

**SOUTHERN REGIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POLICY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

DATE: Wednesday, May 8, 2024

TIME: 8:00 a.m.- Adjournment

Meeting Location: Virtual - Online Only

This meeting held via teleconference at: Join Zoom [Meeting Login Link](#) (see full details in the notes section below). – check online and links at the bottom.

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call** (Chair, Dr. Kevin Osten-Garner, and Coordinator, Mark Funkhouser)

Members Attendance:

Dr. Kevin Osten-Garner (Chair)

Stacy Smith (Vice-Chair) – absent – excused.

Assemblyman Gregory Hafen II

Missie Rowe

Boonn Hem

Jaren Stanton

Sarah Dillard

Brenda O’Neill

Dr. Whitney Owens

Coleen Lawrence

Chief Scott Lewis

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kevin Osten-Garner at approximately 8:00am. Chair Osten-Garner explained that McKay Traynor would be stepping down from serving on the Board.

- 2. Public Comment:** none given
- 3. For Possible Discussion and Action:** Scott Lewis motioned to approve the minutes for the April 10, 2024, Southern Regional Policy Board Meeting. Motion was seconded by Boonn Hem. All in favor, none opposed.
- 4. For Possible Discussion and Action:** continue the facilitated discussion and action to develop, determine, and refine board 2024 priorities around rural behavioral health (Chair/Vice-Chair and Board). (See attachments under *handouts* at the end of the meeting minutes)

Kevin Osten-Garner first explained the timeline of priorities going forward. Mr. Osten-Garner noted that they would be looking at priority #3 which is Crisis Response and Stabilization, as this connects with other priorities of Access/Barriers of Care and Transportation and Transport. Once discussed, the Board would then identify potential speakers to help clarify information at the June meeting, and then refine and develop the language for a Bill Draft Request (BDR) at the July and August Policy Board Meetings. This timeline will ensure readiness of a BDR submission by September 1, 2024.

The coordinator began the discussion by reviewing slides from a presentation that was given to the Behavioral Health Policy Board Advisory Committee (BHPAC), regarding Crisis Stabilization and Response (see attachment under *handouts*).

Kevin Osten Garner challenged the Board by asking “Where are we seeing the gaps in access, laws, our resources, to really focus on the policy side, what is missing?”

Chief Scott Lewis expressed his frustration and exhaustion due to every incident that him and his team had dealt with in the past week that had a behavioral/mental health issue attached, with no resolution on what to do. Mr. Lewis also noted that almost all the individuals involved were incarcerated as a result. Mr. Lewis mentioned that so many areas (including Tonopah, Desert View) are in need of assistance, as they do not have the space consideration for the crisis holds and behavioral health issues. Mr. Lewis noted that while trying to provide assistance, there is nothing further down the line that is in the immediate future policy wise, to truly affect improvement. Lastly, Mr. Lewis brought up the OSHA Regulations (as discussed in previous meeting) explaining that it has the potential of further hindering successes by impacting the staffing models and creating criteria that most likely every volunteer organization within not only Nevada, but other states will be unable to accommodate. Assemblyman Hafen noted his efforts alongside other stakeholders regarding this matter. (See corresponding links)

- <https://www.osha.gov/emergency-response/rulemaking>
- <https://www.nvfc.org/comment-period-extended-for-oshas-updated-emergency-response-standard/>

Coleen Lawrence recommended trying to take some of the stressor systems off the hospitals and first responders and putting them back on the community systems. Ms. Lawrence referenced that THRIVE acts as an “Urgent Care” for mental health, as they do short term therapy, and stabilization to aid the hospitals. Ms. Lawrence noted that, in the past 3 years, they have managed 400 crisis calls in various areas. Lastly, Ms. Lawrence suggested the assistance of the Clinical Directors to come and share information as to what can be done at that level and offer solutions.

Chief Scott Lewis referenced the mental health incidents that he had mentioned earlier, noting that most of the individuals involved were wanted in various states that did not have extradition requirements attached to them, and in turn, deeming this area a “safe” place for them. Other Board members noted the increase of transient population in their areas.

Sarah Dillard discussed the importance of understanding what receiving medical facilities require when it comes to medical clearance and medical detox that are in place for patients. Ms. Dillard also discussed increasing the capacity of community health workers-noting that they can be certified in less than a year and would greatly aid the current shortage of professionals. Lastly, Ms. Dillard explained that the requirements within the EMS profession are not supportive to the volunteer departments, and possibly looking at regional districts that could be responsible for hiring for EMS providers to remain and comply with certifications requirements.

Referencing the issues regarding population from other states, Chair Osten-Garner posed questions to the Board as they need to think about this on many separate levels. One, looking at how they are doing this from a policy perspective of prevention and intervention in their home communities with their citizens. Secondly, thinking about how/what is happening when the State is having more individuals from outside of its boundaries or outside of the counties that are having to work with this. Lastly, is there some other policy intervention that could be considered? In relation to these topics, Scott Lewis mentioned that during his conversations with the Sheriff's office, he queried them as to the number of people that they meet daily that have outstanding warrants in other jurisdictions. Their answer was an estimated thirty to fifty percent of their contacts who have warrants out for them in varying jurisdictions. Assemblyman Hafen inquired as to why there was no extradition, and if it was a state policy, county policy or state to state issue. Mr. Lewis noted that it is not cost effective for the states to bring them back, nor do other states want them to return. Jaren Stanton, board member and District Attorney (DA) for Mineral County, added that when asking for a warrant (at least in his jurisdiction), the DA will ask the judge, and the judge will set what the extradition limits are, noting that there is also a funding element to it-as to how County and State funds are spent on those individuals as well. The discussion also reflected upon the difference between misdemeanors that are not usually levels that warrant extradition as opposed to more serious felonies.

Assemblyman Hafen discussed efforts of Senator Titus and Senator Stone regarding reciprocity and the Compacts in the State currently. Mr. Hafen recommended a future agenda item, in the form of a letter of support for the various compacts or reciprocity that overlap in mental and behavioral health areas, to the Interim Health and Human Service Committee. Dr. Osten-Garner requested a resource regarding what Dr. Titus and others are looking for in terms of language for the compacts, so that the letter of support is ready for Board consideration in June. The coordinator also referenced Elyse Monroy as a possible resource for policy guidance. (See corresponding link on the reciprocity issue - <https://licensureproject.org/>).

Dr. Whitney Owens noted that the psychology board was the first mental health board in the State to jump on their compact. Regarding reciprocity, Dr. Owens explained that a few years ago, the psychology board worked closely with Valerie Haskins, Rural Behavioral Health Coordinator, on a bill for increased reciprocity. Lastly, Dr. Owens noted that interstate compacts are very helpful because there is a governing body that evaluates individuals in a standardized way, and as a result on their interstate compact (PSYPACT), there are around 4,000 or 5,000 additional psychologists who can practice in the State. Board Member, Whitney Owens, stated she would like to be involved in the process of writing the letter of support mentioned above.

Kevin Osten-Garner asked Coleen Lawrence about the transient population, and how her teams are getting paid for their services when those individuals may not be residents of the State and for those who do not have insurance. Ms. Lawrence explained that these efforts are funded through her agency, CPLC Nevada, as they do not always charge for services and have not been paid since the grant ran out in February of 2023. However, Ms. Lawrence noted that that is why there is a big push on crisis funding for Medicaid. Chair Osten-Garner also

inquired about the Medicaid Emergency funding and whether that requires a person to be a resident of the State to be able to bill. Ms. Lawrence confirmed that yes, it does require residency. Dr. Osten-Garner explained that he would be seeking out information from the other Policy Boards regarding how others are stabilizing and having consistency and predictability around crisis stabilization funding because this is a united issue and/or a possible BDR prospect.

Boonn Hem referenced her efforts in the Tonopah Jail and noted that they are missing that human connection component with in-person support groups and faith-based activities to supplement professional services. Brenda O'Neil with Duckwater Tribe mentioned that being in the very Northern Nye County area, that it is difficult to get services and providers out there because of distance-noting that it is a struggle across service sectors.

Missie Rowe, CEO/Administrator of Gover C. Dils Medical Center in Lincoln County and current board member, discussed the strictness of the NRS statutes that govern the use of indigent funds, noting that she cannot even get paid for someone that goes through the county on a mental health crisis. Chair Osten-Garner suggested a BDR prospect of recommending language change to the statutes to open the funding stream and make it more available and decrease some of the burden when trying to figure out how to get paid for the crisis interventions that everyone is doing. Assembly Hafen referenced \$200,000 that the Governor approved for behavioral health, out of the provider fee and noted that that was recently approved by the Interim Finance Committee and would be worthwhile to contact DHHS (Department of Health and Human Services) to be informed as to how the money will be distributed and when. Sarah Dillard would like more understanding of the responsibility of payments for reimbursement and getting reimbursement in a timely manner.

Chair Osten-Garner questioned the Board as to whether there were presentations from experts on topic areas for June that they would like to find speakers on, to help clarify anything to make a decision in July as to what the focus will be for a Bill Draft Request. Dr. Whitney Owens suggested that speakers on very specific ideas and implementation would be helpful.

Coleen Lawrence stated that she will bring in Dr. Lisa Durette and Dr. Duane Runyon to aid in the discussions for June. They will do a presentation on their clinical model and system at the June Policy Board Meeting. Scott Lewis also noted that the OSHA Regulation (discussed previously) should be something that has a close watch on it as well. Chief Lewis agreed that a letter of support from the Board regarding the proposal and the adverse impacts would be helpful. Public Comment ability for the OSHA Regulation will close sometime mid-June 2024.

The coordinator suggested possible presentations in June on 988 funding from the State, and/or Elyse Monroy from Belz and Case in a 2025 legislative priorities overview. Dr. Osten-Garner and the Board agreed that these presentations should be part of the June Policy Board Meeting. Chair Osten-Garner will work with coordinator and Vice-Chair Stacy Smith to finalize and facilitate the upcoming agenda items-noting that there will be a full agenda in June.

5. **For Information and Discussion:** Southern Regional Behavioral Health Coordinator update on activity and grant deliverables, scope of work, and description of services (Coordinator).

The coordinator explained that he had drafted and submitted his Annual Report internally to NRHP (Nevada Rural Hospital Partners) and the same draft to the State and it will be sent out to Board members for their feedback before final approval and re-submission. The coordinator mentioned that he will travel in both May and June, including trips to Hawthorne for the Behavioral Health Task Force meeting and Tonopah Coalition meeting and a project on youth homelessness in the rural frontier. The coordinator mentioned he will also be traveling to Lincoln County for their Coalition meeting in late May. The coordinator discussed efforts being made in making harm reduction opioid kits that will be distributed. Lastly, the coordinator referenced working on the opioid use disorder and community continuation of care project with Bill Teel and the State.

A copy of the Coordinator's Report and Board Goals can be found at the following link:
<https://nvbh.org/pdf-preview?id=5205>.

Boonn Hem noted that she will provide the coordinator with the existing locations in Nye County that currently have opioid kits, and coordinator stated that he will be getting with key people in the areas to discuss locations. Ms. Hem also suggested putting them in the patrol cars in Nye County also.

6. **For Possible Action:** Discussion and Approval of Future Agenda Items (Coordinator/Board)

- a. Board Opening: "law enforcement representative" with "behavioral health experience/knowledge." (NRS.433.429 (4)). (ongoing)
- b. Possible experts or additional input related to emerging legislative priorities.

Kevin Osten-Garner explained that the parameters for McKaye Traynor's open seat on the Board will be added to the June agenda, noting that the seat is approved and appointed by the Board and nominations can be made by board members (See attached link).

<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/NRS-433.html#NRS433Sec425>

Dr. Osten-Garner concluded this segment with two follow-up (as a possible action) items from this meeting.

- 1) A draft letter for the OSHA regulation (with assistance from Chief Scott Lewis).
- 2) A draft letter of support for the Compacts with links (with assistance from Dr. Whitney Owens).

This will be added to the June agenda.

7. **Public Comment:** Laurie Soriano of Nevada PEP gave thanks to the Board and its members for their efforts in BDR considerations and for the opportunity for her to talk about families and youth, and their concerns.
8. **For Possible Action:** the meeting was adjourned by Chair Kevin Osten-Garner at approximately 9:43am. Chief Scott Lewis motioned to adjourn the Southern Regional Behavioral Policy Board Meeting. Motion was seconded by Boonn Hem. All in favor, none opposed.

AGENDA POSTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

Physical Locations:

Nevada Rural Hospital Partners: 4600 Kietzke Lane; Suite I-209, Reno, Nevada 89502, and Division of Public Behavioral Health: 4126 Technology Way, 2nd Floor, Carson City, Nevada 89706.

Southern Regional Behavioral Health Website: <https://nvbh.org/southern-behavioral-health-region/>. Please refer to the Publications and Reports Section for more information.

Department of Health and Human Services Website:

[https://dpbh.nv.gov/Boards/RBHPB/Board Meetings/Meetings/](https://dpbh.nv.gov/Boards/RBHPB/Board_Meetings/Meetings/) (here you can find the agendas and minutes for current meetings including an archive of previous meetings and a listing of board members)

Nevada Public Notices: <https://notice.nv.gov/>.

Meeting Materials: if you need supporting documents for this meeting, please notify Mark Funkhouser, Southern Regional Behavioral Health Coordinator, at (775) 827-4770 ext. 19 or by email at mark@nrhp.org

Handouts:

- *Board Planning Grid:* <https://nvbh.org/pdf-preview?id=5206>
- *Senate Bill document on Reciprocity in chat:* <https://nvbh.org/pdf-preview?id=5215>