



MENTAL HEALTH LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

January 12, 2026

12:00 – 1:30 PM

Gallatin County Courthouse Community Room and Via Zoom

Voting Members Present- Jennifer Boyer, Erin Taylor, Ryan Mattson, Lori Christenson, Melaney Swenson, Nicole Madden, Yvonne Rudman, Eric Szemes, Lori Shanahan, Margaret Kachadurian, Shawna Lockhart, Amanda Roesenkoetter

Non-Voting Members Present- Rick Gale, Bekki Mclean, Todd Lester

Voting Members Absent- Andrea Lower, Anthea George, Susan Gregory, Tom Peluso, Steve Nash, Chad Berg

Guests-

- Call to Order- 12:02 pm Erin Taylor called the meeting to order.
- Roll Call- Nicole Madden took attendance.
- Approval of Minutes: December 2025 minutes – Erin Taylor vote to approve the minutes as distributed after corrections.
- Public Comment-
 - Ryan Mattson: Update on Rimrock stepping in to take on substance services in the Gallatin County. They currently have a need for vehicles for their team to use for the community response to clients with substance crisis or in need of community resources. If anyone in the LAC is aware of available, reliable/safe vehicles that could be procured, please reach out to Erin or Ryan.
 - Yvonne: Nicole/Kirsten presented to OLLI at MSU on mental health services. Nicole provided updates on inpatient psych, Kirsten presented on youth continuum. Eric S recommends we provide a link to the recording of the presentation on our website if its available.
 - Todd: VA clinic opened a new location in Kalispell with grand opening January 30th. Grand opening is open to community for tours and information/materials available. Todd also brought materials to LAC group for resources on preventing financial scams. Todd cites that finances are one major contributor to risk for suicide and welcomes sharing of materials for anyone in the community, especially for veterans. Todd also notes inpatient gambling treatment in Ohio is available for MT veterans for those looking for higher level treatment.
 - Margaret: shares that there is a new mindfulness app that opened in January that is free and basic/easy to use and evidence-based practice that would be another resource for those looking for other access to mindfulness and treatment resources. Margaret also encourages contacting dealerships for possibility of donations or reduced pricing on vehicles.
 - Nicole shares that Trailhead Counseling opened a new office in Bozeman to provide support for IOP substance use care in the community.
 - Todd shares a veteran centers resource to support activities and social engagement for veterans including extension of services to spouses, children and families. The resource offers more support/help to veterans outside of main VA.
 - Committee Reports: Updates provided using new website information

- Strategic Planning: strategic plan is now on the website under the “About” page under governing documents. Updates made to strategic plan to update for work going into 2026 to keep ongoing for the LAC to revisit during ongoing meetings.
- Membership Committee: Member profiles updated ongoing, need pictures and bios for anyone missing these items. Anthea is stepping down as leader for the membership committee, continue to look for someone in LAC to step up into leader role for this committee.
- Accounting:
- CSAA: now back to normal meeting schedule following holidays
- Gallatin Behavioral Health Coalition:
- Eric S: Could we get regular monthly updates on what the coalition is doing during our normal meeting. Could we require the coalition to provide this update?
- Erin T: the LAC is the voice for work being done at the coalition. We can’t require they communicate or provide updates but they have agreed to provide it so hold a spot-on agenda. Erin to follow up with Kirsten.
- Gallatin County Commission:
- County offered 2 trainings for various boards after years off from this opportunity. Dan Clark provided updates on public meetings, meeting organization, how to take public comment/management commentary, management of recommendations and motions, grant review, etc. It was offered to all types of boards and provided some onboarding education and refreshers on meeting/board function. Training provided additional information on what input/data to consider when gathering context for making decisions.
- Erin T: questions what connection Yvonne had and what she was wanting to share following that training? He was only able to join the first 15 minutes of training so questions connection for groups like LAC. Yvonne stepped out of meeting so unable to respond at this time. Jennifer reports the training did get into the weeds and provided more indepth content on management of decision making, decision making authority, decision functions within a meeting.
- Lori C: suggests we add this item to future agenda to provide opportunity to hear Yvonne’s input on the training and her take-aways from this training.
- Media Committee: Ongoing building for additional sections on training/community events. Amanda also working on the process and functionality used for MailChimp and make some updates to try to fix issues with items reaching members and not being waylaid by firewalls and security.
- Eric S: Coalition updates have often been very involved and rapid and hard to follow. Is it possible to put a link on our LAC webpage on the work being done by the coalition? Is there a more formal way to post these updates.
- Jennifer B: recommend getting a copy of the 4-page summary document shared at last coalition meeting as a synopsis of the work being done.
- Unfinished Business
 - Amanda M: Website Updates:
 - Erin T: having a web presence will provide more opportunities to advise and influence changes. Link to NAMI, other agencies/organizations and link to those that come to present to LAC to provide ongoing updates on information. Any postings of articles or links will also fall to the News page on the LAC website for future access.

- New Business
 - HRDC: Sara Savage COO here to present on updates at HRDC. Community action non-profit agency to respond to local community needs broadly. Provide emergency shelter, food support in Big Sky, Bozeman, and Three Forks. Larger continuum available outside of emergency resources including transitional/supportive housing, youth at risk services, rental assistance programs, affordable housing options/management, transportation support- galavan/streamline, community development including housing projects, school-based programs, head start programs. Serve over 13k individuals annually through all the programs. Strong core team of case managers to support resource allocation and connection. Senior programs for housing, and resources. Support for housing purchasing education and programs to support financial stability. Potential changes coming that may impact vulnerable populations, specifically around housing, shelter resources- expanding to their overnight family suites and have been able to add beds available on the second floor of the new shelter space. First floor continues to support community resources and needs. HRDC does have space available in new building to support community partners providing resources and care. Medical clinic space located in first floor of new building- please reach out to HRDC for any partners that are looking for space or partnership options to provide services. There are some anticipated significant changes with NOFO changes at the federal level. HRDC uses the Housing First model and has open options with their shelter housing (no requirements around sobriety, vocation, etc to use the service). Hearing from HUD in the NOFO is a move away from the Housing First approach towards a more service model of delivery which would create requirements for participation in services to be eligible for support services. HRDC looking at methods to support transition as things change on the HUD/Federal level. One anticipated challenge is how funding for homeless services may change- currently resources available for permanent supportive housing, HUD is requesting a shift from 70% of funding to 30% of funding to this program with remainder going to transitional housing. Within the 2-year timeline, HRDC will experience significant shortages in support resources impacting HRDC's local resources shifting from long term supportive housing to transitional housing resources and programming. Funding currently used for housing first visit and if funding changes will result in loss of approx. \$750k annually locally. Current legal process at the federal level to suspend these changes and delay/reduce impact. HRDC will keep LAC and others updated on changes while continuing to plan/adapt approach.
 - Todd L: provides appreciation for the work HRDC is doing. Inquires if the LIEAP program is still in place and accessible. Cites the VA Pioneer Housing program in CA as model with success to approach housing needs etc. Wonders if there was review of successful housing programs federally to inform these changes at the federal level.
 - Sara confirms LIEAP and the home efficiency programs are still in place currently and available for now. Outside of VA programs, have seen an evolution from HUD away from current programming. Have used programs out of Salt Lake as a model. Tracking data on cost of resources and outcomes of supports to align with cost effective models. Can't speak to the administrative changes currently seeing but perceived to be changes in philosophical rather than operational approaches. Rate increases as well as utilization increases have both impacted resources and amount of need to support the gaps.
 - Eric: inquires what does NOFO stand for and if this is a philosophical change to approach is there anything we can do to support/speak to the need and requests for support. Also inquires if there is still a program for youth/adolescents in operation locally and how many are utilizing this support. Does this new directive come about with most recent budgeting impacted by Big Beautiful Bill?
 - Youth program is called Blue Print- only provider in the state able to provide resources for youth 16-24 in addition to youth. Provide housing support, career counseling, and other supports.
 - NOFO= Notice of Funding Opportunity = annual cycle of requesting and being awarded HUD funds to support homeless services in our community.

- What can we do: educate/communicate with local and state officials, consider supplemental funding resources to offset changes/loss of funding dollars from HUD, encourage other ways to support dedicated resources.
- Can't tie impact and changes to any one specific government agency/program. Changes to funding seem to be occurring across all federal funding/spending programming. Can't tie specifically to Big Beautiful Bill or other bills specifically.
- National Alliance to End Homelessness website has resources available to expand understanding and stay updated on changes.
- Likely >600 humans that do not have stable housing each day supported by shelter and other resources. HRDC has been working with family promise/haven to support family based housing resources and track data around housing needs. Hopeful to get waitlist for families seeking housing down to zero in next 30-60 days through multi-organization partnership making gains in supportive family housing.
- Lori C: is HRDC still looking for volunteers to support programs and such? Sara indicates they are always looking for volunteers to fulfill volunteer opportunities. Will send link to the volunteer program. They continue to create expanded bed availability at Homeward Point but need to work on pathways for people back out to stable housing. Continue to look for community providers to utilize the space on first floor to provide support/resources.
- Eric S: can we get a link for the HRDC volunteer opportunities on the LAC website?
- Agenda Suggestions-
 - High Level Overview of County General Fund, Alcohol tax, Opioid Abatement funding- Jennifer B to provide update
 - Chad Berg to present on updates for school system
 - Matt Koutze- report and update on brain health.
- Announcements-
 - Rick Gale: Invitation to joint swearing in ceremony at Bozeman Public Safety Center at 4 pm on Thursday 1/15/26
 - Lori C: Gallatin City-County Health Dept submitting grant proposal for funding to support conversation and collaboration around youth resiliency and expanded policy for device free schools initiative. Applying for support to leverage resources. Topic will be on commission agenda tomorrow. Lori to update and share additional information as it becomes available.
- Adjournment- Erin Taylor adjourned the meeting at 1:21 pm

Erin Taylor, Board Chair