

Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse  
Alaska Mental Health Board

Approved Summer Board Meeting Minutes

Videoconference

July 17, 2023

**Dually Appointed Members Present:** Monique Andrews, Robert Dorton

**AMHB Members Present:** Acting Chair Brenda Moore, Karen Malcolm-Smith, Sharon Clark, Tonie Protzman, James Savage

**AMHB Members Absent:** Jeanne Brady, unexcused; Tanya Hicks, unexcused

**ABADA Members Present:** Acting Chair Anthony Cravalho, Chase Griffith, Philip Licht, Christine Robbins, Katholyn Runnels, Renee Schofield, Kara Nelson

**ABADA Members Absent:** Kathleen Totemoff, excused

**Ex-Officio Members:** Laura Russell, Tracy Dompeling, Duane Mayes, Adam Rutherford, Carrie Collins

**Staff:** Stephanie Hopkins, Acting Executive Director; Jennifer Weisshaupt, Health Planner II; Eric Morrison, SSPC; Charity Lee, Health Planner II; Kevin Holian, Administrative Assistant II.

Minutes Prepared by: Paula DiPaolo, Peninsula Reporting

MONDAY, JULY 17, 2023

CALL TO ORDER – 9:00 a.m.

Acting Chair Brenda Moore called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for attending. The mission statement was read.

ETHICS DISCLOSURES

<b><u>Anthony Cravalho</u></b>	Works for a tribal health organization that bills Medicaid as well as being a state, federal, and Trust grantee.
<b><u>Robert Dorton</u></b>	Employed by Tanana Chiefs Conference and works with the Fairbanks Reentry Coalition.
<b><u>Philip Licht</u></b>	President and CEO of Set Free Alaska which bills Medicaid and has state, federal, and Trust grants. Board member of Recover Alaska and Alaska Behavioral Health Association, which both receive state funding.
<b><u>Brenda Moore</u></b>	President of Christian Health Associates, which receives state and Trust funding and Medicaid reimbursement.

**Monique Andrews**

A provider at Providence Alaska Medical Center, which receives state grants and funds from Medicaid.

**Tonie Protzman**

Executive director for the National Association of Social Workers, which receives federal funding.

**Kara Nelson**

Works with True North Recovery, which receives Medicaid reimbursement, state grants, and Alaska Mental Health Trust grants as well as the Mat-Su Health Foundation; co-chair of the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition, and on the board of Careline Alaska.

**James Savage**

Director of operations for True North Recovery, which receives state funding, Mental Health Trust grants, Mat-Su Health Foundation funding and Medicaid pass through. Co-chair for the Mat-Su Opioid Task Force and board member of Mat-Su Alano Club.

The other members of the Boards had no conflicts to declare.

*APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES*

Anthony Cravalho **MOVED** to approve the agenda as presented, **SECONDED** by Renee Schofield. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**.

Anthony Cravalho **MOVED** to approve the minutes from the meeting of March 21, 2023 meeting as presented, **SECONDED** by Philip Licht. Chase Griffith expressed his objection to the minutes as well as the March meeting in general.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Monique Andrews	Yes
Anthony Cravalho	Yes
Bobby Dorton	Yes
Chase Griffith	No
Philip Licht	Yes
Christine Robbins	Yes
Katholyn Runnels	Yes
Renee Schofield	Yes
Karen Malcolm-Smith	Yes
Tonie Protzman	Yes
James Savage	Yes

The motion **PASSED**.

*COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL UPDATES*

*Psychiatric Care Committee*

Brenda Moore reported that API recently acquired a new electronic health record system which is being populated and is scheduled to go live later this month.

Brenda Moore stated that a pharmacy feasibility study for both API and Pioneer Homes should be completed sometime this quarter. Subjects expected to be addressed in the report are as follows:

- API staff vacancy rates: Keeping the hospital staffed is a challenging process, and the vacancy rate is currently 27 percent. A large concern is the high cost of travel nurses.
- Strategic planning: A five-year strategic plan from consultant Denali Daniels is forthcoming, and more partner meetings are planned.
- Outpatient competency restoration services will be located within the Choices service building. An outpatient medical clinic for medications is also planned.
- Jail-based competency restoration services is planned for the Anchorage jail complex, and training is taking place at Goose Bay Correctional Center.

#### *Board Development Committee*

Renee Schofield reported that this committee is working on a training program for new members which would acquaint them with the bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order, board history, and some state policies. A mentor system is also being explored including conducting training sessions where procedural questions can be posed. An annual review for the full board is being considered to go over expectations and requirements such as travel policies and any Department of Law suggestions.

#### *EX-OFFICIO UPDATES*

##### *Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – Duane Mayes*

Duane Mayes, Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, reported that in 2021 the Alaska Work Matters Task Force was created to look at all policies and programs and services that have to do with competitive and integrated employment for Alaskans with disabilities. The task force members included representation from the Alaska Board of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Alaska Commission on Aging, Alaska Mental Health Trust, Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, and Statewide Independent Living Council. The task force final report and recommendations is available online through the Department of Health website. Director Mayes invited interested members to contact him for more information on the final report.

##### *Division of Behavioral Health – Tracy Dompeling*

Tracy Dompeling, Director of the Division of Behavioral Health, provided an update on the 1115 waiver. The renewal was submitted, and negotiations with CMS will start soon. In response to a question from Brenda Moore, she also spoke briefly about the 7.5 percent rate increase and payment reimbursement issues regarding Optum.

In answer to a question from Anthony Cravalho regarding the grant process and reductions in behavioral health grant funding, Ms. Dompeling stated that a Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) scores the application and its compliance with the requirements. The rate methodology is consistent across the board for every grantee, and there were some reductions because there was less grant money and more grantees this year. They also strive for equitability in fund distribution between different types of services and try to consider unintended biases in the PEC scores.

### Department of Health – Laura Russell

Laura Russell, Senior Behavioral Health Policy Advisor for the Department of Health Commissioner, described her background as a public defender and then her work for the State of Alaska. She now works in all the Medicaid areas but focuses on behavioral health, especially for the Behavioral Health for Alaska Youth project. That project is designed to get a better understanding on a regional basis about what services are available for Alaskan youth. Meetings will be held in each region, and a report will be issued summarizing the information received.

Ms. Russel also reported on the HB 172 regulations process for crisis stabilization centers. There is interim guidance on the Health Care Services website which provides two pathways for certifications and also a temporary licensure route. The HB 172 patient rights report for the legislature is being reviewed, and it is expected to be ready for public comment in August.

Ms. Russell also announced an upcoming presentation on the crisis system of care and HB 172 and a session on bioethics of psychiatric medication in ERs.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

#### ABADA SSPC Appointment – Athony Cravalho

Acting ABADA Chair Anthony Cravalho announced that an ABADA seat is vacant on the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council and asked for nominations or volunteers. With no objections heard, Anthony Cravalho will fill that seat until the October meeting

#### AMHB/ABADA HB 172 Appointment

This vacant seat was held by Kurt Hoenack who has stepped down from his position on the Mental Health Board. James Savage said that Kara Nelson has been attending the HB 172 meetings so perhaps she could be the board liaison.

#### ABADA Leadership Election

Anthony Cravalho explained that he has been serving as acting chair, but thought it was important that the role of chair be filled by election. This chair position would be held until the October meeting.

Renee Schofield **MOVED** that Anthony Cravalho continue in the role of acting chair, **SECONDED** by Bobby Dorton. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**.

Stephanie Hopkins asked that an election for a chair-elect be held so the executive committee has the full membership. Bobby Dorton nominated Renee Schofield, seconded by Katholyn Runnels. Hearing no objections, Renee Schofield was named chair-elect.

#### Resolution for Lee Breinig

Jenny Weissaupt read the following resolution into the record:

#### A Memorial Resolution Honoring Lee Chirstopher Breinig

Whereas, the Alaska Mental Health Board and Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and the broader Alaskan community lost a humanitarian leader on March 13, 2023 with the death of Lee Christopher Breinig;

Whereas, Lee was an advocate and ally for people experiencing substance use and mental health disabilities, including people experiencing homelessness;

Whereas, Lee served more than six years on the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, including elected positions of Vice Chair and Chair;

Whereas, Lee was a passionate and committed professional for policy change and board leadership;

Whereas, Lee emphasized his own duty and the duty of others to help people of the Native tribes and represent them in the seat he held;

Whereas, Lee was a healer and precious friend and brother to the many tribes in Alaska;

Whereas, Lee served on the Alaska Commission for Behavioral Health Certification Peer Support Advisory Board, and his humble leadership inspired many to assist with the development of Peer Support efforts;

Whereas, Lee Christopher Breinig was a brilliant, warm, and soulful man who exuded love and service for humanity;

Whereas, Lee's playful spirit and adventurous soul, thought-provoking philosophies, and deep connection to his roots enriched those fortunate enough to know and work with him;

Whereas, Lee much loved and respected his mother and spoke of her with high regard and credited her with his visionary and academic gifts; and

Whereas, his true legacy lies in the profound effect he had on countless others;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Alaska Mental Health Board and the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, on behalf of its members:

1. Recognizes the significant contributions of Lee Christopher Breinig and mourns his death;
2. Extends its sincerest condolences to his friends and family; and
3. Recognizes that Lee's words echo through the trees, the wind, the trails, and our hearts, where he will be deeply missed and never forgotten.

Renee Schofield **MOVED** to approve the resolution honoring Lee Breinig as presented, **SECONDED** by James Savage. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**.

#### [AMHB/ABADA October Meeting](#)

Stephanie Hopkins, ABADA Acting Executive Director, introduced a table generated by Jenny Weisshaupt and Charity Lee setting out the logistics for the meeting to be held in either Valdez, Seward, or Wasilla. An online poll was conducted with Valdez receiving 11 votes, Seward 3 votes, and Wasilla 2 votes. It was decided to hold the meeting in Valdez from October 2nd through the 4th.

#### [Code of Conduct Forms](#)

Stephanie Hopkins stated that Boards and Commissions requested that the members complete the code of conduct and oath of office forms that were due today. Members not in compliance are Monique Andrews, Chase Griffith, Katholyn Runnels, Kathleen Totemoff, Jeanne Brady, Sharon Clark, Tanya Hicks, and James Savage. Arrangements were made for the completion and return of the forms.

#### [Executive Director Position](#)

Stephanie Hopkins noted that the executive director position has been posted. A Hiring Committee has been formed and has drafted new parameters for the job. The Statewide Suicide Prevention Council will be a part of the executive director's duties in addition to the AMHB and ABADA. The position has historically been centered in Juneau, but it is open to applicants across the state if they are qualified in supervising a team from a remote location.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

A public comment period was offered, and no public testimony was received.

### **FINAL COMMENTS**

Board members offered their final comments of the meeting summarized as follows:

- Adam Rutherford recognized that the board has had some difficult times lately, and he believes it is moving back in the right direction, focusing on the people that the board serves. He thanked the staff for all their work.
- Bobby Dorton agreed with Adam that it's been a little turbulent, but he's happy to be a part of a greater picture, helping the people in Alaska. He added that he has visited six villages doing a culture camp regarding traditional peer support.
- Christine Robbins said she was glad to be a member of the board. She suggested that the members do a little outreach to the public to increase awareness of the board and perhaps have a table at other conferences to provide information.
- Karen Malcolm-Smith thanked staff and members for the tremendous work in keeping everything focused and rebuilding. She suggested that each member try to do a personal outreach to people to propel more participation in the public comment.
- James Savage said he was excited to see the board getting back on track and moving forward and is looking forward to seeing everybody in Valdez.

- Monique Andrews is looking forward to the next in-person meeting.
- Tonie Protzman echoed the sentiments of other members about getting back on track. She also mentioned that a table could be set up at the Alaska Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers conference September 20 – 23 at the Captain Cook. She also summarized the proposed legislation addressed during her trip to D.C. as follows:
  - SB 838, HB 1638, improving access to mental health.
  - Increase the reimbursement rate from 75 to 85 percent for social workers and behavioral health providers.
  - Social work Improving Student Success Act regarding a minimum ratio of social workers to students.
  - More Social Workers in Library Act to fund an internship for social work university students in regional libraries.
  - Community Mental Wellness and Resiliency Act (SB 1452) to establish a competitive grant program regarding a public health approach to mental health.
- Sharon Clark said it was a good meeting and a lot was accomplished. She thanked Stephanie and all the staff and especially Jenny for that nice resolution for Lee.
- Brenda Moore commented that there used to be a mentor program for new members which was exceedingly helpful. She said there had been a lot of turn over in the department and agreed it has been a challenging time but is thankful for the way this board meeting went and is looking forward to Valdez. She added that in her experience, in-person meetings generate much more public comment than virtual meetings.
- Tracy Dompeling appreciated the work of the boards. She was an ex officio member in the past and was happy to be back with the boards.
- Stephanie Hopkins thanked all of the members for the work and help given to the staff. She is also appreciative of the support that the Commissioner and directors have shown her. She is looking forward to the meeting in Valdez.
- Jenny Weisshaupt is also looking forward to the meeting in Valdez and said that the in-person meetings provide opportunities to build relationships and know each other better. She added that in her experience, identifying specific topics for public comment brings out more comment than just general public comment.
- Eric Morrison thanked the staff and members for all the work they do.
- Kevin Holian thanked everyone for the work done and for their patience with him with the way the state works and said it was an honor to be affiliated with the group.
- Charity Lee said this was her first board meeting and was excited to join the boards and work toward advancing all the different areas of social well-being. She added that SSPC received positive feedback from the recent suicide prevention conference. About 200 people attended either in person or virtually, and the program was focused predominantly on the State Suicide Prevention Plan.
- Anthony Cravalho thanked everyone for making the time to attend today. He reported that he also went to D.C. for some advocacy work and was very impressed with the knowledge shown by Alaska’s representatives and their staff regarding the 1115 waiver and the Crisis Now model. He also attended the suicide prevention conference and was impressed by the guest speakers.

## ADJOURNMENT

Tonie Protzman **MOVED** to adjourn, **SECONDED** by Bobby Dorton. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**, and the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

## MOTIONS

Anthony Cravalho **MOVED** to approve the agenda as presented, **SECONDED** by Renee Schofield. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**.

Anthony Cravalho **MOVED** to approve the minutes from the meeting of March 21, 2023 meeting as presented, **SECONDED** by Philip Licht. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

Monique Andrews	Yes
Anthony Cravalho	Yes
Bobby Dorton	Yes
Chase Griffith	No
Philip Licht	Yes
Christine Robbins	Yes
Katholyn Runnels	Yes
Renee Schofield	Yes
Karen Malcolm-Smith	Yes
Tonie Protzman	Yes
James Savage	Yes

The motion **PASSED**.

Renee Schofield **MOVED** that Anthony Cravalho continue in the role of acting chair, **SECONDED** by Bobby Dorton. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**.

Renee Schofield **MOVED** to approve the resolution honoring Lee Breinig as presented, **SECONDED** by James Savage. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**.

Tonie Protzman **MOVED** to adjourn, **SECONDED** by Bobby Dorton. Hearing no objection, the motion **PASSED**, and the meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m..