

Catawba CMHC Board Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2026

Meeting held by Zoom

Attendees:

BOARD MEMBERS	CATAWBA CMHC STAFF	SCBHDD OMH STAFF	GUESTS	ABSENT
Dr. Troy Fitzpatrick- Board Chair	Tamara Edrington- Executive Director	Erin Laughter	Charles Wimmer	Virginia Bowman
Jeffrey Ellison- Board Vice-Chair	Michelle Mitcham- Administrator		Douglas Tiedt, MD.	
Jessica Schmittle	Elizabeth Schrum- Administrative Assistant			
Sandra Calhoun White				
Georgette Fuhr				
Janell Stevens				
Cherie Barton				
Marija Mack				
John Gregory III				
Melanie Saxon				

Topic	Discussion	Follow-Up
Welcome and Introductions	Dr. Troy Fitzpatrick, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM and welcomed Board members and guests present. The Board then prepared themselves for the business at hand by holding a moment of meditation.	

Approval of the Minutes	The May meeting minutes were reviewed. There were no changes suggested. Ms. Marija Mack made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Jeff Ellison seconded the motion. All were in favor and the May minutes were adopted as written.	
Deputy Director's Report	Erin Laughter, CAF Director at Central Office gave the OMH Deputy Director's Report Leadership Appointments • Dr. Kimberly Rudd was appointed as the new acting director for the Office of Mental Health on May 26. ◦ Dr. Rudd previously served as the Chief Medical Director for the Division of Inpatient Services and Assistant Deputy Director for Long Term Care. • Beth Moore has been appointed as the new Communications Director for the agency. Communications and Branding Initiatives • Beth Moore's initial priorities include rebranding the new agency, a process anticipated to take over a year. ◦ She will also focus on establishing internal communication processes for staff. • All marketing materials will be reviewed and revamped. ◦ Beth Moore is requesting existing marketing materials to prioritize. Staffing and Budget Updates • There are ongoing delays in posting positions and hiring new staff. They have lost several staff at the central office. ◦ Approvals for positions and hiring continue to require clearance from the Department of Administration and the Governor's office. • No budget update was available.	
Budget Presentation	Michelle Mitcham reported the following: Fiscal Year 2026 Financials	

	• New medical record software is limiting new revenue, with no billing revenue anticipated in FY26 from April 17 through June 30. • Billing revenue from April 17 through June 30 will be processed and paid out in fiscal year 2027. • Approximately \$340,000 will be pulled from carry funds to balance FY26, a request approved by the central office. Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Development • The budget was presented to the Department of Administration and Office of Mental Health, receiving positive feedback with no questions or concerns, though it is not yet formally approved. • Budget codes require realignment from "Department of Mental Health" to "Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities" across all three agencies due to a new budget structure. • Agency reorganization has altered funding allocation, with specific details on these changes still pending. Carry Forward Funds and Future Projects • An outline was provided for using the remaining carry forward balance of approximately \$900,000. • The primary request is to dedicate \$900,000 towards a new roof for the Lancaster facility, as the current roof is original to the early 90s building. • Secondary uses include increasing equipment at all locations, specifically badge reader access for staff and security cameras. • The plan for using carry forward funds received supportive feedback	
Executive Director's Report Presented by: Tamara Edrington	Tamara Edrington, Executive Director, reported the following: Catawba Center Overview • Catawba is one of 16 outpatient mental health facilities in South Carolina, serving Chester, Lancaster, and York counties with approximately 90 payroll and contract staff.	

	• The center provides adult and child mental health services, including clinicians embedded in schools, and adheres to access standards: routine appointments within 7 days, urgent within 2 days, and emergent on the same day. • A 24-hour mobile crisis team operates 7 days a week, 365 days a year, responding with law enforcement when appropriate and capable of involuntary commitments, with an average response time of 46 minutes. • Catawba serves approximately 2,900 active patients annually, billing private insurance, Medicaid, Medicare, and Tricare, but does not turn anyone away due to inability to pay, utilizing evidence-based treatment modalities such as DBT, CBT, and EMDR. Agency Merger and System Challenges • The South Carolina Department of Mental Health merged in April 2025 with the Department of Disability and Special Needs and the Department of Alcohol and Drug, forming the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. • The merger introduced surprises and kinks, including issues with functional codes for billing, and a new medical health record system, Avatar, is hindering billing, resulting in no revenue since April. • The Avatar system prevents the generation of accurate reports, specifically collaborative documentation and patient healthcare reports, and is described as "faulty" as it cannot manage employee data for new hires, termed employees, or FMLA production reductions. • Reports will be withheld until accurate data can be obtained, with a plan to report several months retroactively if needed. Staffing Updates and Vacancies • An office manager for the Family Center started today, making all clinics fully staffed with front office personnel, and a detention center staff member was hired to start June 2nd, fulfilling the five day a week jail liaison contract. • Dr. Bowman, a contract psychiatrist, will resign on July 3rd, having given a month's notice, stating he was struggling with the new Avatar system and not grasping the new concept quickly enough, leading to an anticipated slight gap in services as Dr. Sachdev interviews candidates.	
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	• A nurse for the Family Center was lost due to HR process delays, taking four to five weeks to make an offer post interview, causing her to accept another job, with concerns that this issue will continue to happen if we don't speed up the process across the board. • A school-based clinician for the Clover contract resigned today, effective June 30th. We will move as quickly and as diligently as we can to backfill that school-based position due to Clover being one of our biggest contracts. Upcoming Meetings and Conferences • The Chester Stakeholder Meeting is scheduled for June 25th at the Chester County Library, with registration beginning at 9:00 AM and the meeting running from 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM. • A Sequential Intercept Mapping Conference will be held on August 11th (full day) and 12th (half day) at Pathways Community Center in York County. • This conference aims to bring together all the key players in York County, including law enforcement, judges, and community services, to alleviate the gaps from mental health, law enforcement and substance abuse. • Invitations have been sent to approximately 100 community members, with RSVPs being collected, and a meal will be provided on the first day.	
Public Announcements All Board Members	Melanie Saxon reported on the NAMI State Conference • The NAMI state conference for South Carolina is scheduled for September 3rd, 2026. • The conference will be held in Columbia. • Information regarding registration and attendance will be forwarded to board members and other interested parties. Marija Mack reported that NAMI PTC is Hiring • NAMI is hiring a new outreach coordinator for Chester. • A potential candidate named Jennifer is expected to receive an offer, though it is not yet official. • The hiring process involved reviewing approximately 60 applicants over two full days.	
Old Business	Elizabeth Schrum, Board Secretary, discussed the following:	

Status of Applications	Board Seats and Vacancies • There are 15 board seats in total with four vacancies. ◦ Two vacancies are in York County. ◦ Two vacancies are in Lancaster County. • We still need a medical doctor to serve on the board to fulfill the state statute. Applicant Overview • Two guest applicants, Mr. Wimmer and Dr. Tiedt, were present to discuss their interest in serving the community. ◦ Mr. Wimmer's application was referred by Councilman Tom Audette and was received from the York County Clerk to Council. ◦ Dr. Tiedt was referred by MUSC Lancaster Hospital and fulfills a state statute requiring an MD to serve on the board. Dr. Tiedt's Professional Background and Philosophy • Dr. Tiedt is an OBGYN physician with nearly 40 years of experience, having delivered over 19,000 babies and performed numerous GYN procedures. ◦ He currently works part-time for MUSC and is restarting the OB/GYN program in Rock Hill for North Central Family Medical Center. • He describes his approach as not a typical OB/GYN, integrating family practice medicine and psychiatric help. ◦ He emphasizes listening to patients to address psychological trauma, stating, "I think it's important to listen to the patient. From teenagers all the way through the elderly, which all have their different sets of psychological trauma in their life." • North Central Family Medicine partners with Catawba to provide integrated primary care services, embedding psychiatrists and primary care physicians in the York County clinics. Mr. Wimmer's Background and Community Engagement • Mr. Wimmer has lived in Rock Hill for 11 years and co-founded a faith-based counseling practice in Fort Mill in 2015. ◦ His practice employs five counselors, including his wife (specializing in EMDR and brain spotting) and himself (specializing in marriage and family), and mentors Master's degree students.	
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	• He expressed a desire to be an encouragement and learn more about Catawba, given his practice's 11 years of service in York County. ○ He aims to serve as a peer-to-peer specialist, a flourishing life coach for military and first responders, and a recovery life coach for men coming out of addictions. Dr. Fitzpatrick asked for a motion to accept Mr. Charles Wimmer's application. Ms. Marija Mack made a motion to accept the application, and Mr. John Gregory III seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to accept Mr. Wimmer's Board application.	
New Business	Election of Board Officers Election: The board decided to form a committee to accept nominations for Board chair and Vice Chair. The subcommittee members are Melanie Saxon, Dr. Fitzpatrick, and Georgette Fuhr. Dr. Fitzpatrick decided not to serve as Board Chair for another year. Mr. Jeff Ellison stated that he would be interested in serving as Board Chair. The nominating subcommittee will conduct the election online by sending out a Google form. Georgette recommended Ms. Marija Mack as a candidate for Board Chair. Ms. Mack declined at this time. Ms. Melanie Saxon recommended Chief John Gregory for Board Chair. Subcommittee Reports: <u>Strategic Planning Committee-</u> no new report <u>Employee Incentives Committee-</u> no new report <u>Community Events Committee-</u> no new report <u>Write Off Report:</u> The Write Off report for June was \$44,755.50. These accounts are uncollectible due to non-payment for a time greater than 24 months, inability to debt-set, bad addresses/patient homeless, or patient incarcerated. All possible efforts have been pursued to collect.	
Adjournment	The meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM	