

HAMILTON COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES BOARD

Minutes of the Board of Trustees

Thursday, February 20, 2025

I. Call to Order

A. The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order (Powell) at 8:32 a.m.

II. Attendance

A. Board Members Present: Gary Powell (Vice-Chair); Ashlee Young (Secretary); Charles Collins, MD; Matt Curoe; Gwen DiMeo; Sandra Driggins-Smith; Lee Harrill; Gregory Hogg; Hillary Wishnick, PhD; Hannah Lewallen; Linda McKenzie

B. Board Members Absent: Thomas Gabelman (Chair) (Exc.); Traci Henry (Exc.)

C. Staff Members Present: LaNora Godfrey; Linda Gallagher; Jenny Heizman; Steve Rokich; Denise Garrett; Ann Briccio

III. Approval of Minutes

A. A motion was made (Powell) to approve the minutes of the January 16, 2025 Board of Trustees meeting.

Motion Approved

IV. President's Report

1. State of the State

Governor DeWine released the state budget on February 3, 2025, now under review in the House and set to advance to the Senate. OhioMHAS Director Cornyn presented updates on February 6, including:

- OhioMHAS will be renamed the Ohio Department of Behavioral Health.
- The Department proposes restructuring certain line items to streamline fiscal operations.
- The total Department of Behavioral Health budget will increase by 4.1% in SFY 2026 and by 2.3% in SFY 2027.
- A proposed restructuring of block grant funding will consolidate multiple line items into one, allowing greater flexibility for ADAMH Boards.

We will continue monitoring the budget process and its potential impact on our Board's operations and funding allocations.

2. Federal Funding

Over the past few weeks, MHR SB and provider agencies have received federal communications regarding a "pause" in financial assistance. However, a restraining order has since been issued prohibiting this action while allowing local agencies discretion in pausing awards or obligations. At this time, MHR SB will not implement a pause in federal assistance. We continue to receive federal funding without notification of reimbursement changes. MHR SB remains committed to keeping providers and the Board informed as further guidance becomes available.

3. Regional Community Health Needs Assessment Released

The Greater Cincinnati Tri-State Region conducts a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) every three years to evaluate the health and well-being of its 18 counties and identify areas for collective action. The CHNA report outlines health

priorities, factors shaping regional well-being, significant health needs, and progress made.

This year, CHNA partners selected three top priorities to improve health, address community conditions that undermine health, and tackle the systems that prevent some of our neighbors from living long and healthy lives. The three top priorities are:

- Mental Health treatment and prevention
- Homelessness prevention and housing stability
- Heart disease and stroke prevention and treatment

Various groups are addressing behavioral health challenges in the region: HEY! Cincinnati, Mental Health and Addiction Advocacy Coalition, and the Behavioral Health Workforce Council. Opening the Hamilton County Crisis Center in 2025 is another key initiative. Details can be found in the report: Regional-CHNA_SWOhio2024_Final.pdf.

V. Opportunity for Public Comments

- A. John Banchy, Executive Director of Best Point, shared that Best Point has sponsored two scholarships for minority students every year at UC for 20 years. Due to DEI-related executive orders, UC notified Best Point they are no longer permitted to sponsor scholarships designated for minority students.
- B. Gary Powell, Board Vice-Chair, inquired about the progress of the Hamilton County Crisis Center. The Crisis Center team continues to have regular discussions regarding partnerships within the Crisis Center. Construction is on schedule for late Spring/early Summer with a targeted move-in date for everyone by August 1, 2025.

VI. Board of Trustees

A. December 2024 Financial Statements

Steve Rokich reviewed line items for the period.

Revenue: Levies decreased by \$395K; State General Revenue Funds increased by \$1.7M; Block Grant Funds increased by \$1.5M; Inter-County Revenue decreased by \$2.7M due to payments received for HOPE and FAIR in December CY24.

Expenses: Agency provider contract payments totaled \$5.5M during the month of January; \$4.9M (88.7%) were for CY 2024 and \$629K (11.3%) were for CY 2025.

B. Action Items

1. State Opioid and Stimulant Grant (SOS) 4.0

HCMHRSB received \$309,189.65 from OhioMHAS from the State Opioid and Stimulant (SOS) 4.0 Grant. This funding will support the efforts of the African American Engagement Workgroup (AAEW). To facilitate the continuation of this work, HCMHRSB will allocate the funds to Talbert House, which serves as the fiscal agent for AAEW.

The RSO Committee recommends the Board of Trustees approve a new allocation of \$309,189.65 to Talbert House for the period 9/30/24 through 9/29/2025, recognizing its role as the fiscal agent responsible for the administration and management of AAEW grant-funded initiatives.

100% of this allocation increase will be funded from the State Opioid and Stimulant grant from OhioMHAS.

Motion Approved

2. Supportive Housing

Funding for Supportive Housing is funded each biennium by the State of Ohio with the alternate year being funded by the Hamilton County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board. Reductions in State funding have necessitated additional funding for the Supportive Housing program for calendar year 2025.

The RSO Committee recommends the Board of Trustees approve an increase of \$35,169.76 in funding to support the operations of two agencies providing supportive housing services through 12/31/2025. This funding will help offset reductions in State funding.

Lighthouse Youth Services	\$2,508.62
Tender Mercies	\$32,661.14

100% of this project is funded by the Mental Health Levy funds.

Motion Approved

3. OneOhio Reallocation

HCMHRSB received \$162,000 through the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners from the OneOhio Distributor Settlement Payment to support individuals who lost their Medicaid eligibility due to the resumption of the redetermination process. Unspent funds for this program totaling \$15,741.28 need to be reallocated to agencies with eligible expenses.

The RSO Committee recommends the Board of Trustees approve a reallocation of \$15,741.28 of unspent OneOhio Distributor Settlement funds for the following agencies covering the period through 12/31/2024.

Central Clinic Outpatient	\$10,693.00
Crossroads	\$5,048.28

100% of this project is funded from the OneOhio Distributor Settlement allocation.

Motion Approved

4. Family Access to Integrated Recovery 2024 (FAIR)

Since 2010, the Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services (JFS) and the Hamilton County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board (HCMHRSB) have been partners in the Family Access to Integrated Recovery (FAIR) project to ensure that children and families involved in the child welfare system have access to necessary mental health and substance use services. To sustain and enhance these critical services, additional funding is required.

The RSO Committee recommends the Board of Trustees approve an increase to Central Clinic-FAIR totaling \$255,300.

\$18,800 will be funded by Mental Health Levy funds. The remaining \$236,500 will be funded by Hamilton County Job and Family Services.

Motion Approved

5. Bipartisan Safer Community Project Funding

HCMHRSB has received a \$54,986 grant from OhioMHAS to conduct activities towards developing comprehensive behavioral health disaster preparedness plans for Hamilton County. The responsibilities will include oversight and implementation of activities that engage the community in plan development.

The RSO Committee recommends the Board of Trustees approve an increase of \$54,986 to Talbert House through September 29, 2025.

100% of this project will be funded from OhioMHAS.

Motion Approved

VII. Other

- A.** There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Gabelman
Chair

Ashlee Young
Secretary