



A Community Mental Health / Developmental Disabilities / Addictive Diseases Program

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**NEW HORIZONS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
2100 Comer Avenue – New Horizons Training Room
Columbus, GA 31906**

Date of Meeting: May 11, 2026

Members Present: Damon Hoyte, Nancy Schroeder, Arcola Scott, Terry Edwards, Karen Bussey, Ed Harbison, Sandra Gill, Laverne Chaffin, and Linda McElroy

Members Excused: April Hughes

Staff Present: Andrea Winston, Denise Wade McLeod, Kenyetta Plummer, Mary Hannify, Susan Gallagher, LaKaren Rickman, Sherry Raya, Molly Jones, and Lisa Dionne

CALL TO ORDER: Board Chair Damon Hoyte called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m. A quorum was established at that time.

RECOGNITION OF GUEST(S) ATTENDING TODAY'S MEETING: Nick Garcia, Attorney, and Valona Baldwin, DBHDD Regional Services Administrator.

*** SECRETARY'S MINUTES (Approval of March 9, 2026, minutes):** M/S/P Arcola Scott/ Terry Edwards to approve the March 9, 2026, Board minutes, Board approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: It was announced that Nancy Schroeder and Sandra Gill's Board terms will conclude on June 30, 2026, and they will not be returning as members of the Board. Both have served faithfully for many years and their dedication to New Horizons is valued beyond measure.

Andrea announced the DBHDD Region 6 offices have of relocated into the same building as New Horizons at 2100 Comer Avenue.

The Board was also informed that the recent CARF survey was completed successfully. Andrea expressed confidence that the agency will receive a three-year CARF accreditation in the coming weeks.

The Mental Health Mindful Walk will be held today at Lakebottom Park beginning at 5:30.

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S ROSTER/VACANCIES: With the departures of Sandra Gill and Nancy Schroeder from the Board, members were encouraged to recommend community leaders with lived experience to fill the upcoming vacancies. At present, there is a vacancy in Talbot County. Following the departures of Mrs. Gill and Mrs. Schroeder, there will be two vacancies in Muscogee County.

FINANCIAL REVIEW: For the period ending February 28, 2026, revenues continued the downward trend experienced in January as the organization works through Revenue Cycle Management (RCM) issues related to PPS/CCBHC implementation. Medicaid fee revenue is currently at \$1,952,679 year-to-date (YTD), with part of the variance attributable to the \$328,576 six-month budget deficit reported in December. The February revenue target was 67% of budget; however, actual February revenue reached 59% of budgeted revenue, with Medicaid revenue reflecting a 43% unfavorable variance YTD.

February expenses were slightly below the YTD budget target, ending at 64% overall compared to the 67% benchmark. Despite controlled expenses, revenues continue to fall short of budget projections, resulting in a reduction in net position as operating cash reserves are being used to offset the revenue deficit. Average daily expenses YTD are \$65,690, and days cash on hand as of February 28, 2026, totaled 181.39 days.

Revenue Cycle Management challenges continued into March due to a combination of billing issues, lower-than-expected numbers of individuals receiving services, and the agency not meeting its Unique Daily Visit targets. March represents 90 days into PPS rate billing and approximately 75% of the fiscal year. At this time, the agency has achieved only 64% of overall budgeted revenue YTD. Medicaid fees and contract revenue are both approximately 50% of budgeted revenue, while DD Work Activity revenue is 34% of budgeted revenue YTD. Contract and Contract GIA monthly revenues are expected to decrease; however, a corresponding increase is anticipated through PPS billing rates.

Cash reserves continue to be utilized to support the transition to the CCBHC model. Overall expenses are currently at 72% of the YTD budget. A review of expenditure indicates that some budget categories are tracking near the 75% benchmark, while others are either above or below projected levels. Personnel costs remain within expected ranges; however, Legal Fees and Court Services, Travel and Training, and Equipment expenses are significantly over budget. The organization's current net position is \$11,280,626.

The 2026 Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program competition opened April 13, and all applications were submitted May 8. New Horizons applied for the ESG Hotel/Motel, ESG Homeless Prevention, and ESG Rapid Rehousing for the grant year beginning October 1, 2026, ending September 30, 2027. Applications for Permanent Supportive Housing and Supportive Services are opening soon. Award amounts will be announced at the end of the competition.

VISION OF STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE -BANKING: Susan's presentation explained how New Horizons maintains strong internal controls over accounting practices, aligned with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) standards established by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). Internal controls and procedures are reviewed annually through the external audit to ensure compliance and completeness. Cash management controls include segregation of duties, monthly reconciliations, restricted access, and required documentation to safeguard assets and prevent fraud. The Board regularly reviews the Statement of Net Position, which includes key assets: cash, restricted cash, and investments. A table of all of the bank accounts used and what they are used for was presented and explained.

CERTIFIED COMMUNITY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CENTER UPDATE: Denise provided an update on the CCBHC transition, including Unique Daily Visit numbers from January through April, strategies to improve service utilization, and ongoing progress and challenges related to implementation.

It was noted that the agency is currently not meeting monthly service targets. Strategies identified to improve performance include increasing access to services, expanding the number of individuals served, and increasing utilization of underused services such as individual counseling/therapy, group counseling, and peer support services.

Challenges related to CCBHC billing and credentialing processes were also discussed. Despite these challenges, the agency continues to make progress in the transition process.

ZERO SUICIDE INITIATIVE: Lakaren Rickman gave a presentation explaining the who, what, when, where and why's of the Zero Suicide Initiative. It is described as an aspirational challenge and practical framework for system-wide transformation toward safer suicide care, and a lifesaving mindset that the only acceptable number of losses, due to errors in quality of care, is zero. Data was presented indicating Region 6 continues to have the highest number of suicides in the state of Georgia since 2022.

DBHDD LEGISLATION UPDATES: Andrea provided an update regarding recent legislative changes impacting the Board's structure and responsibilities. She explained that changes in legislation will result in modifications to the composition and function of the Board. Currently, the Board maintains approval authority; however, under the new legislation, approval processes will transition to DBHDD. As a result, the Board's role will shift from a governance function to a more strategic/advisory capacity.

The Board was informed of the appointments of Jade Benefield and Dana Glass as Executive CEO and COO of DBHDD. Additional information was also provided regarding the Commissioner's decision to designate CEOs as employees of DBHDD.

EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES: M/S/P Terry Edwards/Arcola Scott/ Board Approved Executive Session Minutes from March 9, 2026.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 4:53 p.m. M/S/P, Terry Edwards/Arcola Scott to go into Executive Session to discuss network interruption and CEO meeting with the Commissioner, Board approved.

At 5:15, M/S/P Arcola Scott/Terry Edwards exit Executive Session and return to regular meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Valona Baldwin announced the temporary relocation of the DBHDD Region 6 offices into the building at 2100 Comer Ave. This relocation is expected to be temporary for approximately two to three years while Region 6's permanent location at West Central undergoes renovations.

She also reported there will be a Regional Provider meeting for IDD providers on Wednesday, June 3, 2026, at the Upson County Senior Center.

DBHDD has taken over Crisis Intervention Training (CIT). A 40-hour, week-long training is scheduled in August in Columbus. Clinicians, Certified Peer Specialists, and other subject matter experts are needed to facilitate sessions. Facilitator orientation and site visits at New Horizons are also being planned.

Mr. Hoyte extended condolences to Susan Gallagher and Arcola Scott on the recent passing of their mothers.

ADJOURNMENT: At 5:21pm M/S/P Arcola Scott/Terry Edwards to adjourn the meeting, Board approved



Damon Hoyte
Chairperson