



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00482

Agenda Date: 9/12/2023

Agenda Item Name:

Resolution to Dissolve the Criminal Justice, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Grant (CJMHSAG) Planning Committee Advisory Board

Presenter:

Amy Weber, Advisory Board Liaison, Department of Court Services, (352) 374-3676

Description:

The Criminal Justice, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Grant Planning Committee no longer receives Federal, State, or Local funding, therefore an Advisory Board is no longer needed to satisfy Florida Statute 394.656. The Advisory Board had its final committee meeting on August 24, 2023 to conclude their service to the County. This Advisory Board may be re-established upon finding of necessity, requirement of law, new lines of funding, or other valid reason as determined by The Board of County Commissioners and adoption of a new resolution.

Recommended Action:

Accept and sign the attached Resolution to dissolve the CJMHSAG Advisory Board

Prior Board Motions:

Resolution 07-0034 established the CJMHSAG Planning Committee Advisory Board in May 2007. This resolution was amended in 2009 in order to designate it a Special Committee and to set a sunset date of April 30, 2011.

Resolution 11-0012 allowed the County to rescind and re-establish the Advisory Board in order to extend the sunset date to correspond to the expiration date of the new grant of April 2014.

Resolution 16-0130 designated the CJMHSAG Planning Committee as a consortium committee, under the requirements set forth from the Department of Children and Families Request for Applications 6H16GS1, also allowing Meridian Behavioral HealthCare, Inc, to act on behalf of Alachua County as the application agency for the Department's Request for Applications. This resolution also allowed the inclusion of Bradford County on the grant application as a partner county, including identifying specific resources for matching funds.

Fiscal Note:

N/A

Strategic Guide:

Public Safety

Background:

Established May 22, 2007, to further prior interests of the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to prepare a grant application for the Florida CJMHSAG as required by §394.656, Florida Statute (2007). In January 2008, Alachua County was awarded by Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) a three-year CJMHSAG State grant totaling \$999,000 with matching funds from Alachua County. The grant funded a Forensic Diversion Team (FDT) that was implemented in July 2008. The original grant expired March 27, 2011.

Alachua County was awarded a CJMHSAG expansion grant totaling \$750,000 over three years effective March 28, 2011. Alachua County allocated \$166,500 annually in general fund support as a match for this grant. The expansion grant focused on blending the original FDT with the Forensic Specialist Team (FST) operated by Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, serving additional people with mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders through more cost-effective community-based treatment. Additionally, new partnerships were formed with Vocational Rehabilitation and Florida Works to provide a greater array of services.

In January 2014, Alachua County was awarded by DCF a three-year grant for \$1.2 million. The successful grant preparation was overseen by the Planning Committee as part of its role identified in the Statute. Matching funds are being provided by the County from the General Fund as well as \$148,530 in in-kind support from the Department of Court Services. The total funding available in grant and matching funds for the CJMHSAG Program is \$2,458,530.

In September 2016, a CJMHSAG Expansion and Implementation Grant was awarded by DCF to Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. as applicant and grantee agency, for the period April 1, 2017 through March 31, 2020. The purpose of the Grant was to support the development of an Alachua/Bradford Consortium to serve a greater geographic region with forensic diversion and related supportive services. The amount of the Grant was \$1.5 million, which was matched by a total of cash and in-kind services of \$1,651,419 from three sources: Alachua County, Bradford County and Meridian. The matching funds specifically provided by Alachua County included \$1,110,000 in cash through the Mental Illness Work Group, also via the General Fund and \$240,000 for in-kind personnel services, including the Benefits Coordinator and Criminal Justice Liaison (50% time) from the Department of Court Services.

On April 1, 2020, the CJMHSAG Grant No. 5 commenced, with a grant award of \$1.5 million to Meridian Behavioral HealthCare, Inc. as the recipient agency. The grant award from DCF also carries with it the same level of cash match commitment from Alachua County at \$1.1 million. In addition, there is the same level of in-kind match from Alachua County at \$240,000, for two positions based at Court Services: 1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Benefits Coordinator, and .2881 FTE Criminal Justice Liaison.

Application for CJMHSA grant renewal did not occur in late 2022 / early 2023 due to lack of availability of state dollars/opportunities for grant submission for Criminal Justice Reinvestment initiatives. Recurring state dollars were procured by Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. through the managing entity Lutheran Health Systems. This funding allows Meridian's Forensics Multidisciplinary Team (FMT), to continue working with citizens charged with felony crimes and have been identified as Incompetent to Proceed (ITP) or Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity (NGI populations) in Alachua County, through early engagement, specialized clinical care, and care coordination. However, because this funding is not tied to Florida Statute 394.656, a formal Advisory Board is not required.

Meridian continues discussion with Alachua County regarding funding opportunities to provide care coordination and specialized clinical services for other criminal justice involved citizens with mental health or mental health/substance abuse issues. Currently, Meridian is accepting referrals from the jail and legal professionals for Meridian's continuum of care including outreach, psychiatric, residential substance abuse, addiction receiving facility, crisis stabilization and outpatient clinical/therapeutic services. Meridian will continue to explore grant opportunities to serve this population. It is the hope of Meridian and CJMHAG committee members that funding will be available in 2024 or beyond; at which time a formal Advisory Board will be re-established.

The CJMHSAG grant supports a county initiative designed to increase public safety, avert increased spending on criminal justice, and improve assessment and treatment options for adults who have a mental illness, substance abuse disorder, or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders, and who are in or at risk of entering the criminal justice system. Across the five grant programs, the overall purpose has remained steadfast, with different features added for purposes of expansion and enhancement to improve quality, accessibility, and coordination of services.