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MINUTES of May 11, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Elizabeth (Liz) Atwell, Gretchen Behimer, Jara Bonner, Rebecca Cochran-Kasson, Joe Ellison, Jeff Higgins, Patty Lawrence, Joy Lytle, Nathan O’Der, Laura Perez (Zoom)

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Mark Johnson, Tony Rees

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS EXCUSED: Raymond Bailey, Richard Chaney

GUESTS PRESENT: Debbie Davidson, Jen Dorschug, Alicia Fine, Beth McManus, Laura Stith, Anne Wise

STAFF PRESENT: Marcie Keith, Cindy Knoblauch, Denny Moell, Erica Pursley, Lee Ann Watson

1. Call to Order: The May 11, 2026, Board of Directors’ meeting was conducted in person and virtually at 7:00 pm at 4357 Ferguson Drive, Suite 230, Cincinnati, Ohio 45245. Chairperson Gretchen Behimer welcomed the attendees and called the meeting to order.
2. Approval of the Agenda: A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the Agenda for the May 11, 2026 Board of Directors’ meeting with the addition of Discussion Item #4, “Board Mandated Services”. (Motion-Jara Bonner, second-Rebecca Cochran-Kasson).
3. Approval of the Minutes: A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the minutes from the April 13, 2026 Board of Directors’ meeting. (Motion-Nathan O’Der, second-Jara Bonner).
4. Training: Child Focus: Crisis Services: Laura Stith gave a brief history of the Crisis Services provided by Child Focus as well as background information on the current Director of Crisis Services, Anne Wise. Anne presented a PowerPoint slideshow on Crisis Services that included the various types of services as follows:
 - Crisis Hotline
 - Adult Mobile Crisis
 - Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS)
 - Clermont County Jail Linkage
 - Handle with Care
 - Behavioral Health Urgent Care Mount Orab
5. Executive Director and Staff Reports: Executive Director Lee Ann Watson highlighted portions of her report. Lee Ann’s highlights included:

- New Housing Ohio (NHO) is confirmed to be receiving the long awaited \$1.5 million in OFHA funding. Construction on the Felicity residential facility will begin in fall of 2026.
- The Ohio Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) is changing the way it collects financial reporting from the Boards. DBH will now be requiring information on the number of clients served as well as some outcome-related elements. The new web-based reporting will replace the old “040” report and will be due quarterly.
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has restricted the use of grant funding for some harm reduction items.
- The construction of the Board’s Crisis Receiving Center is on schedule and under budget.

Associate Director Denny Moell said that he spent the week of April 20th conducting program audits for Child Focus, Clermont Recovery Center, and Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health. The audits reviewed clients for fiscal year 2025 (FY25) with the highest utilization of Board funding for treatment services, and a selection of random clients. Denny also reviewed the charts of clients receiving School Based Mental Health (SBMH) services, and Medication Assisted Treatment Services (MAT). There were no significant findings and no ineligible billings. All three (3) of the agencies were all very helpful during the audits.

Community Engagement Manager Marcie Keith said that the community forum “Connecting the Dots”, a community conversation about the impact of mental health and substance use on Clermont County and the plan to address it, took place on May 1. Marcie said that it was very well attended, and post event feedback has all been very positive. Marcie also reminded the Board of the mental health park events every Tuesday in May.

6. Committee Reports:
NONE

7. Unfinished Business:

A. Board Succession Planning: Committee Chair Nathan O’Der said that he would still like for Board members to submit names of potential Board members to fill future Board seats. Three (3) Board members have submitted already submitted names. The Succession Planning Committee plans to have a meeting at the end of May.

B. Strategic Plan Work Group: Lee Ann Watson will be sending out some possible dates and times for the first Strategic Plan Work Group meeting to the Board members who are interested in participating in developing the FY27 Strategic Plan. Interested members are Patty Lawrence, Nathan O’Der, and Gretchen Behimer.

8. Agency Directors’ Reports: Laura Stith said that Child Focus’ report stands. Laura added that in response to the Board’ request of making the monthly reports more understandable, she has added an key for acronyms to her report.

Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services’ (GCB) report stands. Jen Dorschug added that both GCB and its subsidiary, Clermont Recovery Center (CRC), received very positive feedback following the recent CARF survey, and will receive the full three (3)-year national accreditation. Jen said that the number of clients served by GCB/CRC are steadily rising across all

programming. GCB is also in the process of its “Seven Challenges” training. Lastly, Jen said that the Ohio Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) will be at GCB on May 12, 2026 for the System of Care Grant site visit.

Hope Community Center’s report stands.

NAMI of Southwest Ohio’s report stands.

9. New Business:

A. Action Items

1. Resolution Opposing the Ballot Initiative for the Elimination of Property Taxes in Ohio: A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to table the Resolution as presented based on advice received from the County Prosecutor’s Office. (Motion-Rebecca Cochran-Kasson, second-Joe Ellison).
2. Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) Agreement for Adult Residential Care with Alternative Living Solutions, Inc. for Mellon Ridge and Peebles Place Care Centers: A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the FY27 Agreement with Alternative Living Solutions as presented and to authorize the Executive Director to sign the Agreement on behalf of the Board. (Motion- Rebecca Cochran-Kasson, second-Nathan O’Der).
3. FY27 Agreement with Beckett Springs for Inpatient Psychiatric Services: A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the FY27 Agreement with Beckett Springs as presented and to authorize the Executive Director to sign the Agreement on behalf of the Board. (Motion-Jara Bonner, second-Rebecca Cochran-Kasson).
4. FY27 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Template with the Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities (CCDD) for Project Partners: A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the FY27 MOU with CCDD as presented and to authorize the Executive Director to sign the MOU as needed on behalf of the Board. (Motion-Nathan O’Der, second-Rebecca Cochran-Kasson).
5. FY27 Agreement with Cincinnati Children’s Hospital for Psychiatric Inpatient Services for Children/Adolescents: A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the FY27 Agreement with Cincinnati Children’s Hospital as presented and to authorize the Executive Director to sign the Agreement on behalf of the Board. (Motion-Jeff Higgins, second-Jara Bonner).
6. FY27 Agreement with Sparks Psychological Services for Evaluation and Testimonial Services for Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Probate Clients: A motion was made, and unanimously approved, to approve the FY27 Agreement with Sparks Psychological Services as presented and to authorize the Executive Director to sign the Agreement on behalf of the Board. (Motion-Nathan O’Der, second-Jeff Higgins).

B. Discussion Items:

1. Review of Current Strategic Plan Goals: Lee Ann Watson reviewed the five (5) “key result Areas” of the FY23-26 Strategic Plan:
 - Increased Community Awareness of the Board’s Role
 - Formal Framework for Financial Decision Making
 - Comprehensive Continuum of Care
 - Community Education
 - Strong Board Operations and Board of Directors’ LeadershipLee Ann said the FY27 Strategic Plan Work Group will do a deep dive into those key goal areas to complete the next Strategic Plan.

2. Restructuring of Prevention Coalitions: Marcie Keith coordinated the community forum “Connecting the Dots” to give community partners the opportunity to learn about the new prevention structure that will allow for a more unified focus. Under the new organizational model, the existing coalitions will become work groups, and report to a Steering Committee that is supported by the Mental Health and Recovery Board. Larger meetings for all community partners will be held quarterly and chaired by the Clermont County Public Health Department as part of their already existing Partnership meetings. Work groups will exist to address the following areas: addiction, youth mental health, suicide prevention, and early childhood prevention. The restructuring will allow for increased efficiencies and reduce any information-sharing redundancies. The new name will be the Prevention Alliance.

3. Review of Third Quarter School Based Mental Health Outcomes: Lee Ann Watson reviewed the FY26 third quarter Child Focus school-based mental health (SBMH) services outcomes. Most of the outcomes are at or above goal percentages. Overall, school districts, school-based providers, and parents are very satisfied with the FY26 School-Based Mental Health Services Redesign. The Board and Child Focus are gearing up to enter FY27 SBMH contracts with the school districts.

4. Board Mandated Services: Lee Ann Watson wanted to make a correction to a previous philosophy that the Board is not mandated to provide children’s services as stated on the Board’s Priority Grid. In reality, the Ohio Revised Code states that DBH is required to ensure access to services for all residents, which includes youth. Lee Ann said the Priority Grid will be corrected, with the understanding that access to children’s mental health services are state mandated, but the type of services provided are not specified.

10. Announcements/Comments from Public Attendees: There were no announcements or comments from public attendees at the May 11, 2026 Board of Directors’ meeting.

11. Adjournment: There being no further business, a motion was made, and unanimously approved, to adjourn the May 11, 2026 Board of Directors’ meeting. (Motion-Jeff Higgins, second-Liz Atwell).

G Behimer

Gretchen Behimer, Chairperson

Lee Ann Watson

Lee Ann Watson, Executive Director