

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

**GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS – REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
*(February 12, 2026)*

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

On February 2, 2026, board members, contract organization directors, service area news media, county boards of commissioners, and state legislators were notified that the Governing Board of Directors would meet on Thursday, February 12, 2026, 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 Program Committee; and 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting.

**II. CALL TO ORDER:** Vice President Ben Taylor called the regular board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**III. ROLL CALL:**

Board Members Present:

- *Ben Taylor, Vice President (Perry County)*
- *Sean Brady (Muskingum County)*
- *Abby Corder (Muskingum County)*
- *Randi Earnest (Guernsey County)*
- *Dennis Hitchcock (Muskingum County)*
- *Sue Hoover (Muskingum County)*
- *William Johnson (Coshocton County)*
- *Dr. Dan Scheerer (Muskingum County)*
- *Cambridge Police Chief Dave Peoples (Guernsey County)*
- *Wendy Starlin (Perry County)*
- *Bonnie Taylor (Muskingum County)*

Board Members Excused:

- *Leondra Davis, Board President (Coshocton County)*
- *Tony Mayle, Jr. (Morgan County)*
- *Reid Carpenter (Noble County)*

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

Staff Members Present:

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

**IV. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** Several virtual guests were present to explain their FY 2027 funding applications. The RFA's being reviewed were for Southeastern Ohio Counseling Center and People to People.

**V. AGENDA:** Vice President Taylor noted one change to the pre-mailed February 12, 2026, agenda under the Finance/Audit Committee Report, Item 7f: Allwell Behavioral Health changed their mortgage transfer point from Beacon Place to the Crisis Stabilization Center. SEAN BRADY MOVED THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR THE FEBRUARY 12, 2026, BOARD MEETING AS AMENDED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DENNIS HITCHCOCK AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

**VI. MEETING MINUTES:** RANDI EARNEST MOVED THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 8, 2026, BOARD MEETING AS

SUBMITTED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SUE HOOVER AND A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS: SEAN BRADY, ABSTAIN; ABBY CORDER, YEA; RANDI EARNEST, YEA; DENNIS HITCHCOCK, YEA; SUE HOOVER, YEA; WILLIAM JOHNSON, YEA; DAVE PEOPLES, ABSTAIN; DAN SCHEERER, YEA; WENDY STARLIN, ABSTAIN; AND BONNIE TAYLOR, YEA. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED RECEIVING SEVEN POSITIVE VOTES AND THREE ABSTENTIONS.

**VII. REVIEW HEARINGS – FY 2027 SERVICE PROVIDER REQUESTS FOR FUNDING:** MHRS Board staff and board members reviewed FY 2027 funding applications from the Southeastern Ohio Counseling Center and People to People Counseling. Hearing information will be used to help facilitate informed decision-making.

**VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

Director Misty Cromwell provided some additional details on the following items included in her Board Report: 1) Plans to Develop a Certified Behavioral Health Court within the Perry County Common Pleas Court; 2) the Epic System/Call Line/Scheduling Integration initiative being addressed by Genesis and Allwell Behavioral Health; 3) the Clinically Integrated Network Strategic Plan & Priorities for 2026 (partners are Genesis, Muskingum Valley Health Centers, Allwell and the MHRS Board – currently focused on Muskingum County); 4) the integration of Genesis into the MHRS Board’s claims management system; and 5) the recent Perry County Legislative Breakfast (summary included in board meeting highlights). Dr. Scheerer pointed out that it would benefit the network if the MHRS Board could be more informative about levy dollar amounts and how those funds are spent. MHRS Board fiscal staff will be working on developing quarterly levy funding reports for the community and the method for getting that information out in the six-county service area.

**IX. FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT: (Dr. Dan Scheerer, Chair)**

**1. Appropriation of Unencumbered Funds from December 31, 2025:**

Following report of Committee action, DENNIS HITCHCOCK MOVED THAT THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE THE APPROPRIATION OF \$13,036,929.95 IN UNENCUMBERED FUNDS FROM DECEMBER 31, 2025, TO THE CALENDAR YEAR 2026 BUDGET IN THE CONTINGENCIES LINE ITEM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DAN SCHEERER.

*There were no objections to the motion.*

**2. Appropriation Transfer – CY 2026 Budget:**

Following report of Committee action, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE AN APPROPRIATION TRANSFER OF \$130,000 FROM THE CONTINGENCIES LINE ITEM IN THE CY 2026 BUDGET TO THE FOLLOWING LINE ITEMS: \$20,000.00 TO ADVERTISING; AND \$110,000.00 TO PROFESSIONAL SERVICES – CONTRACT AGENCIES. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SEAN BRADY.

*There were no objections to the motion.*

**3. Financial Reports:**

Board members reviewed the following January 2026 financial reports: 1) Balance Sheet as of January 31, 2026; 2) Dashboard Report; 3) Report of Network Funding Reserves; 4) Year-to-Date Status Report for the MHRS Board’s Operating Budget; and 5) Reconciliation Report.

**► January 2026 Reconciliation Report:**

Following the report of Committee action, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 2026 RECONCILIATION REPORT AS SUBMITTED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY WILLIAM JOHNSON.

Dr. Scheerer noted that the reconciliation report is showing how the transition work on the change in operations management of the Liberty Manor Group Home is saving the network some money.

*There were no objections to the motion.*

4. **'Then and Now' Certificates for Specific Purchase Orders:**

Following the report of Committee action, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE 'THEN AND NOW' CERTIFICATES FOR THE FOLLOWING PURCHASE ORDERS: 1) TRULIGHT MINISTRIES, P.O. #120291, \$2,000.00; 2) PERRY COUNTY JOB & FAMILY SERVICES, P.O. #120357, \$3,500.00; AND 3) CHRISTI BARTMAN WITH THE SOUTHEAST EQUITABLE TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE COLLABORATIVE, P.O. #120373, \$200.00. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SUE HOOVER.

This action is in response to a purchase order process recommendation included in the latest state audit.

*There were no objections to the motion.*

5. **Substantial Changes in FY 2027 Contracts with Service Providers:**

Following the report of committee action,

DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE STATE FISCAL YEAR 2027 AGENCY-SPECIFIC LANGUAGE THAT REFLECTS CHANGES PASSED IN OHIO SENATE BILL 138, AS WELL AS POSSIBLE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH REDUCTIONS IN THE CRISIS LINE ITEM — TO BE INCLUDED IN THE 120-DAY NOTICES TO CONTRACT AGENCIES REGARDING SUBSTANTIAL CONTRACT CHANGES:

WHEREAS, the Mental Health & Recovery Services Board has the responsibility and authority to plan, fund, and evaluate behavioral health services in Coshocton, Guernsey, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble & Perry Counties; and

WHEREAS, the Mental Health & Recovery Services Board must notify contract agencies of any substantial changes to contract terms with a 120-day notice in writing;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Mental Health & Recovery Services Board of Coshocton, Guernsey, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble & Perry Counties to approve the State Fiscal Year 2027 agency-specific contract language that is included in the 120-day notices for the following contract agencies: Allwell Behavioral Health Services; the merged Behavioral Health Choices organizations for the counties of Morgan, Muskingum, Guernsey, and Perry; Coshocton Behavioral Health Choices; and the Forensic Diagnostic Center of District 9.

THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY WILLIAM JOHNSON.

Dr. Scheerer noted that this action required by the Ohio Revised Code will not need to be provided in future years, due to recently revised ORC regulations.

*There were no objections to the motion.*

6. **New Policy – V.I.E.03 -Purchase Orders and 'Then and Now':**

Following the report of Committee action, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE POLICY V.I.E.03, PURCHASE ORDERS AND 'THEN AND NOW,' TO ALIGN THE MHRS BOARD'S WORK IN THIS AREA WITH THAT OF THE MUSKINGUM COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY RANDI EARNEST.

*There were no objections to the motion.*

7. **Allwell Behavioral Health – Resolution of Support for a Mortgage Transfer from 121, N. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Cambridge – to 3405 Dillon Acres Drive, Zanesville:**

Following Finance/Audit Committee review of this request, committee members recommended that the action be tabled so that board members could review: 1) additional financial information; and 2) Allwell’s plans for funding the maintenance and upkeep of the properties they manage.

In accordance with the Finance/Audit Committee’s recommendation, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT ACTION ON THE ABOVE-NOTED MORTGAGE TRANSFER BE TABLED UNTIL ADDITIONAL SPECIFIC INFORMATION IS RECEIVED AND REVIEWED BY THE MHRS BOARD’S GOVERNING BOARD. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SEAN BRADY.

*There were no objections to the motion.*

8. **Noble County Transitional House:**

Following the report of Committee action, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO SIGN A CONTRACT ON A PROPOSED NOBLE COUNTY PROPERTY THAT COULD BE USED AS A TRANSITION HOUSE. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DENNIS HITCHCOCK.

It was specified the contract could be up to the amount of \$200,000.00, and the house would be owned by the MHRS Board – with Allwell managing its operations.

*There were no objections to the motion.*

9. **Maintenance Position for System Facilities – MHRS Board Portion of Cost:**

Following the report of committee action, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE/AUDIT COMMITTEE TO APPROVE THE CREATION OF A POSITION THAT WOULD PROVIDE REGULAR MAINTENANCE WORK FOR SYSTEM FACILITIES – WITH THE MHRS BOARD’S SHARE OF THE SALARY FOR THIS POSITION BEING 25%. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ABBY CORDER.

The other partners in this initiative are: the Jefferson County Prevention & Recovery Board and the Eastern Alliance Council of Governments.

*There were no objections to the motion.*

10. **Homeless Hands of Zanesville:**

Director Misty Cromwell reported on a request for the MHRS Board to consider assuming responsibility for the operation of the Homeless Hands Project of Zanesville – that was recently closed due to the resignation of the Homeless Hands Director. It was noted that this program helped many homeless individuals – and they provided services to persons with behavioral health issues in a caring and compassionate manner. Director Cromwell noted she would be having some conversations with involved entities and report back at the Governing Board’s March 12 meeting.

X. **RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:**

SEAN BRADY MOVED THAT THE BOARD RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ABBY CORDER, AND A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS: SEAN BRADY, YEA; ABBY CORDER, YEA; RANDI EARNEST, YEA; DENNIS HITCHCOCK, YEA; SUE HOOVER, YEA; WILLIAM JOHNSON, YEA; DAVE

PEOPLES, YEA; DAN SCHEERER, YEA; WENDY STARLIN, YEA; AND BONNIE TAYLOR, YEA. THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED RECEIVING TEN POSITIVE VOTES.

The Board of Governors recessed to Executive Session at 7:15 p.m. and returned to open session at 7:44 p.m.

Members reviewed the Executive Director’s annual performance evaluation prepared by Executive Committee members Dr. Dan Scheerer, Randi Earnest, and Ben Taylor.

Based on a Market Basket Analysis, DAN SCHEERER MOVED THAT THE GOVERNING BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S ANNUAL SALARY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027 (EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$120,000, REPRESENTING A 7.14% INCREASE. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SEAN BRADY, AND A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AS FOLLOWS: SEAN BRADY, YEA; ABBY CORDER, YEA; RANDI EARNEST, YEA; DENNIS HITCHCOCK, YEA; SUE HOOVER, YEA; WILLIAM JOHNSON, YEA; DAVE PEOPLES, YEA; DAN SCHEERER, YEA; WENDY STARLIN, YEA; AND BONNIE TAYLOR, YEA. THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED RECEIVING TEN POSITIVE VOTES.

Vice President Ben Taylor detailed several of Director Cromwell’s areas of strength in leading the organization: 1) Staff Operations; 2) Financial Operations; 3) Relationships with Ohio Department of Behavioral Health and the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities; 4) Contract Organization Relationships; and 5) Community Relations. Another very important strength is Misty’s passionate advocacy for system clients and their families.

- XI. NEXT MEETING:** The Board of Governors will next meet at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 12, 2026, at the MHRS Board Office. The Annual Board Member Training will take place prior to regular board meeting from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. There will be no committee meetings.
- XII. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

**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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Ben Taylor, Board Vice President