

LAKE COUNTY ADAMHS BOARD

Regular Board Meeting

Monday, September 15, 2025

6:00 p.m.

Lake County ADAMHS Board, 9237 Mentor Ave., Unit B, Mentor

Ms. Kurt called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Chair – Pam Kurt

Mike Hatton	Carl Dondorfer
Roberta Kalb	Jeffrey Taylor
Philip Orley	Martin Phillips
Nicole Parker	Frances Webb
William Wilson	
Joanne Zeroske	

Members Excused:

Stacy Kramer
Kristin Hess
Matt Sabo
Beverly Schilero

Staff Present:

Kim Fraser, Executive Director
Jackie Bruner, Director of Business Operations
Dan Rowles, Director of Quality & Clinical Operations
David Schick, Director of Marketing & Communication
Amy Tulenson, Fiscal & Reporting Specialist
Justin Williams, Administrative Assistant

Guests:

Leslie Quilty	Crossroads Health	Kim Hearn-Vance	UH/Lake Health
Paul Holm	Fine Arts Association	Angi Daugherty	Family Pride
Melanie Blasko	Lake-Geauga Recovery	Damir Pavicic	BRIDGES
Jonathan Lee	Signature Health	Andrea Gutka	WomenSafe
Karen McLeod	Extended Housing	Michelle Bertman	Catholic Charities
Carrie Dotson	Lifeline, Inc.		

MINUTES OF MEETING:

Mr. Phillips moved to accept the minutes of the August 18, 2025 Board meeting as mailed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kalb and the Motion Passed Unanimously. (26-014)

CORRESPONDENCE:

Ms. Fraser stated the Board received a letter postmarked August 28, 2025 from a youth in Lake County, who read the minutes of our August 18th Board Meeting. The letter praised the work of the ADAMHS Board while expressing the young man's belief that it is vital we focus on prevention services, specifically around substance use, for our youth. While he recognized that the ADAMHS budget is very tight, he reiterated that without even small-scale programs, citing specifically the creative art therapies, there would be negative impact on our youth in 10, 20, or 30 years. The ADAMHS Board greatly appreciates that this individual took the time to share his perspective. Ms. Fraser shared that the Board is, in fact, working to develop new prevention programs, through 2 grant proposals that have been recently submitted. The SOS Expansion Grant Proposal allows \$72,000 for middle school substance use prevention and mental health awareness. The program will be entitled, "Think Fast Interactive Education." The SAMHSA Strategic Prevention Framework Grant

Proposal allocates \$1,246,000 over 5 years and includes a speaker series with all schools, including faith-based, vocational and colleges, as well as providing parental education workshops.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Ms. Tulenson read the financial report of Board operations for the month of August, 2025 as follows:

Beginning Cash Balance	\$2,689,136.34
Plus: Cash Receipts for the Month	\$5,284,381.35
Total to Account For	\$7,973,517.69
Minus: Cash Disbursements for the Month	\$1,264,103.92
Ending Period Adjustments	\$ 0.00
Ending Cash Journal Balance	\$6,709,413.77

Ms. Zeroske moved to accept the financial report for the month of August, 2025 as read. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dondorfer and the Motion Passed Unanimously. (26-015)

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS & INTRODUCTIONS OF GUESTS:

Guests were welcomed and invited to comment on any agenda items.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Ms. Fraser highlighted some recent marketing and communication wins for the Board and agencies. She thanked Windsor Laurelwood and Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers for their participation in Overdose Awareness Day by having related events. Ms. Fraser shared the success and excitement of the Board's first Recovery Concert for Hope in partnership with The Fine Arts Association, Lake County Commissioners, City of Willoughby, and Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. The event gathered over 160 Lake Countians at The Fine Arts Association over Labor Day Weekend to honor lives lost to overdose, celebrate recovery, and raise awareness to addiction. Ms. Fraser was proud to announce the Second Annual Recovery Concert for Hope has already been scheduled for August 30, 2026.

Ms. Fraser took a moment to report to the Board that the November Regular Board Meeting has been cancelled in the past. She stated many Boards will only hold 10 meetings per year rather than 12. The November meeting was discussed during the Executive Committee meeting, and it was decided the regularly scheduled Board meeting would be cancelled.

Ms. Fraser shared some highlights from the Lake ADAMHS Board FY2025 Annual Report, as it was included in the Board packets. In FY2025, the Board expanded to 15 Board Members and welcomed 3 new leaders, advanced Crisis Services, continued work to develop a regional Crisis Stabilization Center, expanded the outreach of the Quick Response Team (QRT), began planning new services for multi-system youth, honored Pat Hengst with the first ever Behavioral Health Champion Award, and remembered Curt Lau who passed. The Friends of Lake ADAMHS (FOLA) hosted a record Celebrity Art Auction, NBA Player Chris Herren reached nearly 3,000 students regarding substance use, and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding gave the Lake County ADAMHS Board the ability to expanded mental health residential treatment capacity from 14 to 30 beds. More information regarding FY2025 for the Lake ADAMHS Board can be found in the FY2025 Annual Report.

Ms. Fraser reviewed funding over the last 10 years for the ADAMHS Board. In FY2016, the total of agency contracts was equivalent to \$10.5 million from 26 funding streams with the highest cash reserve being \$7.3 million and the lowest being \$3 million. Five years ago, in FY2021, the total of agency contracts was equivalent to \$13.2 million from 36 funding streams with the highest cash reserve being \$6.5 million and the lowest being

\$3 million. So far, in FY2026, the total agency contracts are equivalent to \$12.7 million from 26 funding streams. Ms. Fraser shared how the ADAMHS Board allocated every dollar comparatively between FY2016 and FY2026, with notable changes being due to Medicaid coverage changes for clients.

In FY16, the Board supported 19 agencies with \$10.4 million invested in ADAMHS supported services, while in FY26, the Board supports 16 agencies with \$12.5 million invested in ADAMHS supported services. Ms. Fraser then highlighted some specific changes in provider networks and funding for the providers since FY16.

Continuing looking at the last decade for the Board, Ms. Fraser shared some events that impacted or continue to impact the Board's future direction. On a global level, the height of the Opioid Epidemic in 2016/17 expanded services for detox, harm reduction, and medication-assisted treatment (MAT), yielded national and regional litigation, and evolved the Opiate Task Force (now called Addiction Task Force). In 2020, COVID-19 tested the Board's disaster preparedness, forced staff to work in remote or virtual environments, expanded telehealth, and shown a light on workforce shortages. On state and federal levels, funding shifts like Medicaid Expansion and Behavioral Health Redesign broadened our continuum of care with Creative Art Therapies, in-home services for youth and seniors, and adopted emerging best practices like AMSR, EMDR, integrated care, trauma-informed care, and peer support.

The legalization of casino and sports gambling along with medical and recreational marijuana, and the youth impact regarding the vaping epidemic and social media use continues to challenge and grow the scope of the Board. On a local level, Board operation changes added transportation services, downsized staff, relocated the office, and expanded cybersecurity policies and insurance. Access and stigma reduction were revealed through the ADAMHS Board levy passage in 2018 (0.7 mil) and in 2024 (0.9 mil), the inception of the Crisis Text Line/988, and expanded community marketing and outreach. Some key collaborations in the past decade promote access to support through trusted voices by training first responders and school staff while building partnerships with community organizations.

Ms. Fraser presented the FY2026 to FY2030 projections for the Lake ADAMHS Board. There are potential future budget impacts on all levels. On a federal level, the Board is threatened with a reduction in healthcare investments and Medicaid changes, changes to or the elimination of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHS) which will lead to an impact on grants, and the overwhelming federal mandates that are influenced by rhetoric on disenfranchised populations. On a state level, leadership changes can result in shifting budget priorities, Medicaid budget shifts puts Medicaid Expansion at risk, property tax issues could lead to a difference in funding, and legislation impacting levy opportunities could make it more difficult to attain funding through levies. Locally, flat levy funding leaves no opportunity to grow current levies the ADAMHS Board has in place. To combat potential funding issues, the Board has to have flexibility to adjust funding when agencies leverage additional grants, hold quarterly meetings with agencies to limit reconciliation needs, perform adjustments during the year based on staffing and baselines, and have the ability to reconcile underutilized grants throughout the year.

Ms. Fraser shared the Budgeting Plan for the ADAMHS Board which includes using 5 and 10 year projections to guide budgeting, prioritizing the Service Continuum, leveraging partnerships to maximize investment, and pursuing state and federal grants to diversify funding. Knowing she presented a lot of information before the Board, Ms. Fraser opened the floor and answered some questions from the group.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Ms. Parker motioned that the full Board approve the following Culture of Quality Policies:

- Cyber Security Policy (02-12-25) *New*

- Event Sponsorship Policy (01-11-25) *New*
- Communication and Distribution Policy (01-12-25) *New*
- Board Member Self-Assessment Policy (06-01-25) *New*

The motion was seconded by Mr. Hatton and the Motion Passed Unanimously. (26-016)

Ms. Kalb motioned that the full Board approve the FY2026 Lake ADAMHS Marketing Plan as updated. The motion was seconded by Mr. Philips and the Motion Passed Unanimously. (26-017)

Mr. Hatton motioned that the full Board enter into a SFY2026 non-Medicaid contract with Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers for Gambling Prevention and Treatment for an amount not to exceed \$75,350 pass-thru funding from OhioMHAS. The motion was seconded by Ms. Zeroske and the Motion Passed Unanimously. (26-018)

EVALUATION/QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT:

Quality Improvement Review of UH Lake Health

Ms. Hearn-Vance shared a PowerPoint on UH Lake Health reviewing the organization's Concord BHU. The Concord Continuing Care Campus provides inpatient psychiatric services for adults aged 18 and over. Their goal is to provide high quality services in a stigma-free environment to deliver the best outcomes in improving their patient's overall health and wellbeing. The organization has been contracted with the Lake ADAMHS Board since 2024 to provide treatment for uninsured Lake County adults in need of inpatient admission. UH Lake Health's BHU campus in Concord provides 20 adult beds in private rooms. They have a multidisciplinary team providing daily treatment groups focused on a variety of topics such as psychiatry, internal medicine, nursing, social work, recreation therapy, nutrition, music and expressive therapy groups. Patients are able to participate in multiple groups throughout the day.

UH Lake Health works hard to prioritize the ADAMHS Board Care Continuum by providing high-quality psychiatric services to Lake County residents in need of inpatient stabilization. The utilization review (UR) process is followed closely to ensure responsible stewardship of county funding. In collaboration with ADAMHS providers and community partners, UH Lake Health works to develop safe discharge plans that help reduce the risk of readmission. Additionally, education is provided on the ADAMHS Board system of care to support ongoing treatment within the community. In FY25, UH Lake Health admitted 32 patients for inpatient psychiatric care, accounting for a total of 290 bed days. The average length of stay was 11 days. Of the patients admitted, 56% were female and 44% were male. There were 2 readmissions during the fiscal year. UH Lake Health has reached over 75% achievement in each of their SMART Goals, while changing some goals for FY26 to ensure higher outcome rates after analyzing the data from FY25. The organization excels with program leadership, their multidisciplinary team approach, accessibility, and licensing and accreditation while struggling with measuring outcomes due to provision of inpatient-only services, workforce, staff engagement, and being off-site from a hospital. UH Lake Health's opportunities for growth lie within their partnerships, education, employee wellness initiatives, and surveys. Threatening the organization is uncertainty with funding changes and workplace violence, as they are off-site and have limited resources to respond to code violets.

Dr. Zarowitz answered some questions from the group. Since the facility is off-site from a hospital, they do not have the luxury of hospital security. They have a very tedious chart review system to analyze a client's behavioral tendencies to ensure they are a good and safe fit for the location before their arrival. If the client is not a good fit for the facility, the care team will find a better suited facility for the individual, to which Dr. Zarowitz stated, "Sometimes connect before re-direct." In the event of an emergency, Dr. Zarowitz assured

they group they do have an Inclusion Room they can deploy to de-escalate while they call for assistance to have the client removed to an emergency facility. Dr. Zarowitz answered some additional questions from the group regarding general clientele.

Mr. Rowles has reviewed the agency's QI plan. It is in compliance with their certification through OhioMHAS and it is his recommendation that we approve their plan.

Mr. Taylor motioned to recommend to the full Board that they accept UH Lake Health's Quality Improvement Plan. Seconded by Ms. Zeroske, the Motion Passed Unanimously. (26-019)

Quality Improvement Review of BRIDGES: Mental Health Consumer Empowerment

Mr. Pavicic shared a presentation on BRIDGES: Mental Health Consumer Empowerment providing an in-depth overview of the organization's history, mission, and current programs. Founded in 1993 through the Lake County ADAMHS Board, BRIDGES is a non-clinical, consumer-operated, peer-run organization led by a volunteer Board of Trustees made up of individuals living with mental health challenges. Since its inception, BRIDGES has been dedicated to empowerment, recovery, and wellness, evolving in alignment with public health policies such as Medicaid reform and the mental health parity movement. The organization's mission is to create and maintain environments where mental health consumers feel comfortable making their own choices about empowerment, while also informing, educating, and advocating at the community, state, and federal levels to advance understanding and support for mental health recovery.

The BRIDGES Service Model is structured as a hybrid system that blends activities and continuing education to promote empowerment through education and community engagement. Participants have access to in-house curricula such as *Personal Development*, *Wellness & Me*, the *Food Management Program*, and programs supporting aging adults. In addition to education and skill-building, BRIDGES provides opportunities for community integration through social and recreational activities like community events, bowling, miniature golf, cinema outings, and restaurant gatherings. This comprehensive approach not only supports individual growth but also strengthens social capital, which research has shown to be directly connected to improved quality of life and mental health outcomes.

Partnerships with community organizations further enhance the scope and impact of BRIDGES' work. Collaborators include Auburn Career Center, Ohio State Extension Office, University Hospitals/Lake Health, Lake Farm Parks, and various local businesses that host activities and provide resources. By leveraging these partnerships, BRIDGES expands access to opportunities for education, wellness, and socialization, reducing isolation and building networks of support. Ultimately, BRIDGES stands as a model of peer-driven empowerment, combining advocacy, education, and collaboration to address the social determinants of mental health, promote self-efficacy, and improve overall well-being for consumers navigating recovery.

Mr. Pavicic answered some questions from the group. Mr. Taylor inquired about the number of clients BRIDGES assists. Mr. Pavicic stated that the pandemic lowered the number of participants by 1/6 and one of their main priorities is re-growth. Currently, the organization averages 4+ new clients per month and 200 people involved in the program per year.

Mr. Rowles has reviewed the agency's QI plan. It is in compliance with their certification through OhioMHAS and it is his recommendation that we approve their plan.

Mr. Taylor moved to recommend to the full Board that they accept BRIDGES' Quality Improvement Plan. Seconded by Ms. Kalb, the Motion Passed Unanimously. (26-020)

Next Meeting Date is Monday, October 6, 2025. The location of the meeting is TBD.

*As the **OPERATIONS COMMITTEE** did not meet since the last full Board meeting,
the Board moved on to the next agenda item*

*As the **LONG-RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE** did not meet since the last full Board meeting,
the Board moved on to the next agenda item*

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business to bring before the Board.

NEW BUSINESS:

Payment of Bills Ms. Phillips moved that the Board approve the August bills totaling \$938,209.22 be paid as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Webb and the Motion Passed Unanimously. (26-021)

GOOD OF THE GROUP:

Ms. Fraser shared that Mr. Rowles is in serious trouble, he's been *arrested*. Dan has been "charged" with the crime of caring too much and sentenced to United Way of Lake County's Jail or Bail program. If we don't raise enough donations, Dan will be stuck behind bars and taken away by a Laketrans bus. Every dollar goes directly to support United Way programs that change lives in our community. You can either donate to free Dan from his shackles, or donate to keep him locked up.

As there was no further business, Mr. Hatton made a motion to adjourn at 6:47 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Zeroske. (26-022)

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Kurt
Chair

Mike Hatton
Treasurer