearby provider.

Dist. 65 SW to request that Joyce Bartz, Asst. Supt. Of Special Ed., gather district-wide numbers and send to MHB.

Public Comment:

Represented agencies discussed the neediness of the populations they currently serve who are not school-age (to assure the age spectrum is represented in the discussion).

All are worried about impact of city budget priority survey. Jessica Sales pointed out that in the EPLAN re: Evanston health needs, Mental Health was the #1 priority. In the City Staff ranking, MHB was 146/152. Seems counter-intuitive. Sarah Flax stated that for years Evanston has been providing many services that were not required of local govt. Surveys are

avail. online with hard copies at library and rec. centers. All recognized that recipients of services that MHB funds are not in a position to complete the surveys. Surveys are only avail. in English. It is also not known what happens to the programs that are rated in between the top ten and the bottom ten. Surveys are anonymous, so how are tracking who completes and who doesn't. What is to prevent someone from ballot box stuffing?

Reports:

Mike reported on Childcare Network, now assessing dental needs; Moran Center works with individuals "as long as it takes".

Irene reported on Learning Bridge Infant-Toddler; got a match from Ev. Comm. Found for Speech Therapist who works with volunteers to help kids talk. Volunteers recruited from Volunteer Evanston.

Next Time Reports:

Jackie and George

Staff Report:

Jessica W. said they are finalizing Zoom Grant application, which is also used for Housing and Comm. Dev.; Comments are due online by 5/21.

City Council declared May Mental Health Month.

Chair Report:

Karin asked liaisons to contact their agencies about the importance of the budget survey for MHB funding.

Sandi Johnson and Rebecca Feiler nominated Jessica Sales as new Chair and Mike Pierce to remain Vice-Chair: vote in June.