

MENTAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY BOARD OF ASHLAND COUNTY
Board Meeting Minutes
January 27, 2026

PRESENT: Andrew Kinney David Ross, Executive Director
 Katie Wright Patty Pawlikowski, Associate Director
 Mary Deeter Sandy Hoffman, Community Relations Coordinator
 Ben Key
 Ed Kieper
 Tom Gaus
 Connie Butler
 Chad Brown

ABSENT: Nancy Udolph*
 Cindy Kyser*
 Sara Battison
 *Provided notice

GUESTS: Jerry Strausbaugh, Appleseed
 Sheryl Villegas, CCS
 Rick Ford, ACCADA

I. CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS

Andrew Kinney, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. in the Martha Jordan Room, 1605 Co. Rd. 1095, Ashland.

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

Pass Warrants- There was a quorum to pass the warrants.

II. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER MINUTES

RESOLUTION: A motion was made by Mary Deeter to recommend approval of December 9, 2025
26-01-01 Board meeting minutes. Tom Gaus seconded the motion. The motion carried.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Finance, Ben Key, Chair

i. December & January Warrants

RESOLUTION: A motion was made by Chad Brown to approve the Warrants. Katie Wright seconded the
26-01-02 motion. The motion carried.

ii. November & December Financials

RESOLUTION: A motion was made by Mary Deeter to approve the November and December financials.
26-01-03 Connie Butler seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Patty reviewed the December financials reporting target is 50 percent; we are halfway through our fiscal year. No updates on reserves. Non-Medicaid is trending below for all three agencies; the agencies are at or above where they were last year at this time. Overall expenses are 40 percent. We've had more water issues at Columbus Circle and Church Street, and the steps at Church Street will be replaced in February.

B. Planning

i. Department of Behavioral Health 2026-2028 CAP

David reviewed the recommended updates to the Community Plan, which was also distributed as a handout. The Plan is our funding application to the State and is due Friday.

RESOLUTION: 26-01-05 A motion was made by Chad Brown to approve the CY 2026-2028 Community Assessment and Plan (CAP) and to submit it to the Department of Behavioral Health. Katie Wright seconded the motion. The motion carried.

ii. First Look – SFY 27 Agency Application Guideline Priorities (handout).

David reviewed the changes to Federal/State priorities; they align with those in the Community Plan. The priorities will be brought back to the Board for approval next month.

iii. Agency Mid-Year Reviews- Update

There were no updates or adjustments that came out of our mid-year reviews with the agencies.

v. Handout: Bullying & Suicide Prevention Resource. Related: [Mother sues Loudonville-Perrysville Schools](#) for negligence, wrongful death of her son. Related: [School Requirements](#).

David discussed bullying and the handout. We are adding bullying components for the School Liaisons. It was discussed that schools are required to offer something on bullying; we can look at how we can contribute to what is being done in the schools.

v. “[Galaxy Gas](#), Whippets, Laughing Gas, etc.” Dangers of inhalants/nitrous oxide (video)

David indicated that folks can watch the video on their own or he can show it at the next meeting, we are moving on due to the weather at this time.

vi. Training & Event Updates

- Farm Bureau Appreciation Breakfast – **February 7th** 8-10am at ASH
- Board Training on **March 24th** – Q & A on Dr. Gillette Video- David will provide a summary prior to the discussion.
- Save the Date! **March 25, 2026**, RSVP Conference Dr. McRae is the Keynote Speaker. The whole conference is based on alternatives.

C. Nominating Committee, Connie Butler, Chair

i. Update of Board members with first or second terms expiring June 30th

Connie reported that the Nominating Committee met on January 13 and discussed expiring terms. Connie and Nancy will complete their second term on June 30. One of the two can flip to a state appointment.

There are three people whose first term is ending (Ben Key, Cindy Kyser, and Chad Brown.) All have agreed to continue for a second term.

ii. Help with ongoing Board member recruitment.

Connie indicated that either she or Nancy can hopefully help with recruiting someone for social work to fill the vacant seat.

Knowledge of Note

- Farmers face a higher risk of suicide due to chronic stressors like unpredictable weather, financial pressure, rising costs, isolation, and a strong culture of self-reliance that can make asking for help difficult. Warning signs may look different from those in other populations and can include withdrawal, irritability, increased alcohol use, risky behavior, or distress during high-stress moments like auctions or crop loss. What helps most is meeting farmers where they are—through trusted messengers such as family members, veterinarians, equipment dealers, faith leaders, and agricultural organizations—using straightforward, non-clinical language, normalizing stress, encouraging connection and purpose, and making crisis and support options visible without stigma. The key takeaway: prevention for farmers works best when it is local, relational, practical, and respectful of farming culture, rather than expecting people to seek help on their own. [Handout – Suicide Prevention in the Agricultural Community](#).
- The **Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities** has hired **Kittleman & Associates**, a national firm that specializes in nonprofit and behavioral health leadership searches, to assist with selecting OACBHA's next Executive Director. Current Executive Director Liz Henrich will leave on January 2, 2026. Kittleman will manage the full search process—from defining the leadership profile and recruiting qualified candidates to supporting the Board in making a final selection—and will also provide structured onboarding support after the hire to ensure a smooth transition. This is a planned, professional transition intended to maintain strong statewide leadership and continuity for Ohio's county behavioral health boards.

The Board Making News

- David represented the Board at Advocates for Families' 40th Anniversary on **1/23**.

SFY 2026 Board Schedule & Important Dates

- **February 7th** – Farm Bureau Appreciation Breakfast (8-10 am) AHS Cafeteria
- **February 16th** – President's Day (Offices Closed)
- **February 24th** – **Board Meeting**
- **March 25th** – 17th Annual Pat Risser RSVP Conference (Planning has begun!)

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS

Jerry Strausbaugh of Appleseed expressed appreciation for the loan.
Sheryl Villegas, CCS, if SOR goes away, they will do less work with iHeart.
Rick Ford, ACCADA, echoed Sheryl's view on SOR. Mary Jo Janchar retired at the end of December.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sandy Hoffman, Community Relations Coordinator



David Ross, Executive Director



Andrew Kinney, Board Chair

