



The Portsmouth Department of Behavioral Healthcare Services (PDBHS) Advisory Board held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, February 5, 2020 at 1811 King Street, at 4:30pm in Portsmouth, Virginia.

**Members Present**

Dr. Marie Shepherd, Chair  
Denise Key, Vice Chair  
Pastor Milton Blount

**Council Liaison**

The Honorable Paul J. Battle

**PDBHS Staff Present**

M. Elaine Breathwaite, Director  
LaTonya Williams, Assistant Director  
Cherie Lassiter, Administrative Coordinator II

**Absent Member(s)**

Charlene Chavis  
Dorescia Paige, Secretary

**Called to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:47pm.

**Review Minutes**

The board reviewed the January 8, 2020 minutes. Pastor Blount motioned for the minutes to be approved with a second by Ms. Key. The board approved unanimously.

**Updates**

- Director's updates were presented by the Director, Ms. M. Elaine Breathwaite:
  - PDBHS Director announced her plans to retire. She stated that her focus is to provide a thorough exit plan for the next director or interim director. The board express their well wish on her new journey.
  - The board were presented with the PDBHS Jail Diversion and Project Assistance for Transition from Homelessness (PATH) brochures. The agency's newsletter and the Virginia Community Service Board (VACSB) annual report was also given to the board members.
  - Building up Children's Services is a top priority for the agency.
  - The agency will be providing a table to the "Something in the Water" event in Virginia Beach, VA. All Hampton Roads CSBs are participating in the event.
- Director discussed agency challenges
  - Hiring full-time and part-time staff swiftly to meet state and federal grant and STEP-VA requirements. Funds will have to be returned to the state due to our inability to hire staff to meet the grant goals.
  - In dire need in hiring additional Peer Recovery Specialists (PRS) especially a Veterans Peer Recovery Specialist. The state has allocated funds for these

positions and they are desperately needed in order to fulfill state requirements.

- Aggressively pursuing to start the renovation on Safe Haven. It will be a drop-in-center for the Portsmouth Community, predominately seeking to be ran by PRSs. The building will be open until the renovations are underway.

### **Old Business**

- No old business discussed.

### **New Business**

- PDBHS will be celebrating a “Day of Happiness within Your Recovery”. This community event will be held PDBHS on Thursday, February 27, 2020 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The agency will have health and wellness check, Rapid REVIVE, Paint and Twist, Lock & Talk and more.

### **Next Meeting/Adjournment**

The meeting ended at 5:37pm. Refreshments were made available before and following the meeting. Our next meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2020 at 4:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dorescia Paige', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Dorescia Paige  
Secretary