

**ILLINOIS MENTAL HEALTH PLANNING AND ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Development Committee – Thursday, February 25, 2021, 3:00 PM**

- I. **Call to Order/Introductions/Opening Remarks:** Co-Chair Ron Melka called the WebEx meeting to order at 3:03 PM. Committee Members present were Ron Melka, Ray O'Connor, Andrea Cooke, and Nanette Larson. Additional DHS staff members Lee Ann Reinert, Courtney Aidich, and Irwin Kerzner were also present.
- II. **Approval of Agenda:** Ray moved, and Andrea seconded to approve the agenda. Roll call vote. Approved.
- III. **Approval of the January 7, 2021 minutes:** Andrea moved, and Ray seconded that the minutes of the January 7, 2021 be approved as presented. Roll call vote. Approved.
- IV. **Resignations:** There have been no resignations.
- V. **Application for new membership:** There is one application for membership, from Sharonda Giles. This is a portion of her application request: "I am currently employed with SGA Youth and Family Services, which is non-profit agency focused on leading positive change for children and families in Chicago's most challenged and underserved neighborhoods. I am also a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC). Throughout my career, I have worked with and counseled adults and adolescents with mental health issues as well as substance use and addiction disorders. I have been given the opportunity to apply my knowledge and skills to help youth and adults in mental health, substance abuse, and the Illinois justice system. It has enabled me to see firsthand that every person has potential for growth. Because of that experience, I have been able to observe the need for caring and quality mental health services within Illinois. I have also grown up on the south side of Chicago and been a witness to the lack of services available to the underprivileged and the definite need for improvement. My goal is to help break the cycle of adversity and provide those that are underserved with enough opportunity to change their lives and their communities. I believe that being a part of this Mental Health advisory council will help me work towards that goal of advocating for persons with mental health concerns and also being able to communicate my ideas for mental health improvements."  
  
Following discussion, Ray moved, and Nanette seconded that Sharonda Giles be recommended to IMHPAC for membership. Role call vote. Approved.
- VI. **Election of Members and Officers:** There were no new requests for membership.  
  
**There are two open officer positions on the IMHPAC, one is the Consumer Co-Chair, the other is the Secretary. Andrea Cooke has agreed to run as Consumer Co-Chair, a position she has held in the past and has considerable experience in. The Development Committee Recommends that she be slated for election to the open position.**  
  
Ron also notified the Committee that he has received no nominations to replace the position of secretary. **Therefore, the Committee calls for nominations for this position.**
- VII. **Member Surveys:** Ron asked Irwin to lead the discussion on the demographic survey and the comments we received from membership. Most suggestions had to do with

race, diversity, and geography. The marital and employment status were included to demonstrate diversity and inclusiveness. After discussion, racial/ethnic categories were recommended to follow the State's Public Act -0275 in those categories, so as to be consistent with all other state data. Those are:

- (1) American Indian and Alaska Native alone.
- (2) Asian alone.
- (3) Black or African American alone.
- (4) Hispanic or Latino of any race.
- (5) Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone.
- (6) White alone.
- (7) Some other race alone.
- (8) Two or more races.

The committee recommends using the survey with the above changes.

VIII. **Public Comment:** None.

IX. **Adjournment:** Andrea moved; Ray seconded. The meeting adjourned at 3:56PM.