



Executive Director's Staff Report
August 21, 2025
(June 19, 2025 – August 21, 2025)

BOARD / STAFF

- **Program Committee** – The committee met virtually on July 17, 2025 at 2:00 PM for a presentation by Taylor Dunn of Watershed Advisors on the St. Louis Regional Early Childhood Implementation Plan; and to discuss results of the Grant Review Process Survey completed by Community Reviewers and Trustees. Members of the St. Louis County Children's Service Fund Board were also invited to attend the portion of the meeting focused on the ECE plan presentation. Conversely, MHB Trustees were invited to attend the County CSF's Program & Performance Committee meeting on August 8, 2025 at 9:00 AM to view the Watershed presentation. A recording of the County CSF virtual committee meeting was sent Trustees along with a copy of the draft ECE implementation plan as part of the August 21 Board Meeting materials on August 15, 2025.
- **Nominating Committee** – The committee met virtually on August 4, 2025 at 5:30 PM to interview Carla Rose, a former Trustee from the North Hampton Neighborhood who after resigning in April 2022, is interested in again serving on the Board. Executive Director Cassandra Kaufman and Nominating Committee Chair Carolyn Jackson met virtually on August 11, 2025 at 5:30 PM to discuss board vacancies.
- **Executive Committee** – The committee held its regular virtual monthly meeting on August 12, 2025 at 2:00 PM to review the August 21, 2025 Board Meeting agenda and to receive updates on important staff activities since the June 18, 2025 Board meeting.
- **Housing Committee** – The committee met virtually on July 30, 2025 at 5:30 PM to review and discuss a letter of intent submitted by Peter & Paul Community Services to create 34 permanent supportive housing studio units at the agency's north city campus. The committee invited Peter & Paul to submit an application requesting up to \$500K for renovations.
- **Board Resignation** – Former Board Chair and Housing Committee Chair Rev. Dr. Terrell Carter tendered his resignation on August 15, 2025. Terrell regrets that his current job does not provide the flexibility to actively participate on the board.
- **St. Louis City—County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD)** – Deputy Director Serena Muhammad represents MHB on the committee addressing the May 16 tornado recovery and will continue to serve as a member of the Long-Term Disaster Recovery Group focused on the behavioral health needs of residents impacted by the disaster.

- **Sunshine Law Training** – Serena Muhammad, Clinical Partnership Director Poli Rijos, Director of Administration Sue Culli-Wilson, and Controller Susan Kabat attended a three-hour training conducted by the State Sunshine Law Coordinator sponsored by the St. Charles County Community and Children’s Resource Board on June 24, 2025.
- **Philanthropy Missouri Operations Staff Network Advisor** – Sue Culli-Wilson will serve as an advisor for the newly formed state-wide Operations Staff Network.
- **2025 Restorative Justice Conference** – Early Childhood Program Director Denise Carter virtually attended the conference for six hours July 29 - 30, 2025.
- **Focused Deterrence Training** – Prevention Partnership Director Jessica Meyers and Serena Muhammad attended the two-day training July 29 - 30, 2025 at St. Louis University as part of the Gun Violence Initiative University.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS / ALLOCATIONS
(CCSF, CMHF, Funding Partnerships & Initiatives)

- **Tornado Emergency Response Fund** – MHB opened an emergency response fund for currently funded partners to apply for up to \$25,000 to offset costs related to responding to urgent participant and staff needs as a result of the May 16 tornado. MHB received 18 applications, of which two were ineligible, therefore 16 awards were approved. The \$125,000 approved for early childhood programs was distributed by the Gateway Early Childhood Alliance making small grants of \$5K, fully utilizing the funding. More than half of the CCSF funding commitment of \$375,000 was awarded for a total of \$218,439. Slightly less than half of the CMHF funding commitment of \$250,000 was awarded for a total of \$110,791. Awards were used to cover a range of expenses from increased staffing costs for agencies directly involved with storm response to housing relocation costs for permanent supportive housing partners who experienced facility damage.
- **Contracting/Evaluation Meetings** – Denise Carter and Data and Performance Analyst Xinyue Zhang met with each of the 15 newly awarded CCSF – Early Childhood projects to discuss reporting, participant data, and program evaluation over the last two months.
- **Funder Fridays** –Poli Rijos and Clinical Partnership Director Dave Haasis along with Denise Carter and Prevention Partnership Director Lisa Potts participated in Funder Fridays on June 27, 2025 sponsored by Philanthropy Missouri. This virtual “office hours’ initiative enables area nonprofits to meet virtually with local funders to discuss funding opportunities and ideas.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS / STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- **St. Louis Area Violence Prevention Commission** –
 - In June, Prevention Partnership Director Jessica Meyers was invited to an interview with the Rachel Zimmerman show/pod cast on KMOX. The recording is here: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/gun-violence-prevention-6-21-25/id1710782638?i=1000713852003>
 - In the first year of the St. Louis County CSF grant, VPC sponsored 10 youth events in St. Louis County and one safe space at Dellwood Rec Center that had 14 nights of basketball. Over 1,700 County youth 19 and under attended events, and more than

2,100 regional youth attended events. These events were entirely funded by a grant from the St. Louis County Children's Service Fund.

- 2025 was the third summer that VPC has partnered with the St. Louis City Recreation Division on extended summer hours. More than 1,100 youth attended one of these safe, summer events.
- **Chiron Community Giving Foundation Partnership** – MHB hosted its second meeting of the Systems Change Leadership Roundtable July 31, 2025. Roundtable members discussed opportunities to leverage Medicaid to increase access to mental health screenings for children in school settings.

ADMINISTRATION

- **FY26 Strategic Plan Refresh** – EMD Consulting was selected from four organizations that bid to conduct the strategic plan refresh. Consultants Kari McAvoy and Eulonda Nevels will facilitate a process including values work, staff focus groups, regular meetings with the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee and MHB's Leadership, as well as a Board Retreat on October 18. A timeline of activities will be distributed to Trustees at the August 21 board meeting.
- **St. Louis City—County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD)** – Serena Muhammad has represented MHB on the committee addressing the May 16 tornado recovery and will continue to serve as a member of the Long-Term Disaster Recovery Group focused on the behavioral health needs of residents impacted by the disaster.

OTHER

- **Regional Early Childhood Implementation Plan Advisory Group July 24** – Cassandra, Serena, and Denise attended the final meeting of the advisory group where the draft implementation plan that Trustees received in their board packet was shared.
- **Children's Services Fund Executive Directors Meeting** – Cassandra attended the bi-monthly state-wide meeting August 1, 2025 in Columbia, MO.
- **Medicaid At Risk Part 2 Town Hall August 1** – Denise and Poli attended the virtual meeting co-hosted by the Community Health Commission of Missouri and the Brown School at Washington University.
- **St. Louis Racial Equity Summit August 8 & 9** – The majority of MHB staff participated in the bi-annual summit held at UMSL and sponsored by Forward Through Ferguson, as part of MHB's commitment to health equity and racial justice.
- **MO House Special Committee on Property Tax Reform August 20** – Cassandra attended and submitted written testimony for informational purposes about who MHB is and what CCSF and CMHF funding supports.