

*****APPROVED*****

**MINUTES
CENTRAL UTAH COUNSELING CENTER
AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING**

DATE: March 11, 2026

PLACE: 47 E 300 S
Richfield, UT 84701

TIME: 4:30 PM

PRESENT: Commissioner Sam Steed, Commissioner Ralph Brown, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Marty Palmer, Commissioner Vicki Lyman, Nathan Strait, Richard Anderson, Jace Ellsworth, Jared Kummer, Lynnette Robinson, Chad Williams, Christian Matthews, Kory Meacham, Kristofer Lundeberg, Samantha Payne, Elizabeth Hinckley

EXCUSED: Commissioner Scott Bartholomew

I. PUBLIC COMMENT:

No Public Present.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Ralph Brown to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2026 Authority Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marty Palmer. Votes by voice included Commissioner Sam Steed, Commissioner Ralph Brown, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Marty Palmer, and Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Commissioner Scott Bartholomew was absent. Motion carried.

Nathan Strait inquired about the Wayne County community's recovery following the county shootings. Commissioner Blackburn replied that healing would be a time-intensive process, but active recovery efforts are underway. Nathan thanked Kory Meacham and Chris Matthews and their teams for their quick response. Richard Anderson highlighted MCOT's valuable outreach. Chris emphasized the importance of community availability. Nathan then played an ABC 4 News clip of MCOT staff, and Commissioner Blackburn expressed appreciation for MCOT's work in light of the trauma experienced.

III. PERFORMANCE BONUS POLICY 1.1.15 REVIEW:

A year ago, we came to the board with this policy proposal. We recently surveyed staff to gauge their feelings about the policy. The results showed both strengths and weaknesses, with positive and negative feedback. It has caused division within teams. While we saw an uptick in direct service hours, staff are also not acting as team players if it doesn't directly benefit their service hours. As administration, we discussed various options, such as bonuses based on class (therapist, medical, nurses, etc.), but did not think that would work. We decided to potentially do away with the bonus structure due to the negative feedback received. We would eliminate this bonus starting July 1st. Richard requested to keep the bonus for a full year to gather Cost Report Data. If we develop another option, we will bring it to the board. The motion is to end the Directive Service Bonus on June 30th.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dennis Blackburn to approve to end the Performance Bonus Policy 1.1.15 effective June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Votes by voice included Commissioner Sam Steed, Commissioner Ralph Brown, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Marty Palmer, and Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Commissioner Scott Bartholomew was absent. Motion carried.

IV. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE/RECAP:

Nathan Strait gave an update/recap on the Legislative session that just ended, highlighting the following:

Senate and House leadership requested proposed cuts from the Legislative Fiscal Analysts (LFA) to the SSA/ (Changes proposed: \$191 million for \$80 million). The Utah Behavioral Health Coalition (UBHC) identified four items most detrimental to the Behavioral Health Systems:

1. Population-based mental health funding: \$23,602,800
2. Counties to pay their normal share of mental health funding for Medicaid Expansion: \$4,200,000
3. Utah State Hospital (USH) unit closure: \$3,363,700, and USH operations: \$5,000,000
4. Do not pay more than Medicare rates in Medicaid: \$7,890,000

On homelessness, the discussion remained quiet with little action taken which he noted as another positive outcome. HB 471 operationalizes HR1 (Omnibus Budget Bill Appropriations Act) by requiring agencies to verify residency, identity, citizenship, and work requirements. We are still working on how to implement this within the center. HB 572 addresses Behavioral Health amendments, including Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams (MCOT)/Receiving Centers (RC), justice-involved clients, and civil commitment rules. Nathan noted that this year we felt defensive, primarily trying to protect existing resources and what is needed to support our clients. HB 572 did not pass. Instead, \$400,000 was placed in a discretionary fund to help fund current MCOT and receiving

centers. While we have the funding for our Receiving Center, we currently lack the funds to staff it.

V. CUCC 50 YEARS:

Nathan Strait mentioned attending a meeting in D.C. where he spoke with someone from Southwest Behavioral Health, who noted it was their company's 40th anniversary. This prompted Nathan to reflect that CUCC started in 1976, making this its 50th anniversary. He suggested celebrating the milestone with staff to show appreciation, recognizing the center's history and evolution. He thanked the board for their role in the center's success. He spoke of planned events like parties and celebrations. Nathan also mentioned a member on Chad's team who is retiring after 35 years, just 15 years shy of having been with CUCC for its entire existence. The logo has been redesigned for the year, incorporating gold to commemorate the anniversary.

VI. NATCON 26:

Regarding Natcon, Commissioner Sam Steed is flying, while Commissioners Dennis Blackburn, Scott Bartholomew, and Marty Palmer are planning on driving. Commissioner Ralph Brown and Commissioner Vicki Lyman will not be attending. Nathan asked the attendees if they preferred to carpool, drive individually, or fly, noting that arrangements could be made for any of these options. It was mentioned that commissioners who drive their personal vehicles will be reimbursed for fuel. Nathan asked the commissioners to let him know what route they choose for travel so that he can make the appropriate arrangements. Commissioner Sam Steed asked if the schedule had been posted yet. Jace replied that it had not, but he is monitoring it closely and will provide updates. Commissioner Marty Palmer inquired about room reservations, and it was confirmed that Julie Lynn had made those reservations.

VII. ONE-TIME BONUS, POLICY CHANGES, AND APPROVAL:

Richard Anderson discussed the One-Time Bonus Policy. Currently, the policy requires all performance bonuses to be approved by the Executive Director and the Authority Board before issuance. Richard proposes changing the policy as follows: Bonuses at or below \$1,000 must be approved by the Executive Director and Financial Director. Performance bonuses exceeding \$1,000 must be approved by the Executive Director and the Authority Board prior to issuance. Performance Bonuses for the CEO or CFO must be approved by the Authority Board, regardless of the amount. It was noted that this bonus is not frequently awarded.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dennis Blackburn to modify the policy to allow the CEO and CFO to issue performance bonuses up to \$1,000 without requiring board approval. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Votes by voice included Commissioner Sam Steed, Commissioner Ralph Brown, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Marty Palmer, and Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Commissioner Scott Bartholomew was absent. Motion carried.

Now the policy is in place, there is an office manager who carried the load of two while they were trying to back fill the vacant position, and did a great deal, and the center would like to thank her. She will be receiving a bonus that falls within the \$1,000 limit of the new policy.

VIII. ONE-TIME BONUS - BOARD APPROVAL:

Richard Anderson came to the board seeking approval for a one-time bonus exceeding \$1,000 for Billing Specialist Tammy Arellano. He presented a graph of insurance revenue over the last eight years, demonstrating a significant increase since Tammy joined, with insurance revenue for 2025 close to \$800,000. He emphasized that she took on a broken system and successfully repaired it. Richard proposed an amount between \$2,000 and \$4,000, asking the board for their input on an appropriate figure. Discussion ensued with amounts varying between \$2,500 and \$4,000. Richard clarified that this would be a one-time bonus under the bonus structure, not a raise. Commissioner Sam Steed was agreeable to \$4,000, and Commissioner Vicki Lyman concurred, agreeing to \$4,000.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dennis Blackburn to award a one time bonus in the amount of \$4,000 to Tammy Arellano. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ralph Brown. Votes by voice included Commissioner Sam Steed, Commissioner Ralph Brown, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Marty Palmer, and Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Commissioner Scott Bartholomew was absent. Motion carried.

IX. FY2026 BUDGET REPORT:

Richard Anderson presented the Budget Report for FY2026 noting that Medicaid revenues are trending higher than budgeted at 67% utilization, partially due to receiving funds related to PRISM issues and the intentionally modest budgeting of Medicaid revenue. Medicare revenue is also higher. The Substance Use Disorder (SUD) side is showing a decrease in costs, which is also reflected in Medicaid revenue, suggesting a potential shuffling of funds. Actuaries have observed that post-pandemic, more people are losing Medicaid eligibility, thus indicating that less funding is required for SUD services. Wages and fringe benefits are slightly above the 67% mark but remain reasonable due to additional ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding. Travel expenses are low, partially attributed to NATCON not occurring yet. The receipt of ARPA funds has allowed for reduced spending on other expenses. Inpatient services are at 38% utilization, with a potential financial lag. Reaching \$700,000 in inpatient revenue would be considered a positive outcome. The Mental Health (MH) side is trending toward a \$1.7 million revenue over expenditure, and the SUD side is trending toward \$70,000 revenue over expenditure, consistent with last year's overall surplus of over \$1 million.

A motion was made by Commissioner Marty Palmer to accept the FY2026 Budget Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vicki Lyman.

Votes by voice included Commissioner Sam Steed, Commissioner Ralph Brown, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Marty Palmer, and Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Commissioner Scott Bartholomew was absent. Motion carried.

X. PURCHASE OF COMPUTERS FOR APPROVAL:

Richard Anderson presented an expenditure proposal to invest in new computers, noting that 100 computers are 10 years or older. Of the remaining computers, 34 are 5-10 years old, and 20 are 5 or less years old. He proposed starting with a purchase of 40 to 60 computers. Using a state contract, the cost per computer is \$780, making the total cost \$31,200 for 40 computers or \$46,800 for 60 computers. Laptops are also needed. Richard asked the board for a preferred quantity or dollar amount. Commissioner Ralph Brown inquired about a bulk discount, but Richard confirmed the state contract price already includes a discount. Commissioner Marty Palmer asked about the trade-in value of the old computers and if there is a year-to-year rotation plan. Commissioner Marty Palmer also asked about AI laws, and Richard mentioned that some computers run Windows 10, which will soon have its support dropped. Commissioner Dennis Blackburn asked if more than 60 computers were needed. Richard proposed approving \$60,000 to spend on the state contract for computers and laptops.

A motion was made by Commissioner Marty Palmer to approve the purchase of new computers and laptops through the state contract in the amount of \$60,000. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Votes by voice included Commissioner Sam Steed, Commissioner Ralph Brown, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Marty Palmer, and Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Commissioner Scott Bartholomew was absent. Motion carried.

XI. FLEET VEHICLE PURCHASES APPROVAL:

Richard Anderson requested the purchase of two new maintenance vehicles to replace the current F150 trucks, which have 5-foot beds and are used for pulling trailers. The proposal is to upgrade to F250 crew cabs with 6-foot beds. The cost estimate for the gasoline engine version is \$60,637.00, with the diesel option costing \$1,000 more. The board discussed the possibility of acquiring one diesel and one gas truck, and Richard expressed openness to further discussion on the matter. Commissioner Ralph Brown suggested approving a total budget amount and entrusting the Center team to decide the optimal engine type.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ralph Brown to approve the purchase of fleet vehicles in the amount of \$142,000. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Votes by voice included Commissioner Sam Steed, Commissioner Ralph Brown, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Marty Palmer, and Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Commissioner Scott Bartholomew was absent. Motion carried.

XII. RECEIVING CENTER UPDATE:

Richard showed the video of the building's demolition. We received feedback from the city and made the necessary changes to accommodate their concerns and requests. The plans are now complete, and we anticipate starting on the footings within the next week or two.

XIII. HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT:

Jace Ellsworth presented the Human Resources Report.

A. New Hires/Terminations

There have been no terminations since the last meeting. One new hire, Sydnee Horn is a new office specialist that back filled the open position on the Tri-County team.

B. Open Positions

Currently there are 2 open positions.

Case manager (Delta/Fillmore): We have received several applicants but not yet found the right fit. Jace noted that team leader, Chad Williams, has been patient with the process.

Recreational Therapist (Center Wide). We have started training seven Recreational Technicians. We need a Recreational Therapist to supervise them. We spoke with a candidate who is currently a personal trainer and is pursuing a Master's degree. The position has been posted on the state and our own websites.

C. Mandatory/Required Staff Trainings

Jace sent a report out to team leaders on delinquent training, showing current compliance rates of 96%-98% varying among the different teams.

XIV. QUALITY ASSESSMENT & CLINICAL DATA:

A. Clinical Services

Jared Kummer presented that training sessions were a key focus in February. On February 5th, Case Managers/Service Providers received training on Quality Assurance Performance Improvement (QAPI), concentrating on the purpose and documentation for various Medicaid services. This was followed by R6 Council Community Resources presentations. Therapists also participated in Medicaid services training on February 19th, specifically focusing on treatment planning and the purpose of several Medicaid services. Additionally, Saprea conducted a training session on Healthy Sexuality and supporting Childhood Sexual Abuse Survivors. Research indicates that it takes, on average, 20 years for a male survivor of sexual abuse to disclose the trauma. Anna LaDamus presented on Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI), noting it as a risk factor for suicidal behavior. Commissioner Vicki Lyman inquired if cutting was still prevalent, to which Elizabeth Hinkley responded that it is slightly down in middle schools. It was clarified that self-harm includes cutting and hitting, and does not automatically indicate suicidal intent. Jared shared an example of how a person's trauma was triggered by a specific scent. Richard related to the concept of scent-triggered memory.

B. Team Reports/Prevention

Elizabeth Hinckley (Libbie), the prevention team leader, gave an introduction on her team members: Chelsie Wilkey, who has been highly successful in establishing The SHARP Survey in Juab County; Alison Robinson, who excels in the Fillmore area; Jocelyne Rojas (Jocie), a Spanish-speaking member who recently relocated from Brooklyn, NY, and works in Sanpete; Brityn Simons, a recent graduate working on her master's degree in Tri-County and involved in numerous community events; and intern Jessica Lyon, who is currently working on starting two new coalitions in South Sevier and Wayne County. These new additions would increase the total number of coalitions to thirteen, adding to the existing eleven. Libbie discussed underage drinking, noting that it presents different challenges in Fillmore and Delta. In Fillmore, youth are purchasing alcohol at gas stations, while in Delta, they are drinking with parents. The different coalitions' approach is specifically tailored to address each area's unique issue. The Student Health & Risk Prevention (SHARP) survey is a tool used by community leaders, schools, and prevention teams to understand students' concerns and risky behaviors, which then informs listening sessions. The survey is administered to students in grades 6-12 on an opt-in basis, with an additional option for students to opt out. The survey covers topics such as physical, social, and mental health, substance use, social connection, basic demographics, risky behavior, and protective factors. It is a comprehensive tool that begins with Step 1: Topics & Data (student experience) survey. Parental involvement is an area that needs improvement in our area. Underage drinking in the six-county area has significantly decreased. Recent SHARP survey data revealed the following key points:

- Screen Time: 80% of students use a phone or device for two or more hours (exceeding the Surgeon General's recommendation); 36% check their phone every 15 minutes, and 37.5% check it every half hour.
- Well-being: 55% worry about suicide among peers.
- Substance Use: 6% have tried vaping (nicotine/marijuana).
- Protective Factors: 36% of kids in the area have rules regarding underage drinking.
- Negative Impact: 56.6% report that screen time affects their sleep, and 41.7% say it affects time spent with family.
- Positive Trends: A decrease in marijuana use, suicide, and vaping was noted, along with improving mental health, increased sleep, and an increase in family meals and connections.

The team plans to continue parent education and increase student engagement. It was also mentioned that Utah schools have banned phones on campus. Nathan commended Libbie for her incredible work and knowledge of the science behind prevention. Richard also praised her effectiveness in securing funding.

XV: CLOSED SESSION:

Not Needed

Potential Closed Session to discuss pending or threatened litigation and/or the character, professional competence of employee(s), property, or strategy session as provided by Utah Code Annotated §52-4-205

- a. Pending or Threatened Litigation

XVI: CLOSED SESSION ACTION:

Not Needed

XVII: MEETING SCHEDULE:

May 13, 2026 location TBD

XVIII: MATTERS FROM THE BOARD:

A motion was made by Commissioner Dennis Blackburn to move to close the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marty Palmer. Votes by voice included Commissioner Sam Steed, Commissioner Ralph Brown, Commissioner Dennis Blackburn, Commissioner Marty Palmer, and Commissioner Vicki Lyman. Commissioner Scott Bartholomew was absent. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:53 p.m.

Samantha Payne, AP Clerk