

ST. CLAIR COUNTY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH
3111 Electric Avenue
Port Huron, Michigan 48060

GROUP MEETING: Advisory Council
PLACE: St. Clair County CMH – Summit
DATE: April 3, 2025
TIME: 12:00 p.m.
PRESIDING: Nancy Thomson, Chairman

PRESENT: D. Johnson, K. Gallagher, H. Fogarty, K. Thompson, N. Thomson, S. Herrle, S. Chase, T. Pierce, M. Partipilo, C. Raymo, R. Mirabelli, J. Parker, T. Hudson
ABSENT: J. Marocco, N. Condland
GUEST:

I. Call to Order/Agenda Changes

The meeting began at 12:02 PM, with Nancy Thomson calling it to order.

II. Review/Accept Minutes

Rosella Mirabelli moved to approve the February meeting minutes, and Cynthia Raymo seconded the motion.

III. Executive Director Update

1. SCCCMH Teen Advisory Group (TAG)

We are working to bring together two students from every high school in St. Clair County to unite their voices, break the stigma surrounding mental health, advocate for meaningful change in schools and communities, design impactful campaigns for teens, and ensure that youth perspectives truly shape the conversation.

What's in it for the student?

They'll gain valuable leadership experience, earn community service hours, have the opportunity to create real change, and attend monthly meetings—with food provided and transportation available if needed.

For now, meetings are scheduled on Wednesdays. At the first meeting, students will have the chance to choose a different day if the majority prefers. The first meeting is set for August 2025.

2. Advocacy Alerts

We just sent out an advocacy alert regarding how the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services is moving forward with changes to how the state funds and manages mental health services. A new process called competitive procurement could impact how these services are provided in the future.

Many in the public Mental health system are concerned that this change could disrupt services and impact those who rely on them. Advocates are asking MDHHS to limit bids to public organizations with experience in Michigan's mental health system to maintain stability and ensure care remains community driven.

We experienced direct funding losses in three areas, but given the size of our agency, the impact is minimal—totaling under \$200,000 within a budget of over \$100 million. One reduction was a supplemental payment for members of our ACT Team, and the others were for training and tuition reimbursement, both of which we had already fully utilized.

3. Other

Martha Partipilo generously donated a Reevo Hubless E-Bike to be raffled off in support of a great cause. The Reevo is a cutting-edge electric bike featuring hubless, spokeless wheels and a fingerprint reader for enhanced security.

While SCCCMH cannot hold a raffle directly due to licensing restrictions, several of our staff are members of Women's Life, who have graciously agreed to host the raffle on our behalf.

Raffle Prizes:

🏆 1st Prize: Reevo Hubless E-Bike

🏆 2nd Prize: \$250 in restaurant gift cards

🏆 3rd Prize: \$100 in restaurant gift cards

All proceeds will benefit individuals served by SCCCMH through the CMH Lifeline Fund.

Tickets are available at each SCCCMH building—\$5 each or 5 for \$20.

The drawing will take place during our 60th Anniversary Celebration on May 21st at 6:30 p.m.

IV. CMH Updates

1. Trauma Informed Agency Survey

Eight years ago, we conducted a Trauma-Informed Care survey, recognizing that over 80% of individuals receiving mental health services have experienced trauma at some point in their lives. The goal was to ensure our services—and our workplace environment—do not inadvertently retraumatize anyone, including staff.

We're now revisiting that process with a new survey as a "trauma-informed check-in." There will be two versions: one for administrative staff who do not work directly with individuals we serve, and one for direct care staff who do.

Kathleen will be sending out the survey's agency-wide soon. Once the results are in, she'll review the findings and present them, helping us determine whether any updates or changes are needed to continue supporting a trauma-informed environment.

2. Updated Code of Ethics

We've updated our Code of Ethics to align with our revised mission, vision, and values. The most significant changes reflect the expanded non-discrimination protections outlined in the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act, which was updated and became law in February 2024. As a state agency, it's essential that these categories are included in our Code of Ethics.

Nancy inquired whether the sections on dignity and non-discrimination also align with the Michigan Mental Health Code. Kathleen will be reviewing that to ensure full compliance, but as of now, the language reflects current legal standards.

V. Program Operations Update

We're currently working to navigate the many changes happening within children's services. Much of this is tied to the ongoing lawsuit and the implementation of the CAFAS (MichiCANS) assessment tools. Unfortunately, the current algorithm is not functioning as intended—it often recommends services that don't meet medical necessity guidelines and are not typically offered.

While the state is reviewing the algorithm, the process remains challenging for staff, especially due to the significant amount of time required to complete the MichiCANS in addition to the NECFAS, CAFAS, and DECA. The cap, originally set to expire at the end of this fiscal year, has now been extended through 2026. Heidi has been actively advocating at the state level, raising concerns about the administrative burden and

its impact—specifically how it's contributing to staff burnout and turnover among direct care providers.

VII. Community Relations Update

1. Run for Recovery

The Run for Recovery is happening on Saturday, May 10th!

- The 1-mile kids' run kicks off at 8:30 a.m.
- The 2-mile walk and 5K timed run both start at 9:00 a.m.

To guarantee a race T-shirt, be sure to register by April 16th.

Not a runner or walker? No problem—we're looking for volunteers! There are a variety of roles available for people of all abilities, and we'd love to have you join us in making this event a success.

2. 60th Anniversary Celebration

Join us for our 60th Anniversary Celebration on Wednesday, May 21st at the Blue Water Convention Center!

The event invitation proudly features artwork from our winning poster contest—created by a talented student from Yale High School.

Advisory Council members are invited as our guests—please contact Tracy Wells or email Tonia Hudson to confirm your attendance.

This year, we're honored to introduce a new recognition: the Karen Cole Family Advocate of the Year Award. After thoughtful consideration of many worthy candidates, we're proud to announce that Joann Wilton will be the inaugural recipient. Joann has been a dedicated advocate in our system for many years, making a lasting impact through her tireless efforts and commitment to families.

VIII. Old Business

Shane Chase shared that he had spoken with his supervisor about ensuring guardians can still reach group homes when residents are on outings. In response, Innovative has decided to provide guardians with the contact numbers of Renee and Mindy during intakes with new residents, so they have a reliable point of contact if the phones go out or if the resident is away.

Rosella inquired whether this will apply to current residents as well. Shane confirmed that they are working on distributing the contact information to the guardians of current residents.

Martha raised the question of whether the group homes could have a cell phone available for emergencies. Shane mentioned that this had been suggested previously, but it was decided to remove phones after incidents of them being stolen. Deb Johnson recommended reaching out to Dann Hayes to learn how SCCCMH tracks their phones.

Martha also asked again about the possibility of implementing electronic payments for the group homes. It was suggested that if a cell phone is provided, platforms like Venmo or PayPal could be considered for payments.

IX. Policy Review

05-001-0080 Recipient Rights Advisory Committee – There were no significant changes or suggested revisions from the Advisory Council.

X. Council Round Table

1. Cheryle Randall submitted an application to join the Advisory Council. Cyntia made a motion to approve the application, and Rosella seconded the motion.

Martha inquired about the maximum number of members allowed on the council, and it was confirmed that the council can have up to 12 members, which we have not yet reached.

Tonia will send a welcome letter to Cheryle to inform her of her acceptance.

2. Shane reported an incident at the group home where a staff member was struck by an individual. When the police arrived, the staff was informed that, if it was the individual's first offense related to a mental health issue, they would not make an arrest. As a result, tensions escalated after the police left, as the individual showed no concern about the police being called. When the officers returned, it took three officers to subdue the individual.

Kathleen will follow up with our police liaison to confirm whether the police were informed that arrests cannot be made on the first offense if a mental health issue is involved. Staff at the group homes need to feel safe.

3. Deb Johnson met with Ashley White, the founder of Thumb Coast Transportation. He offers affordable transportation services, charging only \$2 to \$2.50 per mile for medical appointments and other needs. While SCCCMH does not contract out for transportation services, DHS does. We will pass along Ashley's information to individuals as we have several who could benefit from this service.

In addition, Ashley also offers transportation to the airport if needed.

4. Judy inquired whether the group homes could notify guardians if their individual is sick or if any other resident in the home has a contagious illness. Nancy recommended putting in writing to the group home that you wish to be notified if your individual becomes sick, so they are aware of your preferences.

XI. Next Meeting

Thursday June 5, 2025, in room 204

XII. Adjournment

1:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tonia Hudson
Recording Secretary

Reviewed and Approved,
Kathleen Gallagher
Chief Clinical Officer