

**Region 7E Governing Board Meeting  
September 22, 2025; 9:00am – 12:00 Noon**

Attendees:

Affiliation		Governing Board Members		Directors
Chisago County	x	Kelly Ihrke, 2025 Vice Chair		Robert Benson
Chisago County		Jolene Thorsen		
Chisago County	x	Stacy Johnstone, Consumer Rep		
DHS Liaisons		Abbie Franklin, Pam Sanchez, Andrea Abel		DHS
Isanti County	x	Emily Hawkins, Member & Fiscal Host		Jodi Donnay
Isanti County	x	Ashley Wright, Consumer Rep		
Kanabec County	x	Katie Heacock		Chuck Hurd
Kanabec County	z	Cassie Dahlberg		
Mille Lacs County	x	Jessica Andrich		Char Kohlgraf
Pine County	x	Barb Schmidt	x	Becky Foss
Region 7E Planner	x	Amanda Stevenson		

GUESTS: Brent Johnson. Nicole Rustman, MLC.

MOTION: Consumer Rep Stacy Johnstone made a motion to approve the August GB minutes, Mille Lacs seconded. All ayes. Motion carried.

#### Mobile Crisis

- Rory will attend to discuss Q3 stats at the October meeting.
- Angie Kemen, Chisago County Children's MH, is interested in getting information from and being part of the conversation regarding ECCS mobile crisis services. Emily noted there is a CMH Supervisors subgroup that meets in months that we don't have the LAC meeting, and she will bring it up to them. Supervisors agreed that Angie could attend the meetings when ECCS mobile is being discussed.
- Amanda met with Jay and Kelsey:
  - Audio only telehealth has been extended until 7/1/27
  - Removal of all cost sharing, regardless of insurance. This is great news for those served, but it can/will increase costs.
  - Protected transport vehicles or modifications are an allowable expense; Canvas does not intend to pursue.
  - Canvas is seeing a change in their payer mix and seeing an increase in uninsured. They will watch this trend closely in 2026 and in future grant cycles. It is reasonable to expect that we will see an increase in uninsured individuals by October 2026 and into 2027 with the work requirements and increased renewals for Medicaid/MA. The expansion population, or single adults under the age of 65, 61% of that population in MN is expected to lose MA.
  - Jay expects Rori to retire in the future; he wants to hire a FT supervisor (Rori has been PT) for the ECCS team. The ECCS team is the only team without a FT Supervisor. This will come at an increased expense to the Region in the 2027-2028 grant cycle.
- Canvas Health does not plan to attend the Budget Meeting as their contract is through 12/31/26.
- Mobile Crisis Site visit: DHS and Canvas on Wednesday, 11/5 from 10:00am to 11:00am. Barb will attend, it's a virtual meeting.
- RFP Mobile Crisis, February 2026. Amanda provided an example. The Board will work on the RFP in November/December timeframe to push it out in February 2026 for 2027 budgets. The goal is to have an agency selected by May 2026.
  - Example: ABHI 2022

#### Announcements

- Amanda attended a presentation from Iris Health. Interesting option to recruit, ensure fit, and have dedicated telehealth provider for mental health services. Commitment requires 32 hours per week or Full-Time capacity. They currently have partners in more than 44 states and work with Allina Health.
- **Charlie Health**- recently met with this new virtual mental health provider. They are now in network with BCBS PMAP. Initial assessment is free; can occur in ER or hospital. They can loan devices if needed, but internet is required.

They can provide a virtual “bridge” of care. IOP program for adults and youth, as well as individual therapy, medication management, and groups. 6-8 people in group- personalized BIPOC, LGBTQI+, mother’s group, first responder/veteran group. CBT, DBT treatment approaches. No waitlist ever. Temporary, episodic care. IOP group is 12 weeks; 3x/week for three hours; can include individual therapy, family therapy, or medication management.

- **AHS- Anthurium Human Services-** originally had reached out to Mille Lacs County regarding ACT. Amanda met with them and discussed potential services or options for growth into Region 7E. They were most interested in RCS and ACT. They are a new provider, but have experience doing crisis respite, HCBS/245D in the Metro, St. Cloud, and Elk River area.
- **Continuum of Care (CoC)- Central Region-** Planner provided them a presentation on Region 7E AMHI. They asked the Planner to attend their regular meetings which occur every other month. The group’s goal is to discuss housing and homelessness, and they determine the definition of homelessness for our region. The Board agreed that if the Planner feels it would be helpful in her role, it’s okay, but when it starts becoming irrelevant, then she could stop attending. Case Managers used to attend, but now only Mille Lacs case manager attends on a regular basis.
  - Attachment- CoC Map
- **Upcoming events:**
  - Chisago and Kanabec OCC events 10/16
  - Chisago Age Well Expo 10/17
  - Recovering Hope Trick r Trunk event 10/25
  - October 10-11, Lotus Grace Fright Night

The **PICK’M Up Walk** on September 13 raised \$1,491 through freewill donations. Had 100 people. Lots of feedback received, such as more signage.

#### **Lakes and Pines Bridges voucher updates:**

- # new awarded: 6
- # new housed: 1
- 2 other close to being housed; 1 may have secured income-based housing, and so may no longer need voucher.
- Breakdown: 1 Chisago, 3 Isanti, 1 Pine, 1 MLC, 0 Kanabec
- Coordinated Entry; pulled two from list. Working on verifying mental illness for those pulled.
- Have received feedback from case managers and clients regarding Regional Housing Coordinator. The Planner will work to support her through challenges.
  - Case managers would like to make their referrals and have the Coordinator run with it.
  - It might be helpful to clean up the referral form. The Planner will evaluate it.
- The suggestion was made to encourage relationship building between the Regional Housing Coordinator and Case Managers.
  - Attend the regional case managers’ meetings.
  - Meet with each county case manager group.
- The Regional Housing Coordinator has done a great job putting together the job/duties.

#### **Director Update, Becky Foss**

- Budget, levy and how each county is doing
- AMHI consumer rep interviews, Char and Chuck will do the interviews.
  - Amanda will forward the applications, and they will facilitate interviews.

#### **Nicole Rustman, MLC Social Worker provided the Case Manager Report**

- Struggling with low participation, don’t know if it’s discussion topics or availability of time.
- Current case manager rep may not be the best representative of the group to bring information forward.
- Supervisors will discuss with their case managers whether the case manager meeting is helpful for them and if they have the time to participate.
- When Kelly was the case manager rep, she wondered if it was necessary for a case manager to attend the Governing Board meetings because they can get any necessary information from their supervisors.
- Now that the Region has an active planner, she can distribute information to the case managers, as needed.

- Some case managers feel that the meeting has value so they can meet and interact with other county case managers, to go over some of their complex cases, have resource sharing, team building.
- The purpose of having a case manager attend the Governing Board meeting is to share information between the two groups.
- At a future meeting, the Governing Board will review the bylaws and will discuss the role and responsibilities of the case manager rep on the Governing Board.

#### Consumer Rep, Ashley Wright

- Ashley hasn't been able to attend the Governing Board Meetings since May, because she has been hospitalized.
- Getting back into the community.
- She has been trying to find therapeutic services
- Adjusting to new housing, new people.
- RSI held her position since May and 90 days after.

#### Consumer Rep, Stacy Johnstone

- A friend lost his son-in-law from suicide. She read from an email. She felt helpless and expressed concern over resources.

#### Budget Items / Funding Requests

- Regional Flex Fund Request Question:
  - Does BRASS 418 encompass car payments?
  - The Planner received a regional flex fund request for car payments and has not approved this type of request before.
  - Isanti County stated that the request is under \$450 and felt it would be less expensive to pay for two months of this person's car payment rather than this person losing their vehicle. Pine County stated that she believes it's allowable because Brass 418 mentions automobiles and in our region having a vehicle is paramount because of the lack of public transportation. Kanabec, Chisago, and the Consumer Rep agreed,
  - Because the amount was \$450, it normally wouldn't have been presented to the Board, however, the opinion has now been shared with all members for future reference.

MOTION: Pine County made a motion to approve car payments that after reading Brass 418, Kanabec County seconded. All ayes, Isanti abstained. Motion carried.

- Budget Review:
  - Amount in unallocated: \$131,299.67; the Board must determine in what BRASS codes the 2025 unallocated dollars will be spent within before year's end. The final budget revision is due to the State by November 1.
  - BRASS spending thus far: (also within budget workbook at very end)

BRASS Code:	Total Spent:		Current Budgeted Amounts:	
401	\$ 117,803.95		\$ 167,796.00	70%
402*	\$21,309.40		\$ 30,000.00	71%
403	\$ 78,862.78		\$ 105,182.00	75%
408*	\$ 379.00		\$ 9,670.00	4%
409*	\$27,955.19		\$ 44,000.00	64%
416*	\$1,295.03		\$ 7,000.00	19%
418*	\$9,391.40		\$ 10,000.00	94%
420	\$0.00		\$ 14,300.00	0%
434*	\$230,424.44		\$ 395,677.00	58%
437	\$138,258.50		\$ 239,805.00	58%
438	\$ -		\$ 124,583.00	0%
443*	\$119,297.10		\$ 171,078.00	70%
452*	\$ 1,598.12		\$ 28,857.00	6%
454	\$235,442.52		\$ 317,890.00	74%
491*	\$111,563.55		\$ 179,917.00	62%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 1,093,580.98</b>		<b>\$ 1,845,755.00</b>	<b>59%</b>

- The Planner proposed allocating an additional \$500 to Consumer Rep 2 from Consumer Rep 1's line to accommodate mileage.
- Chisago will have some requests in Brass 402, approximately \$30,000 or less combined.

- The Planner would like to add additional funds to Brass 418

MOTION: Isanti County made a motion to increase the appropriate Consumer Rep line by \$500, Chisago second. All ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: Kanabec County made a motion to increase Brass 418 by \$10,000, Isanti seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

Ideas on spending unallocated funds:

- Winter gear- hats/coats/gloves/boots- BRASS 418
- Food basket or grocery gift card- BRASS 418
- Regional Holiday Party with transportation- BRASS 402, BRASS 418, and BRASS 416
- Willow Grove residents- food, hygiene, or other items BRASS 418

Additional funding recommendations focused on maximizing broad reach and impact for SPMI individuals:

- Isanti County suggested housing needs in the Region.
  - Reach out to Lakes and Pines to offer hotel vouchers
  - Provide funding for gas cards through another agency – must be given by the end of the year.
- Housing subsidies, Pine County has received requests for propane because Lakes and Pines haven't received their money yet. Fund through counties and through Lakes and Pines.
  - Lakes and Pines would need to ensure the recipients have a SPMI diagnosis.
- Another provider to reach out to is Willow Grove as there have been needs there.
- Becky suggested an MA navigator to help people not lose their MA funding.
- Pine LAC is planning a Holiday party funded by Moose Lake dollars. Mille Lacs County likes the idea of a regional event because a holiday party for MLC attendees would be small. Pine County Supervisor will ask the Pine LAC if they are interested in hosting and planning a regional event.
- Allocating funds to the LACs that they can spend on what they need.
- Resource baskets similar to what Pine LAC put together which included:
  - Socks
  - Food item
  - Blanket
  - Meditation/thought card
  - Coloring book
  - Book about mental health
  - Resource guides
  - Chocolate
- Ordering more swag such as jackets, etc.
  - Isanti County Board has concerns about giving out branded clothing. They would prefer non-branded clothing like winter coats, etc.
- Staff training, however, can only be under Brass 341, crisis.

The consensus was to send out information to our distribution list advising that the Region has funds available for basic needs for SPMI individuals for utilities, food, rent, vehicle repairs, etc. providers should use the uncompensated form. Deadline is October 20, 2025.

Isanti Drop in Center has been going well. Doing a Halloween bingo with a white elephant theme. Considering a holiday party.

A budget revision needs to be submitted to DHS by November 1. The Planner proposed:

- REMOVE: \$5,000 BRASS 408; \$124,583 BRASS 438; \$14,300 BRASS 420; \$20,000 BRASS 452
- ADD: \$20,000 BRASS 402; \$20,000 BRASS 403; \$4,000 BRASS 416; \$29,883 BRASS 418; \$90,000 BRASS 443
- 2026:
- REMOVE: \$120,000 BRASS 439; \$14,300 BRASS 420; \$5,000 BRASS 452
- ADD: \$10,000 BRASS 402; \$15,000 BRASS 403; \$10,000 BRASS 418; \$70,000 BRASS 443; \$20,000 BRASS 454; \$14,300 BRASS 491
- The following table outlines spending amounts with the proposed 2025 budget revision amounts:

BRASS Code:	Total Spent:	Current Budgeted Amounts:	
401	\$ 117,803.95	\$ 167,796.00	70%
402*	\$21,309.40	\$ 50,000.00	43%
403	\$ 78,862.78	\$ 125,182.00	63%
408*	\$ 379.00	\$ 4,670.00	8%
409*	\$27,955.19	\$ 44,000.00	64%
416*	\$1,295.03	\$ 11,000.00	12%
418*	\$9,391.40	\$ 39,883.00	24%
420	\$0.00	\$ -	
434*	\$230,424.44	\$ 395,677.00	58%
437	\$138,258.50	\$ 239,805.00	58%
438	\$ -	\$ -	
443*	\$119,297.10	\$ 261,078.00	46%
452*	\$ 1,598.12	\$ 8,857.00	18%
454	\$235,442.52	\$ 317,890.00	74%
491*	\$111,563.55	\$ 179,917.00	62%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 1,093,580.98</b>	<b>\$ 1,845,755.00</b>	<b>59%</b>

#### Rationale:

- 2025/2026: The Contract with RADIAS Health for building ACT team capacity was ended; we maintain a Contract with RADIAS Health for flex funds (418) for R7E persons served. Isanti County HHS has not utilized and does not plan to utilize RSI for peer support services (420). Isanti County HHS has opted for spending in 402, 416, 418, and 443 instead for those served. BRASS 452 has been underutilized and/or activities have been insurance billable. Increased spending in BRASS 403 by A Place For You programs. We are allocating additional funds to BRASS 418, 443, 454 and 491 for 2026.

#### August Meeting Follow Up

##### Request funded.

- Request funded to LGM and Juettner Marketing did not follow the Planners understanding of the process/procedure.
  - The request was not sent out three days before the meeting to the Board, as indicated in the bylaws.
  - There was not discussion without the vendors in the room.
  - The request was not scored.

The Planner requested direction from the Board should this situation present in the future. It was determined that calling it to the attention of the Board would be the best thing to do.

#### Open Meeting Law

- Employment stats request for the October meeting: Kelly will send an email to the Board, and counties can send info back to her individually.
- Meetings are open to the public and the minutes are to be posted publicly.
  - Emily will seek legal opinion on open meeting law and how much detail should be included in meeting minutes.
  - Minutes will be posted through the grant cycle and old minutes put into an archive folder. Amanda will reach out to the other AMHI teams to learn how they manage Open Meeting Law procedures.
- Isanti County would like the Conflict-of-Interest forms to be completed and returned today.

#### Credible Mind

- An email was sent to the Board requesting the information be shared with Public Health. The Planner has not received feedback from the Counties to date.
- Seeking discussion and motion on how the Board would like to proceed with Credible Mind.
  - Mille Lacs reached out and does not intend to pursue independently at this time.
  - Isanti County not interested in moving forward.
  - Kanabec County Public Health is interested but funding not available.
  - Chisago plans to bring forward a funding request.

## Budget meeting updates

- Applications received thus far: 20
- In thinking of the future, it would be helpful if Governing Board members scored each funding request individually ahead of the budget meeting and provided scoring to the Planner and Admin. With this information, average scores could be compiled to help inform budget decisions, as well as save time.
- The current practice is to agree to a consensus score during the Budget Meeting.
  - Discussion
    - Pine doesn't have time to score in advance.
    - Isanti prefers to hear from the providers before scoring.
    - Kanabec appreciates the group consensus as we are a collective group and would lose some of that dynamic if we switch to individual votes.
    - Look at this for next year. Scoring on Friday will be consensus scoring.

## Updated forms:

- COI – please complete and submit as soon as possible.
  - Amanda will send it out and ask it to be returned by the Friday Budget meeting.
  - If your role is listed in the bylaws, you need to complete one. All Governing Board members, Directors, and contractors.
  - If there is a conflict of interest, it has to be noted in the meeting minutes.
  - If the board is voting on a conflicted item, the individual must step out. Declare annually and as they arise throughout the year.
  - Chair and co-chair will review annually.

MOTION: Isanti made a motion to change the bylaws to state that annually, and as conflicts arise, members will declare conflict of interest, the co-chair and the chair will review them.

AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION: Isanti amended the motion that each county rep, consumer rep, case manager rep, directors, the Planner, and contractor(s) will complete and sign a Conflict of Interest form. Chisago seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

- Scoring form has been updated per responses. Add priorities to the scoring sheet for 2026: crisis services, employment, housing, med management, transportation. It was suggested that the Board rank the priorities.
  - It was suggested the Board consider what they want to achieve or develop over the two years of the grant cycle via strategic planning. That would mean changing the timeline for the next grant cycle.
- Uncompensated Care Policy, process, and form. The most significant change is the dollar amount changing from \$540 to \$1,000.
- Regional Flex Fund policy and form, the primary change was \$540 to \$1,000. Also added the Brass 416 description so transportation funds can be requested.

MOTION: Isanti made a motion to adopt the uncompensated care and regional flex fund forms. Mille Lacs seconded. All ayes, motion carried.

## Consumer Rep Job Description and Posting

- The job has been posted. Applications will be accepted through 11/7/25.
- The fillable form is posted on the website.
- The Planner will forward the applications to the selected directors.
- Kanabec and Mille Lacs will conduct the interviews.
- We have received two applications and have received five requests to mail the application.

## Planner 1:1 with Board Members / Counties

- Does the Board have interest in meeting 1:1 with the Planner? Each year? Each grant cycle? As needed?
- The Planner would like to create space to build relationships and county specific conversations.
  - Supervisors agreed and the first quarter of 2026 was proposed.



#### Competing funding request and Conflict of Interest

- The Kanabec County Supervisor departed the meeting to avoid a conflict of interest with respect to a request from a provider with a competing proposal. It was agreed that Kanabec County would not receive a copy of this provider's funding request and that they would not be present in the room during the presentation.
- The initial funding request included comments of concern about the Kanabec County Med Management Program. The Board noted that if the allegations are substantiated, they will be taken seriously and will be addressed with the provider, however, the budget process is not the forum to address those matters.
- The Planner will advise the provider to resubmit the funding request without those comments and provide only their proposal.
- The allegations/complaint made by the prospective provider regarding the current provider will be discussed/addressed at a future date/time to be determined by the Governing Board.
- The Planner will gather information from other Regions on a formal complaint process for future follow up.

#### Public Comments

None.

MOTION: Isanti made a motion to adjourn, Chisago seconded. All ayes, Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 11:59pm.