

MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY BOARD OF ASHLAND COUNTY
Board Meeting Minutes
May 20, 2025

PRESENT:

Mary Deeter	David Ross, Executive Director
Tom Gaus	Patty Walton, Associate Director
Sara Battison	Sandy Hoffman, Community Relations Coordinator
Connie Butler	Ashley Ackerman, Director of Programs, Training, & Education
Katie Wright	
Chad Brown	
Ben Key	
Nancy Udolph	
Cindy Kyser	
Ed Kleper	

ABSENT:

Andrew Kinney
Shari Shafer*
Dennis Dyer*
*Provided notice

GUESTS:

Jerry Strausbaugh, Applesseed, and staff
Rick Ford, ACCADA, and staff
Sheryl Villegas, CCS, and staff

I.

CALL TO ORDER

Mary Deeter, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. in the Martha Jordan room, 1605 Co. Rd. 1095, Ashland.

Mary thanked everyone for their attendance; she explained that we will vote to approve each application after it is presented tonight. Any questions not answered tonight can be tabled until next week for clarification. She pointed out that the agencies realize the flat funding budget for FY2026.

II.

ROLL CALL

Secretary Katie Wright took the roll call and noted that a quorum was present.

III.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Agency Application Review (Applesseed)

David Ross, Executive Director, indicated that all the Board members have been through the application review process. He pointed out that the agencies have worked hard to prepare the proposals and have worked well with staff. The agencies anticipate flat funding, and SOR dollars are likely to end this September, which was helpful as they prepared their applications. Everyone realizes that the formula funding is still a huge unknown. David reviewed the programmatic summary for Applesseed, indicating Board staff support continued funding for proposed core treatment and Carve-out Programs. He noted that of all the agencies, Applesseed has excelled in securing additional funding, which is not from the Board. We have encouraged all the agencies to look for other funding sources.

David explained that Applesseed has used the Columbus Circle house for respite in the past. The Board staff and Applesseed propose utilizing the house for transitional youth housing, known as the TAY Program, which is a slight variation; it will avoid costs associated with a

separate lease. Applesseed has received a three-year OneOhio grant to support jail-based services totaling \$174,953. Applesseed will partner with The Counseling Center out of Wayne County for Mobile Response Stabilization Services (MRSS) in Ashland beginning in July.

In reviewing the fiscal portion of their application, Patty explained that there are not many changes from last year. Each agency is aware that funding will remain flat. She reviewed the differences from last year, which include the Juvenile Court Family Advocate Program of \$40,000, and IAY Rental savings of \$7,800

Applesseed Proposal Presentation-Jerry Strausbaugh, Applesseed Director, introduced his Board Members, Board Chair, Linda Carver, and Staff. Jerry has been at Applesseed since 2005, focusing on positive things Applesseed can do, like maintaining partnerships, hiring good people, and serving the community to the best of their ability. Jerry distributed educational materials to remind everyone that as they look at them to think about their commitment to the community and the services they provide. He reviewed some of their programming, like the art therapy program, the equine program involving youth, and the peer support program. He indicated that Applesseed has a new payroll system and plans to get a new AI program to help clinicians provide quality notes and be more efficient. Lastly, he voiced Applesseed's commitment to trauma-informed care, Medication Optimization, and Person-Centered Care.

Applesseed question and answer session

The Board asked if Applesseed foresees any cuts to the School Liaison Program. Jerry indicated that the agency is making things work with the resources it has. He talked about some changes in the liaison program, as one liaison is working with ACCA.

Jerry indicated that the final details for the MRSS program are still being finalized. He believes the 988 and local crisis lines will work together.

The Board asked if Applesseed has concerns about Medicaid cuts. Jerry explained that they are focused on the work requirements, which he doesn't think will affect us. Board Chair Mary Deeter noted that those who are not working and can work will be affected.

RESOLUTION: Sara Battison made a motion to recommend approval of the FY2026 Applesseed Application with total projected MHRB funding of \$2,115,849.03

25-05-01 Cindy Kyser seconded the motion. The motion carried.

B. Agency Application Review (ACCADA)

David indicated there are not a lot of changes in the ACCADA application, the OneOhio grant they received is for three years to fund their Quick Response Team (QRT) to visit someone who has had a recent overdose, to get them resources and services. The Attorney General's Office granted ACCADA some additional dollars to work in collaboration with the Board and the Sheriff's Department to employ a full-time case manager at the jail. David explained that ACCADA is not proposing new services/programs. They are a very small agency, and one thing they have started to do is discuss a potential merger with Catholic Charities Services. Outpatient services have dropped significantly due to the new trend of meth and fentanyl, which has put the agency in financial difficulty, due to this ACCADA will likely dip into their reserves this year. Therefore, board staff support ACCADA's decision to explore the possibility of merging with CCS, as we want to preserve some of the services ACCADA provides, and believe the strengths of both organizations would complement one another. A merger is attractive to CCS; however, we might not know anything until 2026.

Patty reviewed the differences in ACCADA's proposed budget, noting increases in prevention services of \$8,978.35 and \$2,202.15 for the jail program. She noted staff recommends

decreasing treatment services by \$22,300 and \$4,276.92 in the recovery housing grant. There is no change in MAT, Detox, and residential dollars. There is a decrease of \$92,560.56 in SORS media, and lastly, there is the new jail position, which is an increase from the Attorney General Grant.

ACCADA Proposal Presentation—Rick Ford, ACCADA Director, introduced his staff and board members and expressed appreciation for the Board's support and guidance over the years. This is ACCADA's 40th year in existence, and Mary Jo Jancher has been at ACCADA for 40 years. Rick thanked Mary Jo for her contributions to ACCADA and Dennis Dyer, the prior ACCADA Director, for his impact on the community over the years and for growing ACCADA.

Rick indicated there are no changes to programs and explained that, due to outpatient services being down, they have been implementing things to offset the change in substance use trends. Rick is very mindful of services and financial implications. ACCADA has added a fourth prevention person as they see more youth in the schools. A review of the recovery houses was done with recommendations for increasing residency; currently, the men's house is full, and the women's is three-quarters full. Referrals come from the Ashland County Jail. Also, a new jail position will be contracting with ACCADA for services for one year. ACCADA received the OneOhio grant dollars for post-overdose visits; Rick will be meeting with the Chief of Police in Loudonville to partner with them and Ashland. Lastly, he spoke about ACCADA's C.A.R.E. Model, which is a culture that aligns well with the three legs philosophy, and with recovery and resilience, to empower people based on their choices and needs, and gives options. It comes down to respecting one another, which means we show compassion for our staff, ourselves, and clients. Rick gave some examples of this.

ACCADA question and answer session

The Board asked Rick to speak about the Merger with CCS. Rick explained that discussions with CCS continue and look positive. He has a meeting scheduled with Sheryl regarding staffing.

RESOLUTION: 25-05-02

**A motion was made by Ed Kieper to recommend approval of the FY2026 ACCADA Application with total projected MHRB funding of \$484,480.83.
Connie Butler seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

C. Agency Application Review/Catholic Charities Services – Diocese of Cleveland - CCS)

David reviewed the programmatic summary for CCS, noting the grant-based Regional Early Childhood program will likely remain regional. CCS did not request any new programs but did request to combine the resiliency program into the mentoring program, which Board staff supports. They also propose to grow the Pathways Peer Recovery Program with Medicaid as the primary/funding source, which Board staff recommend due to our current funding climate. The Diocese remains committed to the Ashland site and is in talks with ACCADA for a merger.

Patty provided the fiscal review, pointing out the increase of \$5,242 for the mentoring program due to combining the resiliency program. SORS dollars will likely end 9/30/25, reflecting the decrease of \$57,180. CCS subsidy totals \$30,457.

CCS Proposal Presentation—Sheryl Villegas, CCS Director, indicated she has three financial staff members joining us. She stated the partnership with the Board is a privilege and honor for CCS, and she appreciates the hard work of the Board staff. She provided a PowerPoint presentation, which showed that CCS was founded in 1912 to serve the needs of people residing in 8 counties of the Diocese. CCS offers integrated and comprehensive care to a wide range of individuals. Our local CCS is in the Professional Building owned by the Board, where

they have three offices and it is a great place for them due to their partnership with the Ashland County Probation Office, which is also in the building. There have been some changes at CCS due to a new CEO/President, Jim Mullen. She then reviewed her staff and some of the staffing changes. They try to maximize services between the counties with the staff they have. Diversifying revenue streams is an ongoing challenge.

Sheryl explained that they plan to expand the Pathways Peer Support Program with Medicaid. She indicated that the Golden Centers are growing, as is the Pen Pal Program; there are currently 450 students involved in the Pen Pal Program from Ashland, Hillsdale, and Loudonville, S.D.

Examples of creative things that were done with SOR dollars include: iHeart Audio, Trainings for staff, ACT Mentoring group activities, Additional Pathways activities, and SUD Prevention Group etc. These things were done instead of hiring new staff with the dollars, as we knew the grant would go away.

RESOLUTION: A motion was made by Connie Butler to recommend approval of the FY2026 26-05-03 CCS Application with total projected MHRB funding of \$425,657.00

Cindy Kyser seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mary reminded everyone that the Board meets again next week (May 27), and staff will propose the Board Budget, among other items. She indicated she would be here for the meeting but would be in a wheelchair as she has foot surgery tomorrow. Thoughts and Prayers go out to Mary during her surgery.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS- Mary thanked agency directors, their staff, and Board members.

**V. ADJOURNMENT
The Board meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Sandy Hoffman, Community Relations Coordinator


David Ross, Executive Director


Mary Deeter, Board Chair