

Mesabi Behavioral Health Network

Meeting Minutes

DATE: August 3, 2026

TIME: 10:00 – 11:30 AM

Present: Allison Polacec, McCoy Salgy, Anna Grace, Cindy Kvilvang, Angie Briski, Sheila Piippo, Cassandra Kotnik, Lauren Pipkin, Cassie Liubakka, Beth Elstad, Brandie Webb, Laura Maxwell, Jennifer Elmberg, Angela Ritacco, Bernadette Pospeck, Cassie McDowell, Jennifer Rich, Cassandra Hainey, Aubrie Hoover, Kyra Kjeldahl, Leah Masucci, and Emily Barto.

Facilitator: Cassandra Hainey

Recorder: Aubrie Hoover

[State Opioid Response Services RFP](#) seeking proposals through August 10th.

Agency Updates

Align North

- The next monthly Mental Health Provider Networking event will be held on August 19th from 10:00-12:00 at the Align North building. Everyone is welcome.
- Align North has a couple of providers with immediate openings for telehealth and in-person services.

Range Mental Health Center

- Two new providers are expected to begin at the end of the month and will offer both telehealth and in-person services.

Kind Mind

- A new provider has immediate openings for telehealth services.

Recovery Alliance Duluth

- Recovery Alliance Duluth is looking to expand services for people impacted by the criminal justice system and plans to apply for the State Opioid Response Services RFP.
- Please reach out to Beth Elstad, at beth.e@recoveryallianceduluth.org, if you would like to connect. She would like to become more familiar with MBHN members and organizations.

Northern Reflections Counseling

- The past several months they have been focused on moving their Virginia office to the Trenti Law Office building; they are officially in their new space. The Eveleth location remains the same.

Local Advisory Council

- The Local Advisory Council will resume meeting in August and will be focusing on what their priorities will be for the year.

NAMI Iron Range

- The NAMI Minnesota State Conference will be held November 6th at The Park Event Center in Waite Park. A call for speaker proposals is open, [NAMI Minnesota 2026 State Conference Speaker Proposal Form](#)
- NAMI Iron Range will participate in National Night Out events in Hibbing and Virginia.
- Cherry High School students will host a calm corner at the St. Louis County Fair.

Upcoming events

National Night Out (NNO)

- Taking place in Eveleth, Virginia, Mt. Iron, and Hibbing.
- Members who are unable to attend NNO in Virginia, but would like their brochures displayed, reach out to Cassandra Hainey because she can display them at the MBHN table.

6th Annual Range Iron Pride Festival

- A Pride event will be held at the Iron Trail Motors Event Center from 10:00–4:00 on Saturday. More information can be found here, [RANGE IRON PRIDE FESTIVAL](#)

Recovery Alliance Duluth

- They have several social connection events taking place throughout August and into September. See [RAD Social Connection Event Flyers](#).

Network Business:

Better Together Behavioral Health Network

Beacon Clubhouse

- Beacon Clubhouse will share a job posting for a Clubhouse Manager. The position is currently listed as 0.5 FTE, but the Clubhouse is willing to work with network agencies on a job-sharing or dual-role pilot. The job posting will be included with the meeting minutes. Members are encouraged to share it throughout their networks.

Behavioral Health Pipeline

The Behavioral Health Workforce Pipeline will participate in the Career and Technical Education Advisory Council strategic planning session on August 20.

The project is staying connected with Minnesota North College and its program development work related to a hybrid four-year social work degree.

Grant Updates

- Range Transitional Housing signed a grant award with the Minnesota Cannabis Management Department. The next step is to develop a contract with BTBHN for contracted services under the grant.
- Waiting to hear back on the HRSA grant application that was submitted in early July.

Mesabi Behavioral Health Network

Governance Board

- The Policy Committee workplan and charter were approved.
- Public-facing materials will be added to the MBHN website, including approved policies and meeting minutes. [MBHN Meetings & Policies](#)
- Reviewed the Conflict-of-Interest Policy, Electronic Voting Policy, and the Letters of Support procedure during the meeting.

Workgroup Updates

Education Workgroup

- The workgroup continues developing the Mental Health Hacks. The materials are being vetted with youth and updated based on their feedback. The workgroup hopes to present the updated Mental Health Hacks to the Governance Board for approval in September.

Social Connection Workgroup

- The workgroup continues developing the executive summary.
- Communities That Care Coordinator joined the last meeting to share what they are working on and discuss potential connections with MBHN.
- Hello Range was identified as a resource to explore a youth social connection event page just for youth. Anyone can upload their events on the events page, they get vetted by staff before they are made public. [Events - Discover the Range](#)

Communication Workgroup

- The workgroup did not meet in July, but they continue to develop the MBHN welcome packet.
- The podcast set and furniture were put up last week and finishing touches will take place this week with a plan to record the podcast intro and first episode on August 7th.

The next MBHN monthly meeting is on **September 14, 2026, 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM.**