

Region 7E Governing Board Meeting
MEETING MINUTES
November 24, 2025; 9:00am – 12:00 Noon

Attendees:

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

Approval of the agenda

Motion: Kanabec County to approve agenda. Second: Isanti County. Outcome: Motion carried.

Approval of Previous Meetings Minutes

Motion: Consumer Rep moved to approve the minutes as amended. Second: Isanti County. Outcome: Motion carried.

Approval of Budget Meeting Minutes

Motion: Chisago to approve budget meeting minutes. Second: Mille Lacs. Outcome: Motion carried.

Director Update, Chuck Hurd

- The Directors met with Region 7W. Discussed the format of each Governing Board. The Region 7W Governing Board membership has more than Supervisors, which brings interesting discussion and numerous perspectives.
- Budget challenges across all counties
- Ability to get staff is challenging
- Lots of changes in both Region 7E and 7W. Each Region has a Director retiring in 2026.

Case Manager Rep Update, Cassie Dahlberg

- The last meeting was a joint meeting with Regions 7E and 7W.
- Isanti has a case manager who expressed interest in being the case manager rep for 2026.
- The planner would like to confirm at the December meeting who the case manager rep will be for 2026.
- The question was raised whether a case manager rep needs to be on the board. Supervisors are responsible for relaying pertinent information to their staff. The Governing Board meeting is an Open Meeting, so case managers could attend in person or virtually.

Consumer Rep Update, Stacy Johnstone

- Stacy has been busy with clients and getting into the community

Consumer Rep Update, Amanda Stevenson

- December is Ashley's last meeting.

- Eight applications have been received for the Consumer Representative position with the term of 1/1/26-12/31/28. Interviews are scheduled for December 3rd at Isanti County Health and Human Services. Kanabec and Mille Lacs County Directors will conduct the interviews.

Budget Review and Budget Actions, Amanda Stevenson

Action Item: *Mille Lacs, Furniture, Brass 443, \$2,132.44*

MOTION: Isanti motion to approve. Second: Kanabec. Outcome: Motion carried.

2026 Funding Request: Plum Behavioral Health- Parenting Skills Education, \$25,000

Discussion: New and creative, appreciate that the program will benefit parents with SPMI. It would be offered via telehealth.

1 = Poor · 2 = Fair · 3 = Satisfactory · 4 = Good · 5 = Excellent

1. Where does the proposal rank with the Region's priorities. Rating: 3
2. Rank how closely the proposal fills a GAP if it were funded. Rating: 4
3. Rank how well the request describes the proposed program. Rating: 4
4. In comparison to other funding requests, where does this proposal rank in priority? Rating: 4
5. If the program was funded in previous years, was it successful? Rating: NA
6. When you consider the cost per person, is there adequate justification to fund this request? Rating: 5
7. Is the program sustainable without the ongoing use of AMHI funds? No
8. 20 out of 30 possible points.

2025 Funding Request: Linwood Group Meetings- additional Budget Meeting expenses \$405.92

Grant allocated amount for Budget Meeting: \$2,500; invoice amount \$2,905.92; overage of \$405.92.

There are no additional funds remaining to be allocated in BRASS 401 because the grant is fully committed at 10%.

MOTION: Pine County to approve \$405.92 in Brass 402 for budget meeting actions such as publishing the minutes to the website. Second: Mille Lacs County. Outcome: Motion carried.

2025 Budget Review

- Flex Funds (BRASS 418) \$6,494.79 remaining
- Housing Subsidy/Flex (BRASS 443) \$20,736.78 remaining
- Transportation (BRASS 416) \$4,892 remaining
- Uncompensated Care: There are limited funds remaining for BRASS 408 and 452
 - The Planner received three uncompensated care requests, two from Chisago and one from Isanti, the combined total is less than \$1,000. These requests have not been approved because if Empower Recovery uses the full \$3,000 allocated to them, there would be no funds available. As of now, there are no funds available in Brass 408, and \$3,000 in Brass 452.
 - The contract amendment for Empower Recovery goes before the County Board for approval mid-December. An option is for the Planner to discuss with Empower Recovery about reducing their allocation to \$2,031.25, revise their amendment accordingly and then all requests can be accommodated. The Governing Board members approved of this plan.
 - Chisago and Isanti are to submit the SEAGR units to the Planner so she can process the requests.

Program and Service Provider Reports:

- The contract will reflect Northern Transportation Inc, DBA Stark Transportation. Name change stuff going on, tied to the NPI number.
- Willow Grove- *Lutheran Social Services*
 - Internet will be available in January 2026.
 - Local church is sponsoring holiday wish list for tenants.

- An LSS therapist will be onsite Wednesdays.
- There has been some confusion about CFR for individuals at Willow Grove. Current understanding is that for Social Services cases, the CFR remains with county referred, but the financial case transfers to Chisago County. There was a misunderstanding that the handshake agreement ended after the first year, but that is not the case. This has been the handshake agreement since Willow Grove was established so that Chisago County didn't bear the burden of financial responsibility for tenants who reside there for a short time, leave, and then Chisago County would end up being the ongoing CFR. Chisago County doesn't have the capacity, financially or staff-wise, to take on that responsibility simply because Willow Grove is in their county.
- The Board agreed to adopt a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), however, it should be developed and provided by the Directors rather than AMHI. The Planner drafted an MOU and will forward it to Chisago Director Bob Benson for review, discussion, and editing with the Directors.
- LSS has identified an individual who is not appropriate to remain residing at Willow Grove and they are seeking a recommendation from AMHI on how to address the situation. The GB agreed it is up to LSS policies and procedures. The AMHI can't provide guidance in that situation.

Growing Connections: *Growing Resilience, Nature Based Mental Health Skills and Support Group*

- The Planner sent an email to the GB outlining questions from the provider, such as: is she allowed to have an all-female group, can volunteers also be participants in a separate session, Budget justification/narrative, and additional information regarding the 2025 cost per person.
- The Planner noted that indirect service costs far exceed direct service costs. She recommended that Growing Connections attempt to identify a rate of service that accounts for ancillary expenses or another way of billing.
- The Board agreed: an all-female group is okay, volunteers attending a session is okay because she'll reach more people that way. The Board would like to receive data on how the new program structure goes.

Lakes and Pines: *Regional Housing Coordinator/Regional Housing Triage*

- Met with Lakes and Pines RE: program expansion in 2026. Lakes and Pines is requesting specific county contact or contacts for Housing Triage/Beds/Bridging and/or partnering with mental health providers for SPMI eligibility determination or for those not currently served by county case management.
- The Planner suggested starting the program in 2026 and building on it. County contacts would be for intake and to help determine SPMI eligibility. Lakes and Pines doesn't want to be involved in the MH documentation, ex: HIPPA, DAs, etc. It was stated that it is up to the provider to determine eligibility, and if Lakes and Pines isn't going to determine eligibility, then they won't be able to serve people outside of the county referrals.
- They are still accepting priority 1 referrals.
- More people are being housed on the vouchers.

Unfinished Business:

Item 1: Revised Bylaws DRAFT

The Planner initially revised the bylaws to reflect Conflict of Interest Disclosure form. Revised again given the feedback/notes taken at the October meeting. The Planner will schedule a virtual meeting for the Governing Board to work through the proposed changes. The Region 7W bylaws will be distributed and reviewed for comparison.

Item 2: Open Meeting Law and Government Data Practices

Key takeaways/ handouts emailed on 10/17

- Special Meetings must be posted; all special meetings that deviate from the regularly scheduled meeting dates. Budget meetings are subject to open meeting law.

- Blind copy for emails to the Board to avoid Reply All replies
- Closed meetings still require notice, at least three days, and we must cite the reason/statute behind the closed meeting. Meetings regarding evaluation or discipline of those under the body's authority. The conclusions must be summarized at the next open meeting. Minnesota Statute 13D.05, subd.2.
- Minutes shall be kept on the retention schedule dictated by the policy adopted.
- Open Meeting Law requires that minutes be readily available to the public.
- Isanti County legal advice obtained: AMHI Governing Board is subject to open meeting law requirements.
- Planner recommends agendas and minutes for current two-year grant cycle are posted on the website; other years can be provided by submitting a data request form.
- These issues will be addressed at the bylaw meeting and then reviewed by the fiscal host county attorney before adopted into policy.

Item 3 & 4: R7E AMHI Funding Application and Scoring Form

- Past suggestions for the application: add measurable goals/data collection to application, make form fillable, add form to website.
- Past suggestions for the scoring form: add new provider/program “points” to question: “If funded in the past was it successful?”, add points for sustainability.
- Finalize the bylaws and then review these forms.

Item 6: BRASS 409- Individual County billing requested and approved for Prepetition Screening and Hearing within allocation:

County	Time Period	Amount Requested:
Chisago	1/1/25-10/20/25	\$53,901
Isanti	9/2025	\$3,358.44
Kanabec	1/1/25-9/30/25	\$6,220.16
Mille Lacs	7/1/25-9/30/25	\$6,848
Pine	1/1/25-3/31/25	\$1,759

County	Time Period	Amount Awarded:
Chisago	1/1/25-10/20/25	\$28,289.40
Isanti	9/2025	\$3,358.44
Kanabec	1/1/25-9/30/25	\$6,220.16
Mille Lacs	7/1/25-9/30/25	\$6,848
Pine	1/1/25-3/31/25	\$1,759
	TOTAL:	\$46,475

New Business:

Item 1: Kanabec County Medication Management- Rapid Access appointments scheduled for Canvas Health. Kanabec County is currently reserving 1 one-hour slot per week, with an additional half hour break afterwards in case extra time is needed. Given that there will be two rapid access providers for 2026, Kanabec County would like to know how the Region intends to schedule these appointments moving forward.

2025 usage:

- January - 1 appointment scheduled, then cancelled because client was hospitalized
- February - 1 appointment scheduled, client did not show
- March - 1 appointment completed
- April - 0 appointments scheduled
- May - 0 appointments scheduled
- June - 0 appointments scheduled
- July - 0 appointments scheduled
- August - 1 appointment completed
- September - 1 appointment scheduled, client did not show

Planner input:

- As previously determined, AMHI funds cannot pay for unused “slots” or appointments of services that are unused.
- Rapid access appointments dedicated to Canvas Health/ECCS, should be funded out of the Mobile Crisis Grant, then the service can serve adults or children.
- AMHI funds cannot pay for children’s services.
- The Board has stated that they want to compare the two 2026 medication management providers “apples to apples.” “Apples to apples” comparison is not possible between the two providers, so the board should discuss what items to compare, and what the Region will do with the data.
- Chisago County believes they should be funded under crisis services. Crisis Services refers to a variety of options; Kanabec County, primary care, Dr. Beth Good, and others. Kanabec expressed concern that providers need to reserve time and if it’s not used, they can’t bill for that time. A conversation with Canvas is needed to clarify if rapid access appointments should be directed to Dr. Beth Good and Associates.
- Rapid access psychiatry is a requirement of the mobile crisis grant.

Item 2: 2026 Data Collection and Invoicing

- The Planner was directed to work toward consistent data collection and invoicing across all AMHI programs/providers. However, that’s been challenging because different Brass codes require different information.
- It’s difficult to complete the contracts for 2026 if data collection templates and invoice templates are to be part of the contract.
- Chisago suggested including a work-plan in the contracts rather than the data collection forms. Data collection is in support of invoices.
- Deliverables could be included in contracts, but not goals or data collection

Item 3: Mobile Crisis Site Visit 11/5/25.

Barb attended the meeting. Amanda provided the summary to the GB. Canvas is projected to underspend by \$180K due to being understaffed in two positions and delays finding office space. Canvas shared that in our region they have seen an increase in PMAP and MA billing.

Item 4: AMHI Grant Monitoring Visit 12/4/25, 2:00-4:00pm.

The Planner sent the required information prior to the deadline. Emily, Amanda, Jody, Mark, and Marjanea will participate in the meeting. Sample Monitoring Form <C:\Users\Amanda.Stevenson\Desktop\AMHI grant monitor\Sample Monitoring Visit Form.pdf>

Announcements/Updates: (Upcoming events, deadlines, policy changes, etc.)

- January Closed Meeting date pending.
- AMHI/CSP Statewide Meeting December 11th, 1-3pm

Action Item Summary/Items for December's Agenda:

- Mobile Crisis RFP
- Website Directory
- Bylaw meeting
- LAC attendee and case manager feedback RE: peer support and parenting classes

Adjournment time: 11:10am

2026 Governing Board and Regional LAC Meeting Schedule

Governing Board Meetings: 9:00am – 12:00pm: 4th Monday each month except May and December

Regional LAC Meeting: 1:00-2:00pm – every other month as scheduled below

In Person at Isanti County Family Services, Conference Room A and virtual via Zoom

January 26 – 1:00pm Regional LAC Meeting	July 27 – 1:00pm Regional LAC Meeting
February 23	August 24
March 23 – 1:00pm Regional LAC Meeting	September 28 - 1:00pm Regional LAC Meeting
April 27	October 26
May 18 – 1:00pm Regional LAC Meeting ONE WEEK EARLY	November 23 - 1:00pm Regional LAC Meeting
June 22	December 21 GB ONE WEEK EARLY

Region 7E Governing Board Meeting
Meeting Minutes ADDENDUM
November 24, 2025; 9:00am – 12:00 Noon

The following information is provided to augment the discussion at the Governing Board Meeting.

From page 3: Willow Grove- *Lutheran Social Services*

There has been some confusion about CFR for individuals at Willow Grove. Current understanding is that for Social Services cases, the CFR remains with county referred, but the financial case transfers to Chisago County. There was a misunderstanding that the handshake agreement ended after the first year, but that is not the case. This has been the handshake agreement since Willow Grove was established so that Chisago County didn't bear the burden of financial responsibility for tenants who reside there for a short time, leave, and then Chisago County would end up being the ongoing CFR. Chisago County doesn't have the capacity, financially or staff-wise, to take on that responsibility simply because Willow Grove is in their county.

EXCERPT FROM GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES DATED JUNE 27, 2016: MOTION: Liz Dodge made a motion that the Housing Subcommittee develop a Memo of Understanding for member counties to remain CFR for their client placements and to request the approval of the Directors group as well. Char Kohlgraf seconded. Chuck suggested that the housing subcommittee start researching what other counties have in place. Faye noted her interest in what Youngdahl has in place for those counties. Motion carried.

EXCERPT FROM GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES DATED FEBRUARY 26, 2018: Willow Grove Supportive Housing Update, Angie Kemen

TCM rate: DHS will likely state that the rate should be set at the rate in which the site is located. Chisago rate is \$409. Average rate is \$459. Do an MOU with Chisago that tenants would not become residents of Chisago County but stay under county of financial responsibility, specifically for special services.

EXCERPT FROM GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES DATED SEPTEMBER 23, 2019: Willow Grove. MOU. Willow Grove is non-excluded, but DHS says that CFR would become Chisago County. Todd McMurray suggested that each county maintain their own cases, both social services and financial responsibility. Chuck will bring the issue to the Directors. Karyn and Angie have a meeting with Youngdahl on 9/24 to learn how they are handling these types of issues.

EXCERPT FROM GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES DATED DECEMBER 16, 2019: Willow Grove MOU. Bob Benson, Chisago County Director, will connect with Chisago's county attorney to draft an MOU with the collaboration of the other county attorneys. The intention is that the MOU will be an understanding between our five counties that each county would maintain as the CFR for their residents in any of the 13 beds at Willow Grove. It is further understood that this MOU does not include counties outside the Region. There will be discussion about who would be responsible for a commitment, if needed.

EXCERPT FROM GOVERNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES DATED JANUARY 27, 2020: Director's Update, Chuck Hurd
Willow Grove MOU. The County Attorneys do not want to put an MOU in writing. The Directors group will coordinate with the GB group on the status of the agreement on a quarterly basis. The Directors and Supervisors will regularly discuss to ensure all parties, including any future staff, are aware of the long-standing handshake agreement between each of the Region 7E Counties to stay financially responsible for their clients living in Willow Grove and not transferring County of Financial Responsibility to Chisago County. Of primary concern is regional client status as a factor of Willow Grove tenancy. Chisago County understands that the seven homeless beds will become their financial responsibility no matter where that tenant originally came from.

Chisago County understands that if a resident from outside the Region 7E geographical area becomes a tenant, they will eventually become the County of Financial Responsibility for that individual.

It is still being discussed, but it is believed that Income Maintenance will stay with the original county, but Chisago County will offer to meet with the client to help avoid client drive-time, if so requested.

From page 5, Canvas discussion

- Info from Canvas:

- Canvas Health stated that they have been collecting data regarding unmet Rapid Access Psychiatry (RAP) needs for all the counties/Regions they serve for Mobile Crisis Services. In 2025, they have not recorded any unmet RAP needs. In 2025, thus far, they have made 8 referrals for RAP in Region 7E, across providers.