

MENTAL HEALTH & RECOVERY SERVICES (MHRS) BOARD  
*Serving Coshocton, Guernsey, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble & Perry Counties*  
 1500 Coal Run Road – Zanesville, OH, 43701

**OFFICIAL MINUTES**  
*(October 10, 2024)*

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**I. BOARD NOTIFICATION & COMPLIANCE WITH SUNSHINE LAW:**

On October 1, 2024, board members, contract organization directors, service area news media, county boards of commissioners, and state legislators were notified the Board of Directors would meet on Thursday, October 10, 2024, at the MHRS Board Office — with the schedule of activities to include: 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., meetings of Finance/Audit Committee and Partners Workgroup; and 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting.

**II. CALL TO ORDER:** President Sue Hoover called the regular board meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**III. ROLL CALL:**

Board Members Present:

- *Sue Hoover, President (Muskingum County)*
- *Leondra Davis, Vice President (Coshocton County)*
- *Sean Brady (Muskingum County)*
- *William Johnson (Coshocton County)*
- *Dave Peoples (Guernsey County)*
- *Dr. Dan Scheerer (Muskingum County)*
- *Ben Taylor (Perry County)*
- *Reid Carpenter (Noble County)*

Board Members Excused:

- *Randy Earnest (Guernsey County)*
- *Wendy Starlin (Perry County)*
- *Dennis Hitchcock (Muskingum County)*
- *Bonnie Taylor (Muskingum County)*
- *Abby Corder (Muskingum County)*
- *Tony Mayle, Jr. (Morgan County)*

There being eight board members present, a quorum was constituted for conducting official business.

Staff Members Present:

- *Misty Cromwell, Executive Director*
- *Rhonda Hanes, Associate Director / Director of Finance & Administration*
- *Sarah Reed, Director of Compliance and Quality Improvement*
- *Jamie McGrew, Director of Community Outreach & Programming*
- *Roger Birch, Director of Youth & Family Services*
- *Linda Hand, Administrative Coordinator*

**IV. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:**

The following guests were present for individual Special Allocation reviews:

- *Yolanda Taylor, CEO, Muskingum Behavioral Health; James McDonald, CEO, Allwell Behavioral Health; Tim Buchanan, Ohio Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation and Board President, Project Ready; and Jeanette Hall, Co-Director, Coshocton Behavioral Health Choices*

**V. AGENDA:** President Hoover noted that the Partners Workgroup Report regarding the SCOPE Grant will be heard at the MHRS Board's November 14 meeting. Due to a board member's need to leave the meeting early, it was noted that action items would be addressed before informational items. SEAN BRADY MOVED THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR THE OCTOBER 10, 2024, BOARD MEETING AS AMENDED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY WILLIAM JOHNSON AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

**VI. MEETING MINUTES:** LEONDRA DAVIS MOVED THAT THE BOARD APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 12, 2024, BOARD MEETING AS SUBMITTED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SEAN BRADY AND A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS: SEAN BRADY, YEA; REID CARPENTER, ABSTAIN; LEONDRA DAVIS, YEA; WILLIAM JOHNSON, YEA; DAVE PEOPLES, YEA; DAN SCHEERER, YEA; AND BEN TAYLOR YEA. The motion was approved receiving six positive votes and one abstention.

**VII. UPDATE – ‘OPEN MINDS’ INITIATIVE:**

OPEN MINDS helps behavioral health organizations to implement the transformational business practices they need to improve their operational and strategic performance in an ever-changing landscape. The MHRS Board has contracted with OPEN MINDS to assist service providers in developing an improvement plan that will help them tackle business challenges, build sustainability strategies, and maximize their effectiveness.

Rick Rowley, a Senior Associate for OPEN MINDS, provided a brief overview of the work being done thus far for the MHRS Board and its contract providers and discussed next steps – when he would appreciate speaking to individual members of the MHRS Board of Directors to receive their input about the future of the Board’s network. | Dr. Scheerer requested a budget projection for creating the improvement plan and putting it into motion. | Director Cromwell will provide Mr. Rowley with board members’ contact information.

**VIII. FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT:**

***1. Financial Reports:***

Board members reviewed the following September 2024 financial reports: 1) Balance Sheet; 2) Dashboard Report; 3) Report of Network Funding Reserves; 4) Year-to-Date Status Report for the MHRS Board’s Operating Budget; 5) Contract Services Expenses; and 6) Reconciliation Report.

**► *September 2024 Reconciliation Report:***

Following the report of Committee action, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE BOARD ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 2024 RECONCILIATION REPORT AS SUBMITTED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY WILLIAM JOHNSON AND A ROLL-CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS: SEAN BRADY, YEA; REID CARPENTER, YEA; LEONDRA DAVIS, YEA; WILLIAM JOHNSON, YEA; DAVE PEOPLES, YEA; DAN SCHEERER, YEA; AND BEN TAYLOR, YEA. The motion was unanimously approved, receiving seven positive votes.

***2. Special Allocation Request – Allwell Behavioral Health Services — Noble County Medication-Assisted Treatment @ Allwell’s Noble Counseling Center:***

In the Finance/Audit Committee meeting, James McDonald, CEO of Allwell Behavioral Health Services, asked for a special allocation of up to \$60,000.00 to provide reimbursement in FY 2025 (retroactive to July 1, 2024) for the Medication-Assisted Treatment services provided by Dr. Daniel Bloch at Allwell’s Noble Counseling Center.

Committee members expressed concerns about the low number of clients receiving MAT services in Noble County as well as the prospects for the sustainment of this service. It was suggested that Allwell consider ways to increase community awareness about MAT treatment and also expand Dr. Bloch’s MAT services into Allwell’s other service area counties.

Following the report of Committee Action, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE BOARD ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE A SPECIAL ALLOCATION OF UP TO \$60,000.00 TO ALLWELL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TO PROVIDE REIMBURSEMENT IN FY 2025 (RETROACTIVE TO JULY 1, 2024) FOR THE MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT SERVICES PROVIDED BY DR. DANIEL BLOCH AT ALLWELL’S NOBLE COUNSELING CENTER. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SEAN BRADY.

During full Board consideration of this action, Dr. Scheerer recommended that the MHRS Board bring Allwell CEO James McDonald back in January of 2025 to provide an update on the MAT program in Noble County (i.e., patient numbers and how allocation funds were spent over the previous months).

A ROLL-CALL VOTE ON THE ABOVE MOTION WAS THEN TAKEN AS FOLLOWS: SEAN BRADY, YEA; REID CARPENTER, YEA; LEONDRA DAVIS, YEA; WILLIAM JOHNSON, YEA; DAVE PEOPLES, ABSTAIN; DAN SCHEERER, YEA; AND BEN TAYLOR, YEA. The motion was approved receiving six positive votes and one abstention.

**3. Special Allocation Request – Allwell Behavioral Health Services – PROJECT READY:**

In the Finance/Audit Committee meeting, James McDonald from Allwell and Tim Buchanan, President of the Project Ready Board of Directors, asked for a special allocation of up to \$65,000.00 for expenses related to: Outcome Data Entry and Tracking System; Administrative Services provided by ForeverDads; Care Coordination Services provided by ForeverDads; and reimbursement for support of returning citizens.

Following the report of Committee Action, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE BOARD ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE A SPECIAL ALLOCATION OF UP TO \$65,000 FOR THE SUPPORT OF PROJECT READY EXPENSES: OUTCOME DATA ENTRY AND TRACKING SYSTEM; ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES – FOREVERDADS; CARE COORDINATION SERVICES FOREVERDADS; AND REIMBURSEMENT FOR SUPPORT OF RETURNING CITIZENS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SEAN BRADY.

During full Board consideration of this request, Dr. Scheerer noted that the requested funds are basically seed money for currently-paused Project Ready operations. Project Ready Board Chair Tim Buchanan noted that Allwell will be hiring a Project Ready Director, who will be an employee of Allwell Behavioral Health; none of the requested funds will go to that position. Mr. Buchanan stressed the importance of Project Ready Services in helping to reduce repeated incarceration of returning citizens, especially among those with issues of poverty, mental illness, and substance use. Project Ready works with returning citizens to establish an action plan, to overcome barriers, and to access the services and supports needed for their successful community reintegration.

Program sustainability was referenced. It was noted that the new Project Ready Director will be pursuing applicable grant funds to support the program that serves Muskingum, Perry, and Morgan Counties.

Board members asked for an update report in three months regarding program reimbursements thus far, how those funds were spent, and the number of individuals served.

A ROLL-CALL VOTE ON THE ABOVE MOTION WAS THEN TAKEN AS FOLLOWS: SEAN BRADY, YEA; REID CARPENTER, YEA; LEONDRA DAVIS, YEA; WILLIAM JOHNSON, YEA; DAVE PEOPLES, ABSTAIN; DAN SCHEERER, YEA; AND BEN TAYLOR, YEA. The motion was approved receiving six positive votes and one abstention.

**4. Special Allocation Request —Coshocton Behavioral Health Choices – Autism Diagnosis and Support Consultant:**

In the Finance/Audit Committee meeting CBHC Co-Director Jeanette Hall requested \$21,160.00 to fund the services of an Autism Diagnosis & Support Consultant. The demand for comprehensive autism diagnoses has been steadily increasing. To address the growing need, this funding would bring a dedicated psychologist to the CBHC team. This professional would assist with the diagnosis of autism and provide ongoing support to families.

Following report of Committee action, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE BOARD ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE A SPECIAL ALLOCATION TO COSHOCTON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CHOICES FOR AUTISM ASSESSMENTS OF COSHOCTON COUNTY CHILDREN — UP TO A MAXIMUM

OF \$35,000.00 PER YEAR. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY REID CARPENTER.

The MHRS Board will request intermittent follow-up reports on the progress of this program.

A ROLL-CALL VOTE WAS THEN TAKEN ON THE ABOVE MOTION AS FOLLOWS: SEAN BRADY, YEA; REID CARPENTER, YEA; LEONDRA DAVIS, YEA; WILLIAM JOHNSON, YEA; DAVE PEOPLES, YEA; DAN SCHEERER, YEA; AND BEN TAYLOR, YEA. The motion was unanimously approved receiving seven positive votes and two abstentions.

**5. Special Allocation Request – Muskingum Behavioral Health (MBH) – Second Hearing:**

In the Finance/Audit Committee meeting, Yolanda Taylor, MBH CEO, reviewed a plan that outlined a beginning path toward strengthening the organization's financial standing. Board members expressed appreciation for the submission of the recovery plan but stressed the importance of adequate productivity rates to help ensure the organization's survival.

Following report of Committee action, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE BOARD ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE A SPECIAL ALLOCATION OF \$49,054.00 TO MUSKINGUM BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TO SUPPORT SIX MONTHS OF EXPENSES RELATED TO CLAIMS BILLING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SEAN BRADY.

Board members requested a follow-up report in three months regarding the use of these funds and the status of their financial recovery.

A ROLL-CALL VOTE ON THE ABOVE MOTION WAS THEN TAKEN AS FOLLOWS: SEAN BRADY, YEA; REID CARPENTER, YEA; LEONDRA DAVIS, YEA; WILLIAM JOHNSON, YEA; DAVE PEOPLES, YEA; DAN SCHEERER, YEA; AND BEN TAYLOR, YEA. The motion was unanimously approved, receiving seven positive votes.

**6. Special Allocation Request – Zanesville – Muskingum County Health Department:**

(This request was not pre-reviewed by the Finance & Audit Committee.)

MHRS Board Director Misty Cromwell reported that the Health Department was requesting up to \$45,000.00 to support the services of a Housing & Homelessness Coordinator. Misty noted that she has been working closely with the Health Department on the issue of homelessness and strongly supported the requested allocation to enable the hiring of a coordinator who will be dedicated to addressing housing and homelessness issues.

Following review, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE BOARD APPROVE A SPECIAL ALLOCATION OF UP TO \$45,000.00 TO THE ZANESVILLE – MUSKINGUM COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT TO SUPPORT THE SERVICES OF A HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS COORDINATOR. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY BEN TAYLOR AND A ROLL-CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS: SEAN BRADY, YEA; REID CARPENTER, YEA; LEONDRA DAVIS, ABSTAIN; WILLIAM JOHNSON, YEA; DAVE PEOPLES, YEA; DAN SCHEERER, YEA; AND BEN TAYLOR, YEA. The motion was approved receiving six positive votes and one abstention.

(The remainder of the meeting was led by Board Vice-President Leondra Davis.)

**IX. PARTNERS WORKGROUP:**

The Partners Workgroup did not meet as planned. The group's primary report regarding the status of the MHRS Board's SCOPE (Strategies to Coordinate Overdose Prevention Efforts) Grant will be given at the November 14 meeting.

**X. OLD BUSINESS: (None)**

**XI. NEW BUSINESS: (None)**

**XII. COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER** *(Includes additional information about issues addressed in the Executive Director's October Board Report):*

**1. Farm Stress Update:**

Sarah Reed, Director of Compliance and Quality Improvement, provided an update of the MHRS Board's Farm Stress Outreach initiative (summary included in meeting highlights).

**2. Facility Evaluation – Liberty Manor State-Operated Group Home:**

Director Cromwell reviewed an evaluation report regarding the existing structure for Liberty Manor – to determine if a different facility would be more suitable. The Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction services has set aside \$20 million in capital funds for a 're-do' of this group home that serves clients with severe mental illness – primarily those who are discharged from a State Hospital. At the current group home site, there are several concerns related to limited water supply and other utility safety issues. Members reviewed potential Guernsey County sites/locations that could perhaps better serve this population.

**3. Operation BRIDGE – Guernsey County:** Included in the Board Meeting Highlights are some statistics from the September 24-25, 2024, Operation BRIDGE activities in Cambridge. BRIDGE stands for Bridging Recovery & Interdiction Data Gathering Enforcement. This event was guided by Karl Hoop, the MHRS Board's Director of Community Engagement and Crisis Services.

**4. MHRS Board Mini-Grant Awards – 2024:** (Summary included in Board Meeting Highlights.)

**5. Groundbreaking – Regional Crisis Stabilization Unit for Youth:** (Summarized in Board Meeting Highlights.)

**XIII. NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be Thursday, November 14, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. @ the MHRS Board Office, 1500 Coal Run Road, Zanesville. (The Finance & Audit Committee and the Partners Workgroup will meet from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.)

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

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**SIGNATURES**

**SUBMITTED BY:**

**APPROVED BY:**

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**Linda Hand, Administrative Coordinator**

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**Misty Cromwell, Executive Director**

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**Sue Hoover, Board President**

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**Leondra Davis, Board Vice President**