

**GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH
AND RECOVERY SERVICES**

Dr. Steven Oluic
Chairman of the Board

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Board Minutes

JULY 16, 2025

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Reba Dykes, James Lee Holden, Kathy Johnson, Douglas Lundblad, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, Mary Ruth Shumway, Patricia Varanese

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Christine Lakomiak, Jim Mausser, Michelle Maneage, Teresa Slater

GUESTS: Melanie Blasko, Jack Hoover (Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers), Kathy Franz (Geauga League of Women Voters), Vicki Clark, Megan Duderstadt, Pat Spadaro (Ravenwood Health), Newell Howard (GCTP), Angi Daugherty, Jennifer Marut (Family Pride), Michelle Bertman (Catholic Charities), Angela North (NAMI Geauga), Allison Wilson (Geauga Maple Leaf), Andrea Gutka (WomenSafe), Alicia Cody (OhioMHAS)

I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Oluic called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Mr. Holden called the roll for attendance, and the following Board members were present: Reba Dykes, James Lee Holden, Kathy Johnson, Douglas Lundblad, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, Mary Ruth Shumway, and Patricia Varanese. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES FROM MAY 21, 2025

Mr. Holden moved to waive the reading of, and approve, the Minutes as presented. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES-8; NAYS-0; ABSTENTIONS-0. MOTION APPROVED.**

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Dr. Oluic welcomed everyone and made the following updates:

- June's meeting was cancelled due to a water issue.
- The Transitional Living Center expansion is progressing nicely. He encouraged everyone to drive by and see the progress.
- There was an article, along with an editorial piece, in the News Herald about the collaboration between the Geauga Board of MHRS and the Geauga Sheriff's Office in creating a crisis response position to coordinate and oversee the various behavioral health teams in Geauga.
- Accolades to everyone on the Live Well event, which focused on senior citizens. It was a great event, well attended, and has received a lot of positive feedback. The plan is to make this a yearly event.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Lakomiak spoke on the following:

Today is a cause for celebration - we are 7 months into 2025, and there have been no overdose deaths in Geauga County. This milestone reflects the efforts, hard work, determination, and compassion of our community as a whole, and in particular our agencies and partners, individual community members, and our Board of Directors. Here are some of the actions/efforts/programs that led to this wonderful outcome:

- Families promoting awareness and guidance to their children
- Initiatives that empowered youth to choose health and hope
- Calls to Copeline/988
- Attendance at recovery events
- Leadership, guidance, and strategic use of resources by the Geauga County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board
- Countywide initiatives and programs invested in by agency and Board staff
- The Sheriff's whole-hearted support of families in crisis
- Local Courts championing recovery and treatment
- Victim advocates who provide unwavering support to help survivors and their families heal
- Schools integrating programs to reach youth early
- Expanded access to treatment by healthcare providers and local hospitals
- Critical support given by social service agencies, including Job and Family Services
- Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services for supporting our local initiatives

V. GUEST SPEAKERS

Several guests spoke about a few of the programs that have had a significant impact on our community.

Family Pride: Director Angi Daugherty introduced Jen Marut. She serves as the lead clinical supervisor and has more than 25 years of experience, with expertise in dual diagnosis. She started her education at The Ohio State University and then received her master's degree from Kent. She is a Family First Council member and part of the New Leaf Program.

Jen Marut: Clinicians meet with clients at their homes and in the community as often as needed. When a client is actively using, a treatment plan is developed based on the severity of use and identifies both the client's and family's needs. A client may also have a dual diagnosis. Only treating one and not the other does not bring about positive outcomes. The goal is to break cycles and patterns of abuse and link people with community resources, supports, and programs. She supervises interns at Family Pride. She helps new clinicians gain confidence, teaches them how to conduct interviews, and provides extensive training on what to look for, hear, and more in the home. Sometimes clinicians need to have very difficult and challenging conversations with clients. Family Pride's approach to treatment is comprehensive, involving clients, families, schools, and other stakeholders, which makes a significant difference in outcomes and sustainability.

Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers: Director Melanie Blasko introduced Jack Hoover, who joined the staff in August 2022. He is a licensed chemical dependency counselor who is the residential treatment counselor at Concord Pines. He uses his personal experience to help others recover. He has an Associate's degree from Stark State College and is working on his bachelor's degree at Youngstown State University.

Jack Hoover: He became sober in 2017 at a treatment center in Canton similar to the facilities of Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers. To be able to celebrate zero overdoses this year is amazing. Each recovery home houses 16 people. The day begins at 6:30 am. Clients eat together and pray together, and everyone has specific chores – including cleaning and cooking – which teaches responsibility. Group therapy is from 9:00 to 12:00, and then they have lunch. Residents attend a variety of group sessions from 1 to 3. Dinner is at 5:00. Curfew is 10:00, and lights out at 11. After 21 days, residents can go outside the facility for AA and NA meetings. If a resident does not go out, then someone who has been through the program comes in. Many different treatment modalities are used, including eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, motivational interviewing, psycho-education groups, a goals group, a parenting class with Ohio State, a fine arts class, pastoral support, the Ohio Alliance work training program to help residents prepare for and obtain jobs, and harm reduction teaching. They have a nurse practitioner and a psychiatric nurse available. A client's individualized treatment plan is based on the client's needs and not a set number of days. IOP and aftercare are available. Their success rate for completing residential is 65% for men and 66% for women. One year out, 56% of women and 52% of men report they are still sober. The national average is 41%.

Ravenwood Health: Director Vicki Clark said she is honored to be part of the continuum of care in Geauga. She then introduced Megan Duderstadt, a licensed professional clinical counselor with eight years of experience, five of which were spent at Ravenwood. Megan is the Medication Assisted Treatment Coordinator. Director Clark then introduced Pat Spadaro. She has been with Ravenwood Health for 25 years and is the Intensive Outpatient Coordinator.

Pat Spadaro: She congratulated everyone on reaching this wonderful milestone. She manages the intensive outpatient groups at Ravenwood. Each group is held for nine hours per week. She is also a clinical supervisor. She says recovery is not a straight line and compared it to the game Chutes and Ladders. In 2022, the agency added peer support workers and the Seeking Safety curriculum to IOP groups. She shared a story about a client who is receiving wraparound services after an inpatient stay and continues to improve with support from many individuals despite recent traumatic events in her life.

Megan Duderstadt talked about the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) program, which addresses opioids, alcohol, and stimulants. This treatment modality reverses brain changes that come with addiction. The medication blocks the opioid receptors, so a person cannot get high. It also helps reduce cravings for these substances. Ravenwood has been providing MAT since 2015. During the first phase, a client receives intensive outpatient services and weekly appointments with a medical provider, after which these services are tapered off. Case management is provided to address unmet needs that may impede sobriety, such as food and housing. Cognitive Behavior Therapy and Eye Movement Desensitization are used in the MAT program. She reported that 82% of individuals who completed the MAT program have maintained sobriety for the last year. She shared a story about an individual who has been sober

for three years, is completely off the medication, and is leading a fulfilling life. A person is most successful when the medication is tapered off during a two-year period. The most common stimulants they see are cocaine and amphetamines.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Programs & Policies

Ms. Johnson said there was nothing new to report.

B. Fiscal & Capital

Ms. Dykes reported that the committee last met on May 5th and reviewed a financial forecasting spreadsheet prepared by Jim Mausser. This will be shared with the Board at a later date.

VII. BOARD REVIEW AND ACTION ITEMS

A. Financial Reports

Mr. Mausser reported on the following for May:

- 86% of the Board's administrative budget for SFY2025 has been expended.
- Geauga County calendar year expenses through May were slightly over \$3.13 million.
- Auditor's Fund Balance at the end of May was just over \$2.78 million.
- Voucher Recap #707 for May: \$711,957.16.

He then reported on the following for June:

- 94.4% of the Board's administrative budget for SFY2025 was expended.
- Geauga County calendar year expenses through June were just over \$3.46 million.
- Auditor's Unencumbered Fund Balance for SFY2025 was slightly over \$2.82 million.
- Voucher Recap #708 for June: \$324,523.06.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business discussed.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Miscellaneous

Mr. Petruziello would like to get a digital sign to improve the visibility of the Board offices, inform the community about what the Board is doing, and advertise events, trainings, and other relevant information. Mr. Mausser said the funds would come from unencumbered reserves or the Community Education budget line, depending on the cost. Staff will solicit bids for this purpose. A draft self-evaluation form was sent to Board members. They were asked to review the document and send any questions or suggestions to Director Lakomiak. Once in its final form, Board members will complete the self-evaluation through Survey Monkey.

The Board's Culture of Quality certification review takes place next Monday and Tuesday. There are approximately 150 standards that must be met to achieve certification, demonstrating to the community and taxpayers that the Board complies with all requirements.

B. Slate of Officers for SFY2026

Ms. Varanese reported that the Nominating Committee was comprised of Kathy Johnson, Michael Petruziello, and herself. They met and proposed the following Slate of Officers for SFY2026: Chairman: Steven Oluic; Vice Chairman: Kathy Johnson; Treasurer: Reba Dykes; Secretary: James Lee Holden. The members discussed whether to vote on each position separately or as a whole. There were no nominations from the floor. Ms. Shumway moved to approve the SFY2026 Slate of Officers as submitted. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. **ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES-8; NAY-0; ABSTENTIONS-0. MOTION APPROVED.**

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr. Oluic said having speakers tonight is very insightful for the Board. There is some great work happening in the community, funding is being well spent, and we are making a difference.

Director Lakomiak introduced Alicia Cody, who serves as the Board's liaison with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. She is very grateful for the guidance received from Alicia, Director Cornyn, and her executive staff. Alicia commended the Board and partner agencies for the collaborative work being done and for helping meet the needs of the whole family.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Holden moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Teresa Slater
Administrative/Office Manager

Steven Oluic
Chairman of the Board

James Lee Holden
Secretary of the Board