

115 STATE STREET  
MONTPELIER, VT 05633  
TEL: (802) 828-2228  
FAX: (802) 828-2424



STATE OF VERMONT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SEN. ANN CUMMINGS, CHAIR ✓  
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REP. MITZI JOHNSON ✓  
SEN. JANE KITCHEL ✓  
SEN. DICK SEARS *ab* ✓  
REP. DAVE SHARPE ✓  
SEN. DIANE SNELLING ✓

**Legislative Joint Fiscal Committee**

**AGENDA**

**Room 10**

*Special Committee Members Include: Legislative Joint Fiscal Committee, Representatives Pugh and Haas, and Senators Ayer and Mullin.* *ab*

**Thursday, April 5, 2012**

12:00 PM

**Contracting for Mental Health Structure and Services Study**

*Sec. 33(e) of H.630 of 2012*

Catherine Benham, Associate Fiscal Officer, Legislative Joint  
Fiscal Office [APPROVED 4/5/2012]

*If you have questions or comments, please contact*

*Theresa Utton-Jerman at 802-828-5767 or [tutton@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:tutton@leg.state.vt.us)*

*[www.leg.state.vt.us/jfo](http://www.leg.state.vt.us/jfo)*

ONE BALDWIN STREET  
MONTPELIER, VT 05633-5701

SEN. ANN CUMMINGS, CHAIR  
REP. MARTHA HEATH, VICE-CHAIR  
SEN. DIANE SNELLING, CLERK  
REP. JANET ANCEL  
REP. CAROLYN BRANAGAN

SPECIAL COMMITTEE:  
SEN. KEVIN MULLIN  
REP. ANN PUGH



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
LEGISLATIVE JOINT FISCAL COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON MENTAL HEALTH

PHONE: (802) 828-2295  
FAX: (802) 828-2483

SEN. JOHN CAMPBELL  
REP. MITZI JOHNSON  
SEN. JANE KITCHEL  
SEN. RICHARD SEARS, JR.  
REP. DAVID SHARPE

SEN. CLAIRE AYER  
REP. SANDY HAAS

Thursday, April 5, 2012

Minutes

Members present: Representatives Ancel, Branagan, Heath, and Sharpe, and Senators Cummings, Kitchel, and Snelling. Special committee members present: Senators Ayer and Mullin and Representative Haas.

Other Attendees: Administration, Joint Fiscal Office, and Legislative Council staff, and various media, lobbyists, advocacy groups, and members of the public.

The Chair, Senator Ann Cummings, called the special committee meeting of the Legislative Joint Fiscal Committee members, the chairs and vice chairs of the Senate Committee on Health & Welfare and the House Committee on Human Services at 12:06 p.m. per Sec. 33(e) of H.630 of 2012.

Catherine Benham referred to a memorandum previously sent to the special committee and explained its contents. The explanation included a brief summary of the legislative mandate of H.630 of 2012 following information on Gail Hutchings, the only candidate applying for the RFP to study Vermont's mental health structure and services.

Senator Kitchel stated that she had spoken with Ms. Hutchings and offered that she came highly recommended by her former employer (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)), and due to her prior employment as the Chief of Staff at SAMHSA was very adept at the RFP goals and expectations. The Senator added that Ms. Hutchings was well-regarded by her peers, and her forte was to configure teams according to the needs of the study.

Senator Kitchel moved that the Special Committee authorize the Joint Fiscal Office to negotiate and sign a contract with Gail Hutchings, President and CEO of Behavioral Health Policy Collaborative, in order to meet the requirements as set forth in Sec. 33(e) of H.630 of 2012. Senator Ayer seconded the motion, and the committee unanimously approved it.

The committee adjourned at 12:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Theresa Utton-Jerman".

Theresa Utton-Jerman, Joint Fiscal Office

## MEMORANDUM

To: Joint Fiscal Committee  
Chair and Vice-Chair of House Human Services  
Chair and Vice Chair of Senate Health and Welfare

From: Catherine Benham, Associate Fiscal Officer, Legislative Joint Fiscal Office

Date: April 3, 2012

Subject: Information for meeting Thursday April 5 at 12 pm in Room 10 re: Contracting for Mental Health Structure and Services Study as called for in H.630

H.630 calls for a Special Committee consisting of the Joint Fiscal Committee and the chairs and vice chairs of Senate Health and Welfare and House Human Services to hire a consultant. The consultant will evaluate the structure, services and financial implications of Vermont's proposed mental health system. The bill's language is attached.

I am proposing that this contract be negotiated with Gail Hutchings. Over the past several months I have spoken with five potential candidates to do this work. After discussions with all of them, I recommend the joint fiscal committee hire Ms. Hutchings. She is eminently qualified, and proposes a team of co-workers that can address the broad range of issues. Furthermore, over the past few months she has engaged in a few conversations regarding Vermont's mental health system and issues to consider and has done so free of charge. The cost is projected to be \$60,000-\$68,000 which is under the \$75,000 threshold for which formal bids would be solicited.

Also attached is a brief bio for Ms. Hutchings and a proposed statement of work.

**Proposed Motion:** The Special Committee authorizes the Joint Fiscal Office to negotiate and sign a contract with Gail Hutchings, President and CEO of Behavioral Health Policy Collaborative in order to meet the requirements as set forth in Sec. 33(e) of H.630 of 2012.

**H.630 – Reforming Vermont’s Mental Health System**

**Sec 33 (e)** A special committee consisting of the members of the joint fiscal committee and the chairs and vice chairs of the senate committee on health and welfare and the house committee on human services, in consultation with the commissioner of mental health shall contract with an independent consultant who has expertise in the field of mental health and psychiatric hospital services to evaluate the structure, services, and financial implications of Vermont’s proposed mental health system. The joint fiscal office shall administer the contract for the special committee. The department of mental health shall transfer to the joint fiscal committee one-half the cost of this contract and the joint fiscal committee is authorized to transfer one-half the cost of this contract from the legislative budget to the joint fiscal committee. The independent consultant shall submit a report to the general assembly by December 1, 2012 and shall specifically address:

(1) Whether Vermont’s proposed mental health system appropriately serves the needs of individuals with mental health conditions throughout the state and, if any unmet needs are identified, how they may be addressed;

(2) The data and evaluation mechanisms necessary to manage and improve the quality of care and outcomes for individuals in Vermont with a mental health condition.

**Gail P. Hutchings, M.P.A.**, is the founding President and CEO of the Behavioral Health Policy Collaborative, a private consulting firm based in Alexandria, Virginia, whose clients are public and private sector organizations dedicated to improving mental health and substance abuse systems, services and outcomes. She is a nationally recognized expert on national- and state-level behavioral health policy and practice as well as effective technical assistance for a wide range of topics and issues. Ms. Hutchings is the former Chief of Staff of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a \$3 billion dollar agency in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She is also the past Deputy Executive Director of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors. She served as an Alternate Commissioner on the President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health and was the senior content editor and contributing writer to the Commission’s 2003 Final Report, *“Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America.”* In 2007, Ms. Hutchings was appointed to SAMHSA’s Advisory Council on Women’s Services and she is also a Foundation Associate in the Women Business Leaders of the U.S. Healthcare Industry Foundation. She is a former Board Member and Summit Chair of the American College of Mental Health Administration. Ms. Hutchings is a published author of several journal articles and book chapters on mental health and behavioral health issues. She holds a Master’s Degree in Public Administration with a concentration in public management from the State University of New York at Albany.

## Vermont Proposal

**Project Objective:** The Behavioral Health Policy Collaborative (BHPC) will provide a professional, independent assessment of the State's Mental Health Plan and will provide a written report identifying areas of strengths and potential improvements. BHPC will assist the State with identifying key financing strategies and mental health outcome and accountability measures to ensure that adults with serious mental illnesses receive quality care.

### Proposed Team

- \*Gail P. Hutchings, MPA – Project Director
- \*Martin (Marty) Cohen, MSW – Senior Consultant: Behavioral Health Systems
- Kevin Huckshorn, RN, MSN, CADC, ICRC – Senior Consultant
- \*Leslie Schwalbe, MPA – Senior Consultant: Financing and Utilization Management
- Heather Cobb – Editor

### Available if needed:

- Richard Fields, MD – Senior Consultant: Psychiatric Hospital Clinical, Safety and Standards Compliance
- Virginia Knight, RN, MSN, PhD – Senior Consultant: Psychiatric Hospital Clinical, Safety and Standards Compliance

\*= On-Site Team

## Proposed Activities/Deliverables

### Work and Deliverables:

1. Review background materials (“Futures Plan,” current State Plan, etc.)
2. Provide list of questions/data needs; review response (i.e. utilization management and review criteria and data, demographic trend data, psychiatric hospital data [average length of stay, top 10 diagnoses], data on unmet need, homelessness and criminal justice data, etc.)
3. Develop and submit draft agenda, after consultation with the state, for on-site consultation (2 ½ days) to include:
  - a. Meet with senior staff from the VT Department of Mental Health and other relevant State agencies
  - b. Conferring with providers affected by the State Plan, including hospitals, agencies, peer organizations
  - c. Meet with advocacy organizations to determine potential implementation issues/concerns
  - d. (For a-c above, number meetings during site visit TBD).
4. Review data on utilization of services and unmet need (see above, item #2)
5. Review available data on consumer satisfaction with existing services (see above, item #2)
6. Conduct on-site consultation
7. Develop and submit draft report addressing:
  - a. BHPC's assessment of the State Plan (as passed in H-630) including potential missing elements

- b. Strategies and key considerations in planning, financing, implementing, monitoring, assessing, and reporting on the Plan's status
  - c. Suggestions for outcome measures and performance indicators
  - d. Recommendations for how the State can ensure proper oversight of care provided to individual consumers
  - e. Recommendations for how the State can best allocate resources and manage utilization across its system of care
  - f. Synopsis of key concerns, perceived benefits, potential barriers, and recommendations offered by key informants (legislators, state staff, advocates, providers, consumers, hospital administrators)
  - g. Contingent on available data for review, offer an assessment of the use of evidence based practices for clinical treatments and supports
  - h. Review of services for adults with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders
8. Revise report to incorporate feedback and submit final report

**Contract Timing:**

- Team visit to Vermont – mid May
- Draft report by late June
- Final report by early July
- Presentation to the special committee mid-July 2012 (possible via phone or video conference)

**Budget:** Estimated budget \$60,000-\$68,000 includes consulting fees, travel costs, and BPHC overhead and fee



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
LEGISLATIVE JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

Date: March 29, 2012

To: Legislative Joint Fiscal Committee  
Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Senate Committee on Health & Welfare,  
and the House Committee on Human Services

From: Legislative Joint Fiscal Office  
Theresa Utton-Jerman (828-5767)

A Special Committee comprised of the Legislative Joint Fiscal Committee and the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Senate Committee on Health & Welfare and the House Committee on Human Services, has been tentatively set for Thursday, April 5, 2012 at 12:00 p.m. in room 10 of the State House to discuss the hiring of a contractor to fulfill Sec. 33(e) of H.630 of 2012 (See reverse side).

If you have questions or concerns, please let me know as soon as possible.

Thank you.





An act relating to reforming Vermont's mental health system

Sec. 33. REPORTS

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