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(ITEM ) A resolution by Supervisor Weishan, Jr., requesting Journal Communications, Inc., retract claims that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors is, or ever was, against reform of the mental health system in Milwaukee County, by recommending adoption of the following:

**A RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, Journal Communications, Inc., which includes the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and TMJ4, continuously and falsely asserts that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors (“the Board”) is against reform of the mental health system in Milwaukee County as indicated by its unceasing parroting of the same false accusations:

“The closure [of the Milwaukee County Mental Health Complex – Hilltop], which comes after years of resistance from the County Board and labor unions, marks a dramatic shift from care in a troubled institution to smaller settings throughout the community.” Kissinger, Meg. “Closing of Milwaukee County’s Hilltop mental health unit a historic shift”. *Jsonline.com. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 6 Jan. 2015.

“But there are still critics — including some county supervisors — who want the county to drag its feet on creating a system that will provide improved care for those struggling with mental illness.” “Audit Should Move County to Greater Urgency on Mental Health Care”. Editorial. *Jsonline.com. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 21 Dec. 2014.

“For decades, Milwaukee County politicians have ignored calls to build a better system of mental health care in the community.” Kissinger, Meg. “There was time to help Paul Schmidt, but county politics got in the way”. *Jsonline.com. Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 5 Oct. 2013.

; and

WHEREAS, in contrast to these articles, the Board has for years supported efforts to reduce inpatient beds, unify mental health inpatient and community-based mental health services, develop extensive community-based case management, include consumers and families in agency planning, and provide evidence-based best practices; and

WHEREAS, the Board has worked diligently, through its own actions and by approving administrative actions, with input from experts and consumers, to improve

45 mental health services in this county including, but not limited to:

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- 1999 - requesting the Mental Health Division (now the Behavioral Health Division [BHD]) create The Milwaukee County Mental Health Division Strategic Plan, 2001-2004 to continue the work of the 1993 Master Plan that increased community placements and reduced inpatient service from 774 to 334 beds;
- 2000 - requiring reporting by the Mental Health Division regarding inpatient census, overcrowding, and community initiatives;
- 2001 - adopting The Milwaukee County Mental Health Division Strategic Plan, 2001-2004, continuing the progress toward reducing inpatient service and increasing community-based care management;
- 2002 - creating an Acute Inpatient Task Force;
- 2004 - increasing psychiatrist social workers at BHD;
- 2006 - expanding youth focused Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) prevention and education, creating an initiative to provide permanent housing options to persons with mental illness, creating a task force to advocate for and recommend continuous sources of funding for BHD services;
- 2007 - creating permanent housing for homeless persons with disabilities, authorizing a large staffing increase at BHD, authorizing the Commission on Supportive Housing;
- 2008 - creating a Special Needs County Housing Trust Fund to provide gap financing to assist in developing supportive housing;
- 2009 - approving \$1,264,267 for community-based services for children with mental health needs;
- 2011 - creating the Mental Health Redesign Task Force, pushed for a specific action oriented plan to implement the Human Services Research Institute study;
- 2012 - directing the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Director to continue to implement the mental health redesign and spend the three million dollars that was put in the 2012 budget to aid in moving toward a community-based mental health system;
- 2013 - establishing guidelines to transition BHD's long-term care facilities to a community-based model of care and authorizing the DHHS Director to implement SMART goals (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic, and **T**ime-bound) outlined by the Mental Health Redesign Task Force;
- 2014 - making funds available in the 2015 budget to allow BHD staff an opportunity to enjoy the same employee fringe benefits available to the general county workers; and

WHEREAS, the Board has never stood in the way of mental health reform and has supported nearly every action requested by DHHS and BHD in relation to mental health over the past twenty years; and

WHEREAS, the Committee on Health and Human Needs, at its meeting of

88 January 28, 2015, provided NO RECOMMENDATION on the Supervisor's request, due  
89 to a tie vote (3-3) on a motion to recommend adoption; now, therefore,  
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91 BE IT RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors (County Board)  
92 requests that Journal Communications, Inc., retract all statements that characterize the  
93 County Board as being against reform of the mental health system in Milwaukee County  
94 and refrain from making similar characterizations in the future; and  
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96 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Corporation Counsel will transmit this resolution  
97 to Journal Communications, Inc., and negotiate a retraction with Journal  
98 Communications, Inc.; and  
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100 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, within two months after passage of this  
101 resolution, if a retraction cannot be negotiated, Corporation Counsel will review legal  
102 options and report back to the County Board.  
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srb  
1/30/15  
U:\Committees\2015\Jan\HHN\Resolutions\15-77 Weishan Resolution-Journal Sentinel.doc