Board of Trustees

Mental Health Advocacy Service

July 15, 2017

Children’s Hospital, Board Room B

200 Henry Clay Avenue

New Orleans, LA

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Staff and Board Present: Joseph Seyler (Director, non-voting), Robert Garda

Martin Drell, Hector Linares, Patrick O’Neill, Steve Sheckman

1. **Approval of minutes from last meeting**: Rob Garda moved to approve the minutes from February 11, 2017. Hector Linares seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.
2. **Budget Update**: Joseph Seyler reported that the MHAS budget adopted by the Executive Branch was passed by the Legislature, including funding for IT services via the Office of Technology Services (OTS). Additional funding was appropriated for a pay increase of 2% for all classified employees on January 1, and for an additional pay increase on January 2 under the new Civil Service pay plan designed to bring salaries of state employees in line with market value. Along with other agencies, the service was assessed a “mid-year” reduction prior to the close of SFY 2017, which was absorbed by attrition savings.
3. **“Outside Practice of Law” Policy Amendment**:The board discussed amending the service’s policy on attorneys having an outside practice to include non-contested matters for a fee. A discussion ensued as to the advisability of the amendment, given attorney caseloads, the difficulties entailed in supervision, the problematic nature of “non-contested” legal matters, and liability issues. The amendment was deferred to the next meeting, the director to gather information on comparable policies of other state agencies.
4. **Legislative Update**: Joseph Seyler reported on the following bills passed into law: SCR 38 gives MHAS a seat on a task force established to set standards for the care, treatment, operation, and rehabilitation of youth in secure care facilities;  Act 254 provides for physicians assistants and nurse practitioners to execute emergency certificates;  Act 370 makes changes to the commitment statute specifying that the hearings be closed and that LDH given notice and leave to participate as regards placement;  Act 369 amends Title 28 to provide for current practice and appropriate terminology.
5. **Schedule for Next Meetings:** Future meetings for SFY 2018 were scheduled for October 21, 2017; January 20, 2018; and May 5, 2018.
6. **Old Business:** Joseph Seyler reported that the Court Improvement Program extended its contract with KempWorks for another year.
7. **New Business:** Joseph Seyler presented an MHAS logo designed by OTS as part of its work on a new MHAS website. Hector Linares announced his resignation from the board as LSU’s statutory representative, as he has accepted a position at Loyola. The board thanked Hector for his work. Rob Garda is working on a replacement from LSU.