

**Behavioral Health Planning Council  
Legislative Committee**

**Tuesday, December 29, 2020  
10:00 AM, CT**

**Call to Order.** Greg Gallagher, Facilitator, called the business meeting of the BHPC Legislative Committee to order at 10:04 AM, CT.

**Members Present.** Brenda Bergsrud; Teresa Larsen; Emma Quinn.

**Special Guest:** Rosalie Etherington

**Facilitator.** Greg Gallagher, The Consensus Council.

**Legislative Committee Charge.** Greg Gallagher provided background information regarding the December 29, 2020, business meeting of the BHPC Legislative Committee. The charge of the Legislative Committee includes: (1) identifying prospective legislative initiatives aligned with the purpose of the BHPC; (2) monitoring legislative initiatives through the legislative process; (3) coordinating communications with BHPC members and facilitating effective BHPC input throughout the process; (4) soliciting the active participation of BHPC members; (5) drafting legislation that might advance the aims of the BHPC and the state's behavioral health strategic plan; and (6) empowering the BHPC Legislative Council, with full participation of the BHPC Executive Committee, to transact legislative activities that support the aims of the BHPC.

Mr. Gallagher reviewed the minutes from the December 16, 2020, BHPC Legislative Committee meeting. Among the various legislative initiatives identified for possible BHPC engagement, Committee members identified the DHS proposal to build a new state hospital as a principal item of interest, arising from previous BHPC discussions. Members expressed interest to learn more about the details of the proposed project's design and impact across the state. Dr. Rosalie Etherington was invited to discuss the various considerations of this proposal, including providing a summary descriptor of the project and its merits.

Dr. Etherington expressed her appreciation for the invitation to meet with the Committee, to provide an overview on the state hospital project's purpose and provisions, and to answer Committee members' questions. Dr. Etherington provided three documents that provided background information on the project:

- [New Treatment Campus, NDDHS;](#)
- [ND Residential Treatment Facility Capacity Study, HSRI;](#)
- [ND Hospital Study, HSRI.](#)

Refer to these three documents to provide a detailed summary of the state hospital proposal's origin, purpose, design, cost, and operational gains in efficiency.

Dr. Etherington guided Committee members through the proposal's impact to the state's system of care, highlighting core benefits:

- A new state hospital will cost less than remodeling the current hospital's current campus complex of buildings.
- The state will reduce the number of dedicated hospital beds to approximately 75-85 beds, providing a proper balance of institutional- and community-based service options, spanning intensive rehabilitative hospital care through telehealth opportunities.
- A new state hospital will eliminate approximately 50 FTEs, reducing annual personnel costs by \$5 Million.
- The state will expand direct service capacity to the western half of the state, as allowed for under state law, by providing 6-10 beds through a contracted service agreement with a properly licensed provider in Dickinson.
- A new state hospital will complement the services gained through the new Medicaid 1915(i) service plan.
- The anticipated 40-year leasing agreement will provide stable, longer-term budgetary gains to the state.

Committee members discussed the BHPC's proper level of engagement regarding the state hospital proposal.

TERESA LARSEN MADE AND EMMA QUINN SECONDED A MOTION TO MOVE THE STATE HOSPITAL PROPOSAL FORWARD TO THE FULL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PLANNING COUNCIL WITH THE RECOMMENDATION TO ENDORSE AND PROVIDE TESTIMONY DURING THE 2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION, IN SUPPORT OF BUILDING A NEW STATE HOSPITAL. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. CHAIRPERSON BERGSRUD DECLARED THE PASSAGE OF THE MOTION.

*Legislative Committee Authority to Act on Behalf of the BHPC Membership.* Members referenced the decision made during its December 16, 2020, Committee meeting and acknowledged the authority placed with the Committee, acting in concert with the BHPC Executive Committee, to transact legislative business on behalf of the BHPC membership. Members affirmed the importance to act with care and in keeping with the aims and reputation of the BHPC.

Mr. Gallagher will prepare and distribute the minutes from the December 16, 2020, and December 29, 2020, Legislative Committee meetings to the full BHPC membership.

The Legislative Committee will meet again on Friday, January 8, 2020, at 11:00 AM, CT, to begin its series of weekly legislative review meetings.

**Adjournment.** Having complete the stated aims of the meeting, Chairperson Bergsrud entertained a motion to adjourn.

TERESA LARSEN MADE AND EMMA QUINN SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. CHAIRPERSON BERGSRUD ANNOUNCED THE PASSAGE OF THE MOTION AND DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED.

The meeting adjourned at 11:13 AM, CT.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Gallagher  
Facilitator  
Deputy Director, The Consensus Council