



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: March 9, 2026

Members Present: Arcola Scott, Terry Edwards, April Hughes, Karen Bussey,
Linda McElroy, and Laverne Chaffin

Members Excused: Ed Harbison, Damon Hoyte, Nancy Schroeder, Sandra Gill

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

CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chair Terry Edwards called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. A quorum was not established at that time but was established later in the meeting.

RECOGNITION OF GUEST(S) ATTENDING TODAY'S MEETING: Nick Garcia, Attorney, Frank Lumpkin, assistant to Attorney Nick Garcia, Valona Baldwin, DBHDD Regional Services Administrator

SECRETARY'S MINUTES (Approval of February 2nd, 2026, minutes): M/S/P Arcola Scott/Linda McElroy to approve the February 2nd, 2026, Board minutes, Board approved.

FINANCIAL REVIEW: Susan presented an informational power point presentation on December's profit and loss statement, and December's statement of net position. January profit and loss statement and January's statement of net position. December is the halfway point for the fiscal year and that we are right on target with total revenues at 49% and total expenses at 48% budget. Medicaid is 40% of the budget YTD with a 6-month budget shortfall of 328,576 below target projections. December was the final month before going live with the CCBHC PPS rate and that that December closed on a positive note with a month end margin of 85,555 and YTD margin of 240,861. January was our first month operating as a CCBHC and we held billing to ensure our work processes were correct. Susan reported that there was a 839,661 budget variance for the month and that Medicaid fees, GIA-FSS, and contract Revenue are impacted by CCBHC operations. Once the PPS rate is implemented, we should see a significant increase in Medicaid and GIA-FSS revenue to off-set the decrease in DBHDD Contract Revenue.

YTD we have an Operating Deficit of 456,703. We have a healthy net position with average daily expenses of 66,609 and days cash on hand of 185.59 days. Susan ended by giving encouragement that the Pot of Gold is at the end of the rainbow and that we have just begun our CCBHC Journey. Andrea talked about why we are holding billing to work with partnering entities to get authorizations in place and for test billing to be performed before opening the doors on billing.

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING GRANT UPDATE: Susan reported that the Permanent Supportive Housing Symposium was February 18–20, 2026, in Savannah, Georgia. During the symposium, participants discussed best practices, emerging strategies, and collaborative approaches to addressing homelessness and expanding supportive housing opportunities across the state. She informed the Board that the 2026 Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program competition will open on Monday, April 13, 2026. All applications, supporting documentation, and required organizational materials must be submitted by Friday, May 8, 2026, at 5:00 PM. She noted the importance of meeting these deadlines to ensure eligibility for funding consideration. Susan further reported that the ESG Program provides funding to support a range of services designed to assist individuals and families experiencing homelessness or those at risk of becoming homeless. These services include street outreach, emergency shelter, rapid rehousing, homelessness prevention, and related supportive services delivered throughout the state. She emphasized that these resources play a critical role in strengthening community efforts to reduce homelessness and connect individuals with stable housing and supportive care.

BOARD MEETING EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES POLICY: Attorney Nick Garcia and Compliance officer Kenyetta Plummer addressed the Board regarding the Executive Session Minutes Policy and provided an overview of the policy along with the proposed revision. The recommended change clarifies that Executive Session minutes will be presented to the Board for review during the executive session and voted on for approval at the subsequent Board meeting, ensuring consistency in the approval process and proper documentation of Board proceedings.

Following the discussion, M/S/P Arcola Scott/Laverne Chaffin to approve the Executive Session Minutes Policy as revised, Board approved.

***DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING, AND PUBLIC RELATIONS:** Chloe addressed the Board of Directors and provided an update on recent marketing and outreach initiatives for New Horizons. She discussed the organization's recent receipt of a Google Ads Grant and shared plans to utilize this resource to enhance New Horizons' marketing efforts and expand community awareness of available services. Chloe also highlighted the upcoming QPR on Tour initiative, which is scheduled to begin in May in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month where NHBH staff will tour in the community to teach QPR. This initiative will focus on increasing community engagement and providing suicide prevention education throughout the region. Additionally, Chloe encouraged board members to stay connected with New Horizons by subscribing to the organization's newsletter and following its social media platforms, including Facebook, to remain informed about programs, events, and community outreach efforts. Motivational speaker Marquis Hill recently presented in several of the rural counties and did a

phenomenal job engaging and inspiring participants. Board member April Hughes expressed her appreciation for the presentation and complimented the motivational impact it had on those in attendance.

DBHDD LEGISLATION UPDATE: An overview of House Bill 1368 and its implications for Community Service Boards and governance structure was presented. HB 1368 grants the DBHDD Commissioner authority to appoint an Executive Director for each CSB. The Executive Director will serve as the Chief Operating Officer and will be a state employee directly accountable to the Commissioner. The Executive Director will serve as a member of the Board, strengthening alignment between state oversight and local governance. The Commissioner is granted authority to remove an Executive Director if performance or governance standards are not met. The Commissioner may promote a current CSB director into the Executive Director role, with retirement benefits transferred to the Georgia State Retirement System. All CSB board members are required to complete training. This model has proven effective in strengthening governance and compliance. Existing boards will be reconstituted under the new framework while maintaining current membership and enhancing accountability. HB 1368 will move to the Georgia Senate, likely to a Health and Human Services committee. If passed, it will proceed to the Governor for signature.

VISION OF STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE: Andrea presented a PowerPoint on the organization's commitment to radical transparency and ownership. She emphasized the importance of acknowledging impact while avoiding defensiveness in leadership responses. Andrea outlined a strategic shift from a crisis-driven approach to one focused on recovery and accountable leadership, with an increased emphasis on operational excellence rather than legal defense. She further reported a transition toward more proactive, frequent, and transparent communication, guided by the organization's strategic "North Star." Andrea also noted her continued open-door policy and reminded the Board of the availability of the New Horizons corporate compliance hotline as a resource for reporting concerns and promoting accountability.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 4:31 p.m. M/S/P Arcola Scott/April Hughes, to go into Executive Session to discuss CEO Employment Agreement, Allegation letter, Board approved.

At 5:58, M/S/P April Hughes/Arcola Scott to exit Executive Session and return to the meeting.

M/S/P Arcola Scott/ Laverne Chaffin to approve the Employment Agreement, Board approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

No Board Meeting will be held in April 2026.

Four Board members terms expire in 2026: Sandra Gill, Linda McElroy, Nancy Schroeder, and Terry Edwards. Letters have been sent asking if they would like to be reappointed.

Edwina Turner's Father-in-law is in Hospice Care. Please keep the family in your prayers.

Valona reported that after 16 years, the State of Georgia has completed the Department of Justice Settlement Agreement for Behavioral Health services. She announced that the DBHDD Region 6 Field office is moving to 2100 Comer Avenue, 2nd floor. A tentative timeframe to complete the move by the end of March is on track, and the administrative processes are still underway. She indicated that Heather Smith, Coordinator for Crisis Intervention Training may have reached out to our NHBH partners with a request for potential CIT facilitators.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None presented

ADJOURNMENT: At 6:06 p.m., M/S/P Arcola Scott/April Hughes to adjourn the meeting, Board approved.

Damon Hoyte
Chairperson