



MENTAL HEALTH LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

May 12, 2025

12:00 – 2:00 PM

Gallatin County Courthouse Community Room and Via Zoom

Voting Members Present- Jennifer Boyer, Erin Taylor, Ryan Mattson, Lori Christenson, Melaney Swenson, Nicole Madden, Anthea George, Yvonne Rudman, Eric Szemes, Susan Gregory, Tom Peluso, Steve Nash, Lori Shanahan, Margaret Kachadurian, Shawna Lockhart, Zach Ehrhardt

Non-Voting Members Present- Rick Gale, Todd Lester, Ben Frentsos, Bekki McLean,

Voting Members Absent

Guests- Kirsten Smith, Caitlin Avey, Mike Chavers(YBGR), Michelle Watson (YBGR), April Smith (MT VA), Cola Rowley, Marissa Dunn,

Staff

- Call to Order- Erin Taylor called the meeting to order.
- Roll Call- Nicole Madden took attendance.
- Approval of Minutes: April 2025 minutes – Erin Taylor approved the minutes as distributed.
- Public Comment- None noted
- Committee Reports and Updates
 - Strategic Planning Committee-
 - Membership Committee- Anthea noted no changes since last month. Melaney S provided an intro to her role in community- Regional Director for Intermountain Children's services provided services within the school systems in Bozeman and Belgrade. Also working on putting together a community screening event for the fall showing a movie specific to dangers/implications of children and screen time. Looking for LAC support of the event in the fall. More information pending on this event. Discussion around best way to connect with Cedar Creek and other substance use providers to include in LAC and other events.
 - Accounting- Tom P indicated standing balance for LAC increased by \$1000 with distribution from CSAA. Grant for media program coordinator approved and distributed to the account. Tom pulling total balance for LAC.
 - Central Service Area Authority- Steve & Nicole splitting CSAA meetings. Nicole to start a CSAA update newsletter or email structure to share CSAA key talking points.
 - Gallatin Behavior Health Coalition Update- Caitlin Avey stepping in for Kirsten starting this summer. Kirsten indicated important conversations happening around mobile crisis, crisis stabilization, and other HB 872 money. Community considering how to sustain mobile crisis given limitations in billing/revenue from the state. Also working as a community group to collaborate with the state on use of \$1.75 million awarded through crisis diversion grant. Funds received to invest in facility to offer crisis stabilization. Committee planning to submit proposal to use funding to develop a

location with or without having plan to operate and sustain crisis stabilization or receiving. Limitations with regulatory pieces for crisis stabilization/receiving and lack of ability for anyone to offer this service and sustain it operationally. Looking at options to offer other pieces of crisis care that are more peer driven/led while working on longer term clinical options. Look at option to refresh the current warming shelter upon completion of new HRDC shelter. Dual purpose use of that space to allow for DIC space, support for tiny home community, creation of resource access in that space to diver from crisis. Need to develop the space and address concerns around narrative of that space and how it is perceived and create a community space to meet needs concurrent with clinical pathways. Youth campus work continues. YBGR here today to update on youth campus project. Tours of new HRDC facility available- reach out to Heather for tour. Ribbon Cutting coming later in the month.

- Gallatin County Commission- No updates from County Commission
- Unfinished Business
 - Communications Specialist Intern-
 - Strategic Planning Committee-
- New Business
 - Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch- Mike Chavers from YBGR- Provided information on current YBGR programs and future plans. Currently caring for/offering treatment to approx. 90 kids through the PRTF assessment program. Also offering nationally accredited school support for kids in treatment. In effort to support best practices of keeping kids in home communities, began looking at opportunities for provision of supports and services across communities across the state, currently in 26-27 school districts working with kids in home community- therapeutic mentoring, support services, parenting education/support, resource coordination. Working with greater than 3500 kids across the state. Looking to further expand foot print with other community services. Have offices across several communities in western MT (Billings, Livingston, Lewistown, Kalispell, etc). Goal is to reduce barriers and offer right services to right kid at right time in right place. Operating 4 group homes between Boulder, Helena, Billings, and Great Falls. Others are non-operational due to staffing. Youth Campus in Gallatin Valley: support access to services. Looking to fill in gaps for care/services for kids/families in Gallatin Valley. Youth Campus provided space/location to provide services. Still working through processes to pay for purchase and have some plans/ideas to offer services to fill needs of community and utilizes full potential of the ranch campus location. Mike offered Q&A session for questions.
 - Q&A: how is PRTF sustainable through reimbursement? Most services covered through insurance or state Medicaid rate. By operating a 24/7 services able to more effectively bill insurance programs and state Medicaid service support.
 - Q&A: How does YBGR Foundation work to support projects and community partnerships- foundation is separate entity with own board and president to operate to create endowment to support financial needs for projects and programs. Foundation has been successful in creating sizeable endowment for programs- use both project-based donations as well as expanding to larger strategic initiatives around planned giving. With endowment, funding is there in perpetuity with use of money from growth without reducing initial balance. Currently YBGR receives approx. \$3million in support annually for operations and projects to support

sustainability with variances in state, revenue, etc. Also allows for latitude for taking opportunities for growth.

- Q&A: What excites you most about the youth campus in Gallatin valley? It was designed with youth in mind and mirrors much of what we have in other successful campus locations. YBGR has a bit different model from others across the country- most PRTF are hospital based but YBGR is campus based with clinical care in a community and ranch setting- provide clinical along with purpose/meaning and community engagement. Features of campus in Gallatin Valley has key infrastructure to offer similar services and life skills with clinical care.
- Q&A: We have community trauma around investment in programs that have since fallen apart (WMMHC, Hope House, etc). With youth vs adult services and how they are sustained, what does the community need to be aware of in terms of sustainability and supports needed for youth services? Kid system in MT has been a leader in MT on a national level in efforts to innovate and think differently about efficiency and sustainment, collaboration. YBGR has worked closely with state leaders to build programs and collaboration that are sustainable and innovative partners. Partnership with Youth Dynamics has allowed for sustainability and efficiency as an example. Harder to “turn the ship” with the adult system and the amount of work it takes to make effective change. YBGR is committed to partnering with the community to produce incremental changes and growth of youth services, open to partnering and conversation across a number of partners.
- Q&A: what do staffing and clinical components look like: psychiatry/psych PA working with kids weekly, access to therapy and counseling, daily integration in the individual treatment plans, youth guided/engaged functions through the day, incorporate clinical work with the relationships with the youth. All staff receive 40+ hours of training in programming. Clinical programs in a non-clinical community type setting. Trauma informed care with a relationship component to guide the clinical care.
- Q&A: how do you accommodate physical limitations or physical medical limitations: have medical staff onsite to manage medical concerns, have access to mobile lab and xray, address medical needs onsite rather than relying on hospital or emergency dept. Medical access required as part of the PRTF model. Will start with smaller scale of PRTF assessments in Bozeman then expand with economies of scale with growth. Current plan is to build towards a youth crisis model and offer PRTF assessment.
- Do you have to manage a waiting list or how to address access needs? YBGR doesn't run a waiting list but recognizes timeliness of access to care. When receive referral for services, they review case and provide services where able across multiple settings. Services offered are medically necessary and are not part of judicial or criminal system. Also offer step down care from residential to return to community.
- What does it look like for kids that might not excel within YBGR services? Looking at full clinical picture- consider IQ, those with chronic sexual behavior concerns (not appropriate in this setting), those that are close to age 18. Do try to fit youth into correct program and when able adapt program to support individual success needs.

- Agenda Suggestions- Someone from Suicide Prevention Program at future meeting? VA or otherwise

- Announcements- VA has some give away products available for gun safety, 988 information, etc
- Adjournment- Erin Taylor adjourned the meeting
- Next Meeting is Monday June 9 at 12 pm.



Erin Taylor, Board Chair