

**County Commissioners**  
Colm Willis, Chair  
Kevin Cameron  
Danielle Bethell



**Chief Administrative Officer**  
Jan Fritz

**MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**WORK SESSION**

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Quarterly Updates with the Marion County Health & Human Services (MCHHS)  
Executive Team  
Minutes

Thursday, June 25, 2026, 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Commissioners' Boardroom  
Courthouse Square, 555 Court St. NE, Suite 5231  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Commissioners:** Kevin Cameron, Colm Willis and Danielle Bethell.

**Board's Office:** Trevor Lane, Jonathan Sanford, Kendall Hall, Toni Whitler, and Matt Lawyer

**Legal Counsel:** Steve Elzinga, Jennifer Rogers.

**HHS:** Phil Blea, Sid Venkatachalam, Sam Andress, Debbie Wells, Rhett Martin, Carol Heard, Naomi Hudkins, and Sarah.

Commissioner Colm Willis called the meeting to order at 10:50 a.m.

**1. Welcome & Introductions**

-Commissioner Colm Willis

**2. Discussion**

- **Rapid Engagement, Assessment & Community Health (REACH):**
- **Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) Updates from 2024 & 2025**
- **Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Month**
- **Behavioral Health Resource Network (BHRN)**
- **Behavioral Health Housing Investment (BHHI) Funds**
- **Willamette Health Council (WHC) Board**
- **Member Position**
- **Family Resource Advocacy Network (FRAN) Update**

-Debbie Wells, Naomi Hudkins, Anna Maceira, Phil Blea, Sid Venkatachalam, Sam Andress, Melissa Gable, Carol Head, and Troy Gregg

- REACH:
  - Partnership with MCHHS, Salem Fire Department, and City of Salem:
    - Salem Fire paramedic.
    - Salem Fire Emergency Medical Technician (EMT).
    - MCHHS Mental Health Associate.
  - Responds to behavioral health crises, substance use concerns, complex medical needs, and social service needs:
    - Conducts proactive outreach to frequent users of emergency services.
  - Program goals:
    - Reduce emergency room visits and traditional public safety responses.

- Stabilize, connect to services, and prevent future emergencies.
  - Early outcomes (first three months):
    - 156 individuals engaged through 215 HHS-documented contacts.
    - 226 service calls with contacts to 170 individuals per Salem Fire data:
      - Discrepancy due to initial under-documentation of medical-only calls.
      - Documentation process corrected.
    - Two-thirds of contacts resulted in referrals or connections to services:
      - About 105 individuals.
      - 144 separate referrals.
    - Total of 282 referrals/service connections across multiple partners:
      - Behavioral Health Crisis Center.
      - 988/crisis services.
      - Hope Services.
      - Safe sleep sites.
      - Housing services.
      - Senior services.
  - Impact on high utilizers and 911:
    - 24% reduction in encounters with identified high utilizers.
    - 18% reduction in overall call volume associated with these individuals.
    - Early intervention reduces episodes and unnecessary emergency use.
  - Frees fire and ambulance resources to respond to higher priority emergencies.
  - Collaboration with City of Salem and Salem Fire leadership:
    - Weekly meetings and active medical director participation.
  - Geographic scope and Polk County/Wallace Marine Park:
    - Request for REACH to accompany Salem’s homeless services team to Wallace Marine Park.
    - Concerns:
      - Lack of fiscal and historical participation from Polk County.
      - Risk of overwhelming REACH team if deployed into Park:
        - Complexity and volume of needs there.
    - No expansion without cost sharing and engagement from Polk County:
      - Prefer City of Salem and Polk County work on appropriate response model.
      - Open to support Polk County based team as a buffer/filler once Polk County stands up its own resources.
- OHA OAR Updates from 2024 & 2025:
  - Major OAR updates starting October 2024:
    - Further revisions through March 2026.
  - Substantial overhaul of residential services rules to align with Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) and “choice model” for residents.
  - Key rule themes:
    - Expanded language and requirements on:
      - Resident rights and integration of services.
      - Cultural responsiveness and equity.
      - Food access and environment standards.
    - Increased training requirements in first 60 days of employment:
      - Medication administration.
      - Culturally responsive care.
      - Crisis de-escalation.
      - Additional mandated trainings as specified in updated OARs.
  - Administrative and operational impact:
    - Large increase in paperwork and policy work for residential programs.

- Each rule change triggers:
      - Policy and procedure revisions.
      - Reissuing and rereviewing residency agreements with all current residents:
        - Viewed as not trauma informed.
    - Increased administrative burden on supervisors and program managers to keep documentation and practices in compliance.
  - Safety and concerns:
    - State interpretation of HCBS rules has implied residents may have items like weapons in residential settings for protection.
    - Local stance:
      - Priority on safety over interpretations of choice.
      - Support for weapon free environments in residential programs.
      - Willingness to accept legal/policy risk and defend county decisions publicly if needed.
    - Concerns raised about drugs and alcohol allowances under broad choice framework.
- CAP Month:
  - Program ownership and structure:
    - Planning fully transitioned to HHS, with planning and committee model.
    - Use multiple subcommittees to avoid single large, unfocused group:
      - Car/caravan parade.
      - Activities:
        - Blue Ribbon Tree.
        - Bridge/building lighting.
        - Window displays.
        - Pinwheel installations.
      - Marketing.
      - Budget and fundraising.
      - Community outreach.
  - Recent accomplishments:
    - Annual caravan led by Salem Police with 20+ participating vehicles.
    - Resource gathering at Hope Plaza with:
      - 100+ attendees.
      - About 10 leaders presenting on child abuse prevention efforts.
    - Expanded proclamations:
      - 10 city council and county governing body meetings.
      - Growth in outreach to smaller and less urban jurisdictions.
    - Increased engagement with business community:
      - Sponsorships and donations secured.
      - Salem Greeters presentation meeting with high interest from small business owners.
  - Activities and branding:
    - “Paint the Town Blue” theme.
    - Blue Ribbon Tree at Center for Hope and Safety.
    - Lighting of bridges and buildings.
    - Window decorating.
    - Pinwheel displays representing children in the community.
  - Website and social media:
    - CAP Month domains redirect to Marion County web page.
    - Page is currently being rebuilt from scratch to:
      - Highlight CAP activities.

- Link to community partners' websites and resources.
  - CAP Facebook page:
    - Created and owned by community partner.
    - County stepped back due to policy concerns about county control of non-county accounts.
    - Route social media through official HHS and county channels.
    - Community partners manage CAP specific page.
- BHRN:
  - Drug Treatment and Recovery Services (Measure 110) funds to expand addiction treatment and recovery services:
    - Substance Use Disorders (SUD) screening and assessment.
    - Low barrier treatment.
    - Peer support services.
    - Housing barrier removal for people with SUD.
    - Supported employment services.
  - Performance against grant milestones:
    - Screenings:
      - Goal to screen about 274 individuals.
      - Achieved 900+ screenings.
  - Assessments:
    - Goal to complete 407 SUD assessments.
    - Achieved 430+ assessments.
  - Treatment:
    - Goal of 16,760 SUD treatment services to 838 individuals.
    - Achieved about 22,936 services to 1,099 individuals.
    - Includes medication services which inflates service counts but reflects real workload/daily contact.
  - Peer support:
    - Goal of about 2,600 peer support services to 432 individuals.
    - Slightly fewer total services, but more than double of unique individuals served.
  - Housing supports:
    - Goal of 30 individuals assisted into safe, stable housing in year one.
    - Assisted 21 individuals.
    - Funding will roll into year two to serve additional households.
  - Supported employment:
    - Goal of 216 individuals served with 3,200+ services:
      - Based on 3 Full Time Equivalent (FTE).
    - Achieved 76 individuals with 516 services provided:
      - Impacted by from 3 FTE to 1 FTE due to staff turnover.
  - Staffing and program adjustments:
    - Loss of two supported employment staff.
    - Remaining supported employment specialist continues:
      - Connect participants to felony friendly employers.
      - Assist with resumes, mock interviews, and education linkages.
    - Future grant goals to be adjusted to realistic levels based on an FTE.
    - Funding shifts due to year 2 grant reductions:
      - Delete one vacant supported employment position.
      - Move crisis clinical supervisor's costs from BHRN to crisis specific funding.
      - Family Support specialist at Juvenile Department under opioid settlement funds not BHRN.

- BHRN dollars reallocated to Addiction Treatment Associate to expand direct services.
- BHHI Funds:
  - Funding source and purpose:
    - \$6.32M BHHI Funds received by state.
    - Expand residential treatment and supported housing capacity.
    - Housing stabilization and barrier removal for those with behavioral health needs.
  - Capital investments - made via Request for Proposals (RFPs) to:
    - Pelton Project:
      - About 750k to develop residential treatment home:
        - Aspen House with 5 beds.
      - Existing portfolio includes Sequoia House:
        - Dual diagnosis MH/SUD.
      - Investment supports a second facility.
    - B2 Communities:
      - About \$1M toward Mistletoe Residential Facility.
      - Facility serves individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD) and co-occurring mental health needs.
    - Horizon House replacement:
      - \$1.476M to support development of new Horizon House facility.
  - Service and staffing supports:
    - Housing support services:
      - Funding for Qualified Mental Health Associate (QMHA) level role working with families on housing issues.
      - Position moved to another funding source to maintain function.
    - Program coordination:
      - Program Coordinator 2 managed RFPs and OHA liaison work.
      - Position vacated and not refilled as most funds committed.
  - Housing barrier removal / outreach & engagement:
    - Used for:
      - Security deposits and first month's rent.
      - Eviction prevention payments.
      - Ancillary supports.
    - To date:
      - 65 households assisted with deposits/first month's rent.
      - 38 households supported with eviction prevention.
      - 8 households assisted with other housing stabilizing supports.
      - In total 106 families/individuals assisted.
      - \$170,000 invested in stabilization and supports.
    - Barrier removal funds have been used conservatively:
      - One more year of support remains at current rate of utilization.
- WHC Board and Member Position:
  - Item regarding member position matter was addressed in another setting.
  - Needed confirmation email for designated representative has been completed.
  - No further substantive discussion occurred within this transcript segment.
- FRAN Update:
  - Project overview:
    - New co-located service hub with multiple agencies in same building.
    - Marion County Health will occupy first floor office space.
  - Facility and lease status:
    - Office location considered strategically well placed within building.
    - Lease negotiations are ongoing:

- Details being finalized, including price per square foot.
  - Meeting with property representatives and awaiting final terms.
- Service layout and operations:
  - Calendar showing which county programs will staff FRAN office.
  - Gives predictable, multi-program presence for those seeking support.
- Partner participation:
  - Current materials highlight Salem Housing Authority as a partner.
  - Expect Marion County Housing Authority (MCHA) to have presence:
    - Given jurisdiction and relevance to local housing needs.
  - Direction given to:
    - Ensure MCHA is engaged and represented.
    - Clarify office arrangements for MCHA within FRAN site.

### **3. Other**

-All

- Reallocate state mental health funds and County Financial Assistance Agreement (CFAA) amendment:
  - State reallocating dollars between internal accounts and providing additional \$844,000 associated with Community Mental Health financial agreement:
    - Specifically targeted to aid and assist services.
  - \$844,000 is “new” money to county, not replacement for existing allocations:
    - Reallocation of state accounts should not alter county’s approved local plan or reduce other behavioral health allocations.
  - Internal verification:
    - Finance reviewed amendment and increases of CFAA would have no negative local impacts.
    - Legal review finds no administrative rule conflicts in amendment language.
  - Use of funds:
    - Additional dollars will be directed to Aid and Assist program.
    - Existing aid and assist funding from working capital and Medicaid will be partially replaced by new state allocation.
- Governance and policy concerns:
  - Strong insistence that:
    - County’s locally adopted behavioral health plan remains intact.
    - State not to use funding as leverage to impose new OAR interpretations or de facto amendments to local plan.
  - Document in writing acceptance of funds does not require local plan changes.
- Broader policy context:
  - HB 5202 and related executive orders underpin several current housing and behavioral health investments.
  - Desire to better understand:
    - Legislative origins and purpose of these streams.
    - How Governor and state agencies may be planning to structure future stabilization or housing initiatives.

### **4. Next Steps**

-All

- REACH program:
  - Compile and report:
    - County’s share of REACH operating costs of 6 month or annual period.

- Budget proposal for continued REACH operations including:
      - Options for supplemental and ongoing budget.
    - A financial ROI analysis showing:
      - Dollar value of reduced 911 call volume.
      - Estimated savings/avoidance in emergency departments and other systems.
  - Obtain 911 center cost data from Salem Fire and incorporate into ROI.
  - Open recruitment for REACH role:
    - Maintain interim coverage to avoid service gaps.
  - Federal funding opportunities recently announced for 988 and related crisis systems and assess fit with REACH and partner agencies.
- OAR / residential services:
  - Update local policies and residency agreements as required by new OARs while:
    - Prioritizing staff and resident safety.
    - Seeking legal advice on rule interpretation where safety is at stake.
  - Participate in state rulemaking processes.
  - Monitor and flag any proposed OARs that:
    - Compromise safety.
    - Erode bed capacity or create impractical administrative burdens.
  - Work with counties to develop unified position on HCBS interpretation in high acuity residential settings.
- Child Abuse Prevention Month:
  - Develop a formal 2027 CAP proposal including:
    - Detailed activity plan and timelines.
    - Annual cost estimate (by category).
    - Internal budget request plus external fundraising approach.
  - Refine subcommittee structure and recruit additional partners to help meet 20–30% participation growth targets.
  - Enhance communications:
    - Draft plan for using ParentForTheFuture domains and county website.
    - Identify processes to achieve 24–48-hour turnaround for CAP related social media posts.
  - Participate in a countywide social media strategy meeting to:
    - Direction for promoting CAP content on county departmental channels.
    - Recommendations and use CAP as case study for cross departmental promotion.
  - Engage existing networks for CAP partnership opportunities and presentations.
- BHRN:
  - Provide historical baseline data on SUD treatment volume and individuals served prior to Burn funding to quantify growth attributable to Measure 110.
  - Adjust employment goals in next grant period to reflect current (1 FTE) staffing model.
  - Confirm and communicate with all BHRN partners:
    - Expectations regarding active participation in local coordination structures (Burn partner meetings, LADPC, etc.).
    - Funding decisions such as support for a Burn funded position at Painted Horse.
  - Ensure invitations and engagement for:
    - LADPC events (e.g., picnic with Painted Horse drumming).
    - Relevant youth focused events and openings (e.g., HYB food truck program) to strengthen relationships.
- Behavioral Health Housing Investment Funds:

- Data on how many households supported with deposits/first month's rent were homeless at intake.
- Continue conservative use of barrier removal funds to extend availability over next year.
- Track capital project progress:
  - Aspen House.
  - Mistletoe Residential Facility.
  - New Horizon House project.
- Identifying replacement/ongoing funding for high value housing stabilization interventions when current funds are exhausted.
- Willamette Health Council / board and governance:
  - Maintain current board/member arrangements as recently confirmed.
  - Ensure communication lines are open with county and regional health governance bodies.
- FRAN (Family Resource Advocacy Network):
  - Execute lease for FRAN office space, including:
    - Price per square foot.
    - Term and key conditions.
  - Confirm MCHA's presence and role at FRAN:
    - Coordinate space planning accordingly.
  - Implement calendar shoeing which county programs are present on which days.
- State funding / CFAA and HB 5202:
  - Send written request to OHA confirming:
    - The \$844,000 CFAA increase is new money.
    - Amendment and state account shifts do not alter local plan or other allocations.
  - Share with the Board:
    - Breakdown of aid and assist financing before and after new CFAA funds.
  - Background memo on HB 5202, covering:
    - Legislative history and intent.
    - Funding mechanisms and flows.
    - Anticipated future directions or dependencies relevant to Marion County's behavioral health and housing strategy.

**Adjourned** – time: 12:11 p.m.

**Minutes by:** Mary Vityukova

**Reviewed by:** Gary L. White