

Minutes

Mental Health Advisory Council

Tuesday, November 18, 2025, 2:30 – 4:30 pm, GC 1105

Attendees:

Members:	☒ Elizabeth Handt*	☐ Tammi Dahlman*(E)
☒ Angela Lamarche*	☐ Jacquelyn Bergo*(E)	☐ Whitney McElhone*(E)
☒ Breanna Heintzelman*	☐ Kelli Douglas*(U)	(E)=Excused
☒ Brienne Elstad*	☒ Kirk Wulf*	(U)=Unexcused
☒ Carl Harju*	☒ Mikki Northuis*	(R)=Attended Remotely
☒ Cathy Elfstrand*	☐ Natalie McClory*(E)	*=MHAC Member (16 Members)
☒ Commissioner Kirby Moynagh*	☒ Roxanne DoBrava*	(Need minimum of 9 for quorum)
	☐ Shirwa Adan*(U)	

Others in attendance: Faith Rhode, Laura Duhn, Bethany Oberg

HHS Staff Attendees: Tarynn Anderson, Gretchen Backer, Diane Erkens, Keith Bennett, Jill Pooler

1. Welcome and Introductions

a. New Member:

i. Roxanne DoBrava introduction

1. Roxanne provided work experience/background with mental health, and has her own practice in Monticello

ii. Intro of all in attendance for new member

2. Approval of the Agenda (any additions)

- a. Cathy E. moved, Seconded by Brienne E. Motion carries.

3. Approval of MHAC Minutes from 09.09.2025

- a. Brienne E. moved, Seconded by Cathy E. Motion carries.

4. Subcommittee reports

a. Youth Coalition – Keith Bennett

- i. Discusses status of the Youth Coalition. The Youth Coalition would need to be voted upon to make an official subcommittee.

- ii. The coalition has progressed through its early implementation timeline, completing establishment and initial meetings (April–May 2025), asset mapping (June–July 2025), and qualitative and quantitative data collection (August–September 2025). Strategy selection and action plan development are underway for September–November 2025, followed by evaluation plan development in December, with ongoing coalition work beginning January 2026 and beyond. Youth engagement continues to strengthen, with five youth now participating from Delano, Buffalo, and Monticello, supported by a recruitment flyer and a per diem vendor process to ensure compensation.

With the approval of the coalition becoming an official subcommittee to the Mental Health Advisory Council, our processes of having youth members receive per diem for participating will be smoother and give youth members the opportunity to become voting members. The coalition's draft work plan, developed in coordination with MHAC and refined with MDH input, has been identified as too expansive for a single year, prompting efforts to narrow goals, align priorities using the "Importance and Changeability" framework, and consider focusing by population and geography. Upcoming activities include conducting community conversations and interviews, pending receipt of contact information and finalized interview questions.

- iii. Motion made to make an official committee by Brienne E., Seconded by Cathy C. Motion carries.
 - iv. Currently four very active Youth Coalition youth participants
 - 1. Keith will discuss with these youth to see if there is interest in attending MHAC
 - v. Diane stated, to change the bylaws, it must be presented in advance. Group could make motion to change the bylaws regarding changes for a youth to be attending. Commissioner Moynagh agrees that it would be a good change to the bylaws.
 - 1. Diane has the Bylaws wording noted and will have them sent out with changes before next meeting adding "youth member" to official voting structure.
5. Unmet Needs and Possible Solutions Discussion
- a. Outpatient providers are an ongoing need
 - b. Inpatient beds are a need
 - i. Diane updates group on Capital Mental Health, currently open and aim to have 144 beds opened by next year. Currently they have 16 beds, and they are opening more beds each month. TMS and ECT services. Geriatric Unit, Specialty Healthcare Unit, 18+ up for patients. Diane will reach out to Capital Health to come in and present at the next MHAC meeting.
 - ii. Capital Health is an affiliate of Fairview Health Services, which offers inpatient mental health and substance use disorder treatment services for adults age 18 and older and seniors age 65 and older.
 - iii. For more information:
 - 1. [Minnesota's Premier Acute Behavioral Hospital | Capitol Park](#)
 - c. Mikki N. asks about Mental Health services within the schools. Brienne H. discusses colocation providers that go into the schools. Still funding through private insurance by the students seeking/receiving services. Co-located services are happening in the schools
 - d. Food Insecurity – Kirk Wulf
 - i. Families can only use the Buffalo Food Shelf once a month. Kirk's wife started a meal kit "pantry" that she is doing with shelf stable items and have gone through 40+ kits at this time. Hoping to get this running on a bigger scale.
 - 1. Diane mentioned a grant application that is currently available and info was sent out to all local food shelves, mnmentalhealth.org

2. Bethany will send out the application through a “reply all” on MHAC email chain. Encourages the group to review and forward out to organizations that may qualify.

6. Action Items

- a. Must get dates for 2026 meetings finalized for MHAC
 - i. Carl mentions we are meeting quarterly at this point; this changed last year from meeting 6 times annually. Discussed January and February were skipped in 2025 due to potential for weather concerns.
 1. March, May, September and November 2025. The group will still be meeting the second Tuesday of 2026. The group wants to add an additional meeting in January.
 - a. Commissioner Moynagh suggested changing the May meeting to June for the potentially interested youth to attend.
 - b. Motion made to change to 5 meeting dates in 2026, Motion made by Carl H., seconded by Angela L. Motion carries.
 - i. MHAC will meet:
 1. January 13, March 10, June 9, September 8, and November 10.
- b. Housing stabilization services – Carl H.
 - i. Jill P. discusses current happenings in housing stabilization services within the state. Program ended at the end of October due to fraud that had been taking place. This does not affect Housing Support.

7. Information Sharing

- a. NADD Conference – Carl H. attended conference, multi day conference that was in Minneapolis this year. Link Center presentation really stood out to Carl. Carl has a Power Point if anyone is interested in viewing. Presentation was geared towards how we can treat the whole individual and not individual pieces of a person’s health. Mentions calling 988 and how calls are handled with support being offered.
 - i. Brienne H. mentions a 988 commercial aired during a nationally televised football game
 - ii. Angela L. mentions a song that talks about 988 and helping break down the stigma to seeking help/services.
- b. CAMHI – Bethany Oberg
 - i. Bethany will reply all to the group with some attachments for people to review
 1. Looking for community advocates with CAMHI, individuals with a SPMI or a family member with lived experience. 6 meetings a year, meetings are offered as hybrid. Stipends are available to those who attend, and mileage is available for those who attend in person. Bethany will reply to the group and attach these fliers for the group to review.
 - ii. Carl asks about prior CAMHI all day training to see how it went. Bethany said about 100 people were in attendance. Hoping to do another all-day training course in 2026. Looking to make this a regular event so long as funding remains available. Carl mentions many staff of his attended and had high praises for this training.
- c. Buffalo Strong Coalition – Keith Bennett

- i. The coalition has completed its early milestones, including establishing the group, conducting asset mapping, and collecting qualitative and quantitative data, and is now finalizing strategy selection and action plan development, with the evaluation plan scheduled for completion by December 2025 and the full workplan launching in January 2026. The draft workplan has been reviewed and approved. Planning is underway for a series of five community data panels representing the workforce, religious, community groups, first responders, and professional support sectors. The first panel, focused on Professional Support, is scheduled for December 10 at noon at the Wright County Government Center, with 3–5 participants to be confirmed. Clear goals for the discussion will be set, and refreshments will be arranged. Lastly, out of all the coalitions under the suicide prevention grant, we are the only coalition focusing on middle-aged men in the state.

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Cathy E., seconded by Angela L. Motion carries.

Next meeting will be January 13, 2026.