

Mesabi Behavioral Health Network

Meeting Minutes

DATE: July 6, 2026

TIME: 10:00 – 11:30 AM

Present: Marlise Riffel, Laura Maxwell, Brandie Webb, Sheila Piippo, Cassandra Kotnik, Cassie McDowell, Cassandra Hainey, Aubrie Hoover, Leah Masucci, Kelly Sather, Cindy Kvilvang, Shireen Lee, Angela Ritacco, Shawna Suomi, Salgy McCoy, Eli Corbin, Cassie Liubakka, Jennifer Rich, and Nicole Lind.

Facilitator: Cassandra Hainey

Recorder: Aubrie Hoover

Agency Updates

Family Services Collaborative

- Thanked everyone who participated in Youth Mental Health Night. Family survey feedback was very positive and over 670 people participated in the event, not including all the vendors.

Range Mental Health Center

- They are accepting referrals for co-ed DBT groups which are available in-person and telehealth. The women's group is only available in-person. They are looking to hire additional therapists.

NAMI Iron Range

- They have been meeting to set priorities for the next several months. Cherry High School students will be hosting a calm corner at the St. Louis County Fair; intended to be a calm space for people to step away from all the stimulus if needed.
- Shireen Lee will be going through the next family support group training.

St. Louis County

- The Suicide Prevention Coalition is running a survey targeting males ages 35–44 to reduce stigma and guide education. If you have clients, friends, or family members that are a part of the target audience, please share the survey with them.
- If anyone hasn't gotten a free yard sign from our Suicide Prevention Coalition and would like one, here is the [LINK](#) to request one.

Peace of My Mind Project

- Community partners came together to bring the Peace of My Mind Project to our area. This creates space for individuals to share their recovery stories. See attached flyer for dates and locations.

Northland Counseling

- They are hiring a full-time Peer Support Worker in Hibbing. Please share with anyone with lived experience who needs more support.

Upcoming Events

2026 Community Steps Resource Carnival Schedule

- Wednesday, August 19 | 3:00–8:00 PM
- Thursday, August 20 | 3:00–8:00 PM
- Saturday, August 22 | 10:00 AM–2:00 PM
- Monday, August 24 | 3:00–8:00 PM
Quiet Steps – A sensory-friendly and trauma-sensitive event designed to provide a calmer, more supportive experience for youth and families.
- Wednesday, August 26 | 3:00–8:00 PM

National Night Out on Tuesday, August 4th. It will be held in Olcott Park in Virginia from 4pm-7pm. If there are any organizations that would like to have a booth at the event, please reach out to Chad Nickila at nickilac@virginiapd.com

AEOA 4th Annual Block Party Thursday July 23rd from 4:00-7:00 at AEOA (702 3rd Ave South, Virginia). Range Mental Health Center

- They are offering DBT Group, both a Women's Group and a Co-ed Group. Please send any interested referrals to RMHC. They would like participants to already be working with a therapist (doesn't need to be a therapist at RMHC); but this isn't a requirement.

Network Business:

Better Together Behavioral Health Network

Beacon Clubhouse

- Beacon Clubhouse has been operating for two months. New hours are Monday–Wednesday, 7:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. This increases operating time by 1 hour while also allowing the Clubhouse Manager to have time to complete admin tasks. There are approximately 30 members with 15 of them actively participating. Several MBHN members have volunteered to help at the clubhouse or offer trainings, Jennifer Rich is hosting a walking group. If you would like to offer a training or host an activity at the clubhouse, please reach out to Arthur Schoonmaker at Arthur.Schoonmaker@outlook.com.
- More information can be found on the [WEBSITE](#). They also have a Facebook page where they actively share clubhouse updates and activities.

Behavioral Health Pipeline

- A proposal was submitted to IRRR to support the development of the pipeline.
- A grant writing team is working on a HRSA application that is due July 8th. The focus of the grant is substance use but there is a workforce component built into the application. Additionally, the grant will support a Peer Recovery Specialist in an inpatient setting while working with MN North to expand certification programs such as Community Health Workers.

Mesabi Behavioral Health Network

Governance Board

- Approved the strategic plan and workplan.
- Shared MBHN flyers and tabled at Youth Mental Health Day. Working on more formal plans for how to have the MBHN show up in the community more such as future tabling events.
- Applied to present at the St. Louis County Health & Human Services Conference. The presentation proposal was accepted. They will plan a panel of network members to present the work of the network.
- Brandie Webb transitioning St. Louis County representative role to Laura Greensmith in August.
- The policy committee, made up of Cassandra Hainey, Jennifer Elmberg, and Kelly Sather, is working on drafts of a Conflict-of-Interest policy, Letters of Support procedures, and an annual policy review. They are working on committee communication such as a shared Teams channel for the workgroups to use while discussing posting meeting minutes on the website.

Workgroup Updates

Education Workgroup

- Working on the Hallway Toolkit and mental health hack one-pagers. At Youth Mental Health Night youth provide feedback on topics they would like to see included in the toolkit.
- The Social Connection Subcommittee is working on the Executive Summary of the Youth Social Connection Survey.

Communication Workgroup

- Working with the Education Workgroup on the mental health hacks. They are working on an MBHN welcome pack to provide new members.
- Podcast Development: all the equipment has arrived and set up will begin after the HRSA grant is submitted.

Transportation

- Transportation survey closed and the ABHI will be meeting to review survey results. This is a regional approach for 6 counties and 3 Tribes. They are contracting with Rural Pathways who will be writing grants to support the transportation work.

The next MBHN monthly meeting is on **August 3, 2026, 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM.**