



**CLEVELAND COUNTY EMPLOYEE BENEFITS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
THURSDAY, MAY 6, 2021**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Cleveland County Employee Benefits Committee was called to order at 9:00 a.m. this 6th day of May 2021, in conference room 200 of the Cleveland County Office Building, 201 South Jones, Norman, OK, by Chairman Jim Reynolds. Linda Atkins, Deputy County Clerk/Secretary, called roll and those present were:

Jim Reynolds, Chairman
Rod Cleveland, Vice-Chairman
Sheriff Chris Amason, Member

Others present were: George Mauldin, Michelle Newburg, Jan Skelton, Kelly Lashar, Jo Beth Throckmorton, Denise Ellison, Melinda Duke, and Leann Clements.

A. Items of Business:

1. Sheriff Chris Amason moved, seconded by Rod Cleveland to **approve** the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 1, 2021.
The vote was: Jim Reynolds, yes; Rod Cleveland, yes; Chris Amason, yes.
Motion carried.

- 2 Discussion was had as follows on **Restore Behavior Health**, for counseling services for county employees. Chairman Reynolds said that the Committee has discussed for some time to include a female counselor as well as a male counselor to give counseling for the employees.
Rod Cleveland said that Kelly Lashar is with Restore Behavior Health and she will talk about the services her agency specializes in and what type of services they offer.
Kelly Lashar said that Restore Behavior Health is a private group practice in Norman, Oklahoma. They have been in business since October 2016 and now they have 29 Therapists on staff. They have moved recently into a huge building of 10,000 square feet on 24th and Robinson. She said that they have the personnel and the facility to handle a lot of needs and most therapists will have a niche that they specialize in. It is something that they have always striven for so when someone calls they will have someone qualified and specialized to meet that need. They have therapist for children and technically it is a separate department called Restore Kids and they have their own group of therapists and there are twelve members of that team and soon the group will be under the same roof. She thinks it is very important to partner together whether it is businesses or schools, organizations or counties. The county is massive and there are so many needs. They see a lot of Police Officers as well as a variety of people since they offer many types of services. The licensed personnel can accept insurance payments

from assortments of insurances.

Rod Cleveland said that Health Choice is the insurer for the County.

She said that they have some that pay through private pay. They have candidates in a Master's Degree program and people from OU, Mid America and Southern Nazarene; they are on a team working under supervision as residents. They are fully capable and just need a little more time for state regulations to get their license and build up their hours. They have the ability to charge less. The third tier is the Interns and they do counseling for \$25.00. As a private business they strive to meet all the economic needs as well.

She is aware that the county has worked with one man in trying to meet all the needs with a health crisis in the entire country and knows that because of COVID-19 some people have had relationship issues due to being cooped up with their spouse and various other issues such as substance abuse, financial strain, issues that are too many to mention.

Discussion was had that the county employees have three per incidents. The county pays a monthly fee for an unlimited amount.

After further discussion, Kelly Lashar said that she will put something together for the County to check the services and costs.

Jim Reynolds said this discussion has opened his eyes and stated that the county needs to figure out what is needed and look at an RFP. He thinks a questionnaire should go out to employees and then resolve the cost issue for the service. He said that Restore Behavior Health is a viable candidate, but first they must know what the employees want by opening it up to explore all the options out there.

Rod Cleveland said that this is different from looking at the Clinic. It is different because no one wants to talk about it and nobody wants to admit that they need help until help is really needed.

Jim Reynolds asked how many visits Wiley gets per month.

Rod Cleveland said that he gets about 10 visits.

Jim Reynolds said if there are 400 employees and he gets 10 visits, either the county has the mentally healthiest employees in the world or it's not being utilized.

Chris Amason said that one counsellor is not enough to meet the need and added that it is always good to have options.

Jim Reynolds said it would be wise to look for a facility with multiple counselors.

Kelly Lashar said that they have 500 that are coming each week and shows a great need. People are more willing now to go to therapy than ever. It was a stigma at one time to admit the need for help, but all that is changing. She thinks that the questionnaire would remove any hesitation about seeking the help needed.

She said that police officers fear going to therapy because of the risk of losing their job and the same is true for the military and added that she would like to have discussion with the Sheriff on overcoming those fears.

After further discussion, Rod Cleveland proposed a motion to increase the three per incident to six per incident and put out a Request for Proposal and get it to the BOCC.

Jim Reynolds said that before requesting the RFP, the questionnaire should come first and stated that it is at the will of the committee.

Rod Cleveland said that is fine with him.

Jim Reynolds asked Alison Vinson to help with the questionnaire.

3. Rod Cleveland **discussed** the mission and objective of the Employee Benefits Committee before making a decision to go forward. He said that it is a great Committee and the future recommendations would go from Committee directly to the BOCC. He said there may not be a need to meet every month, but wants it to continue as a committee.

Jim Reynolds said that the demands in his office will cause him to step aside and suggested having eight members on the committee if it is approved by the BOCC to represent each office; it could be an officer or a designee of those who can devote the time and energy to serve.

Rod Cleveland said that the committee may not be constrained to the open meetings act.

Jim Reynolds said that he wants to wait until next month to discuss this matter.

B. No new business to come before the Committee for discussion at this time.

C. No discussion was had on Employee Benefits Business.

D. No one signed up for Public Comment at this time.

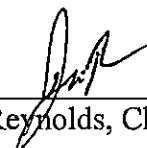
E. There being no further business to come before the Committee for discussion, Chris Amason moved, seconded by Rod Cleveland, that the meeting is adjourned at 10:05 A.M.

The vote was: Jim Reynolds, yes; Rod Cleveland, yes; Chris Amason, yes.

Motion carried.


(Clerk's Note: Agenda was posted on May4, 2021 at 1:54 P.M.)

**EMPLOYEE BENEFITS COMMITTEE MEETING OF
CLEVELAND COUNTY, OKLAHOMA**



Jim Reynolds, Chairman

ATTEST:



Tammy Belinson, County Clerk and Secretary to the Board

Minutes Prepared by: 

Deputy County Clerk

