

# National Association for Behavioral Healthcare

Access. Care. Recovery.



Board of Trustees  
Thursday, Dec. 17, 2020  
2021 Budget: Minutes

## Roll Call

Present: Members: Pat Hammer, Board Chair; Stuart Archer, Sam Bastien, JP Christen, Mark Covall, Frank Fortunati, Frank Ghinassi, Gary Gilberti, Michele Gougeon, Jeff Hillis, Eric Kim, Tom Kenny, Jameson Norton, Eric Paul, Matt Peterson, Ben Rucks, Fran Sauvageau, Dominic Sirianni, Phil Spencer, Ken Weiner, Dwight Willingham, David Wyman

Staff: Shawn Coughlin, Kirsten Beronio, Maria Merlie, Julia Richardson, Sarah Wattenberg, Emily Wilkins, Jessica Zigmund

Absent: Stuart Archer, John Boyd, Jennifer Ziccardi-Colson, John Hollinsworth, Blair Stam, Harsh Trivedi, Sean Walsh

Shawn Coughlin began the call at 4 p.m. ET.

Shawn thanked NABH Board Chair Pat Hammer for his two years of service. Shawn also thanked three members for their three years of service to the board: Sam Bastien, Frank Fortunati, and Dwight Willingham.

Shawn gave a top-line overview of the previous year: Despite Covid and the 2020 Annual Meeting cancellation, NABH's financial position is strong. The association has been able to minimize the effects of canceling the Annual Meeting and also has had strong growth in new members and the association's existing member base.

In addition, NABH has negotiated a lower price to rent the Washington office. Meanwhile, expenses were slightly down because the NABH team has had reduced travel during the pandemic, and the team has worked from home since mid-March 2020.

The association has a surplus of almost \$500,000. Shawn said this aligns with what expectations had been if the Annual Meeting had not been cancelled. He proposed several uses in the budget for this surplus.

Shawn said he is requesting \$200,000 for the association's education and research foundation.

Shawn said we expect to meet in person for the 2021 Annual Meeting (in October), especially because the nation's vaccination roll-out has started. However, if this does not happen, NABH would consider a hybrid meeting in which some would attend in person and others would attend virtually.

Shawn said the 2021 budget includes \$50,000 for the Unified Vision campaign. NABH has been engaged in ongoing effort to develop a unified CEO vision among the major behavioral healthcare associations and consumer groups regarding policy changes needed to improve the behavioral healthcare system and expand access to our services along the entire continuum of care. That process is ongoing, and the CEO

group has chosen a public relations firm to announce the agreement and build a campaign to advance policy proposals.

Shawn also added that the budget allows for a new director position. That person will oversee the new foundation and government relations as a principal lobbyist in our advocacy efforts.

NABH is also enhancing its communications budget to continuing promoting NABH's mission, goals, and advocacy efforts.

Shawn said both the Finance Committee and the Executive Committee approved the budget and asked for a motion for the Board to approve it.

Sam Bastien moved to move to approve the 2021 budget and Frank Fortunati seconded. All Board members on the call approved the 2021 unanimously.

### **Legislative & Regulatory Updates**

Shawn said it appears as if the \$1.4 trillion omnibus has been settled and the only remaining discussion point is the Covid package. It has been reported that Congress will stay in Washington to approve a short continuing resolution to keep the government operating as Congress decides on the larger package.

A Jan. 5 run-off in Georgia will determine Senate control. In addition, Democrats have a narrow majority in the House. All of this makes the case for regular order and bipartisanship to pass anything.

President-elect started naming his healthcare team, including naming former U.S. Rep. and current California Atty. General Xavier Becerra to lead HHS.

Kirsten reported that the most recent Covid task force call discussed the vaccination program that rolled out this week. NABH sent a letter to governors asking that behavioral healthcare providers be made a priority.

We have a letter with 30 other behavioral health groups to HHS that CDC issue guidance to states for vaccines to providers in behavioral healthcare/residential settings.

NABH has been working with a group on the hospital price transparency rule. We will continue to raise issues and made CMS aware today, Dec. 17, of our concerns.

NABH staff continues to engage with HHS on data-reporting requirements for psych facilities. NABH has also been successful in persuading the agency to require psych hospitals report only once weekly, and also argued successfully that our facilities not post Covid data publicly.

The call ended around 4:30 p.m. ET.