

NORTHWESTERN COUNSELING & SUPPORT SERVICES
107 FISHER POND ROAD
ST. ALBANS VT 05478

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 4, 2025

Present: Jim McMillian, Angela Poirier, Elaine Carpenter, Meg Marshall, Jason Minor, Ken Gagne, Casey Toof, Anjanette Watson, Dan Thompson, David Hutchinson

Excused: Andrea Patrick-Baudet, David McCallum,

Staff: Todd Bauman, Derek Hoy, Belinda Bessette, Samantha Thomas, Kim McClellan, Stacey Remillard, April Matheau, Danielle Roberts, Emily Richards

Minutes received and meeting called to order by Angela Poirier at 6:01pm.

Motion was made to approve the May minutes as presented by Dan Thompson. Second by Jason Minor. All in Favor

Executive Director / Financial Report

- FY26 Budget Review - The team has been working very hard to get this finished. Derek sent the budget packet to the full board earlier this week for review. We are currently ahead of where we were last year in the budget planning process. We are planning on submitting a \$800,000 loss in the upcoming fiscal year. We have one year to become a CCBHC and unlike the other agency who are on that timeline we do not have a planning grant which was about 1 million dollars, this is where our loss is coming from. The state is aware this is where the loss is coming from and is in support of it. Part of the loss is the need for CCBHC is the ability to provide substance use disorder (SUD) supports. Howard Center is the preferred provider in our community, so we are working with them, but we have budgeted for a full staff to provide these services as we work through the process with Howard Center. The other we need to bolster is our administrative teams and they have been added to the budget.
- We are closed through the month of March and have projections through the end of the year. We are looking at a 2-million-dollar gain. We revived the balance sheet, Derek and his team feel we are in a very good financial position. We stand at about 89 days cash including the capital reserve account.
- The question was asked – Will we be fully refunded for the PCB remediation? We are one of the four schools who will be receiving funds we just are not sure what percentage will be given to us. We have the consultant who has done the extra testing and is creating an action plan that we will submit to the state for approval. Once that is done he will help us put bids out to have the work done, this will give us actual numbers so we can have a solid plan to move forward with. The Question was asked – With the increased need for data and data analysis, are we working on moving the process forward with new systems that work together to pull everything together and hiring new staff? We currently piece data together, we are looking into platforms that can help us not to do that. We will be hiring staff to help with the data needs. Anjanette feels this would be a good place for the state

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to come together and create something that is used by everyone. She uses a tool called spotfire. She would also love updates on this process as it moves forward.

- The Executive committee made a motion to recommend the full approve the budget as presented.

Motion made to adopt the FY26 budget as presented made by Dan Thompson. Ken Gagne Second. All in Favor

Motion made to move to executive session made by Ken Gagne. Jim McMillian Second. All in Favor.

Motion made to exit executive sessions made by Ken Gagne. Jason Minor Second. All in Favor.

Motion made to approve the FY25 Wage Action Bonus as discussed in executive session made by Jason Minor. Ken Gagne Second. All in Favor.

Motion made to approve the FY26 COLA as discussed in executive session made by Jason Minor. Ken Gagne Second. All in Favor.

Motion made to approve the FY26 discretionary wage action as discussed in executive session made by Jason Minor. Ken Gagne Second. All in Favor.

Executive Committee Report

- During our meeting we talked about the budget and the wage actions in depth and agree that the team here is doing a great job.
- Angela wanted to thank and recognize Jason for the amazing job he did at the interview for the 988 accreditation they sat on together. His ability to talk about the things NCSS is doing is amazing. She would also like to thank Trisha Ketchum and Sarah Kenny for the work that went into this.
- We discussed our July and August meeting and have decided we will have a virtual executive committee meeting but will cancel the full board meetings.

Community Mental Health Report

- Belinda also wanted to talk about the 988-accreditation team, it was very nice to hear the accreditation team talk about what a special thing we have going here.
- She would like to call attention to the write-up in the board report about the celebration of the arts which was last month. It was a full and very enjoyable day.
- We had the ribbon cutting for the new Access Center last week. The staff are so proud of the building and the programing that will be offered. The staff are planning an open house that all staff will be invited to.

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- We had an incident today that involved staff and a very acute client, it is and was a very tough situation but she wanted to say how proud of her team she is and knowledge the hard work they are doing.
- The 2nd day of our Connect training which is a postvention training done by a national trainer is coming up.

Nursing Report

- April wanted to talk about how proud of her team she is, the acuity of clients has made it very busy. We are working hard on to get intakes finished as quickly as possible. We are also working hard to get the urgent and same day appointments handled and it seems to be going well.
- We have had a lot of movement within the residential programs, this includes the nursing team, so we have been busy with that as well.

Community Relations Report

- As Danielle is wrapping up all the things in May she has reflected on them and decided that the theme has been community partnerships. This morning, we had the community partnership meeting, twice a year we bring our legislative folks to this meeting. One thing that we talked about was how they feel Franklin County is the role model when folks talk about community partnership. Danielle also had the Franklin County development meeting today and it was good to hear folks talk about what we can accomplish when we all work together. It is nice to get praised for our collaboration.
- There was the In Their Shoes event which happened in May. This is a walk that starts in Taylor Park, and folks walk to the different locations in the community where resources can be found. One thing that stuck out was how far it is for folks to walk to get services. Hoping to make the event bigger and better in years to come. We are hoping to include the Access center as a stop on the walk next year.
- Danielle wanted to talk about how amazing the Autism Walk was despite the rain. The community partners that were present at this were great. Just shy of 400 people were there. The team that worked on pulling this together did a great job.
- June is Men's Mental Health month, and with June Dairy days we have had all our advertising focus on farmers, and men.
- Anjantte suggested we look into providing "buddy/friendship benches" it helps break down stigma. It helps us meet people where they are at. This is a process that can help guide folks who need support into the places they can get them. This is a great idea and we will look into them.

Human Resources Report

- Stacey wanted to recognize how busy personally and professionally she has been, she had a new baby added to her family and she can't get enough of him!
- She has spent a of time on the wages to get us set up for all the votes we had earlier.

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- St. Albans Pride event is happening this weekend. If anyone would like to come Stacey welcomes everyone. The parade starts at 10am.
- We just had the captive meeting, and it really has been the best decision for us. It has helped us finically. We have been working on a few things like our prescription cost.
- The question was asked - If we needed to add any funds to this for a “rainy day fund”? Stacey doesn’t think so we think through this process well.
- One area we would like to work on this coming year is our workers’ comp claims. We will be bringing this topic to the Leadership offsite; the goal would be to come up with some different ways we can help bring this number down.

Quality and Risk Management Report

- There will be a lot of changes coming to the operations team and programs and we will keep the board update as they happen.
- We have our provider agreement being worked on right now, and we will not being going live with that on 7/1.
- There are six manuals for how programing works, two are brand new to us. So, her teams are working to make sure those are current and available to staff. Kim wanted to recognize her teams for all the work that is going into this process.

Other Business

- Ken wanted to let the board know he might have some things coming up in the future and will talk to Todd when these things happen.

Motion made to adjourn by David Hutchinson. Seconded by Ken Gagne. All in Favor.

Meeting adjourn at 7:34 pm

Minutes recorded by: Emily Richards