701 Market St., Suite 200, St. Louis, MO 63101
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*** * * MEETING MINUTES * * ***

City of St. Louis Mental Health Board of Trustees
Minutes of the October 15, 2026 Hybrid Board Meeting

Trustee	Attendance	Trustee	Attendance
Rob Poirier, Chair	In person	Marcia Hayes-Harris	Absent
Julia López, Vice Chair	Zoom	Carolyn Jackson	In person
Vander Corliss, Sec./Treas.	In person	Brian Phillips	Zoom
Andi Blaylock	Absent	Cassandra Pinkston	In person
Evanna Burkett	Zoom	Donna Schmitt	In person
Ronald Griffin	Absent	Janice Thomas	Zoom

Others Attending:
Matthew McBride, General Counsel, Lashly & Baer
Cassandra Kaufman, Executive Director
Serena Muhammad, Deputy Director
MHB Staff

Regular Meeting of the City of St. Louis Mental Health Board of Trustees

1a. **Call to Order** – The regular meeting of the City of St. Louis Mental Health Board of Trustees was called to order at 5:45 p.m. by Board Chair Rob Poirier.

1b. **Community Comments** – There were no community members present who wished to address the Board.

2. **Consent Agenda** – Rob Poirier made the motion to approve the consent agenda and Cassandra Pinkston seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The following items were approved:

a. **September 2026 Board Meeting Minutes**

3. **Regular Agenda Items**

a. **Funded Partner Learning Plan Progress Update** – Early Childhood Program Director Denise Carter and Clinical Partnership Director Poli Rijos presented a FY27 Q1 progress update on funded partners implementing learning plans (corrective action plans). Trustee Donna Schmitt raised concerns about the board being unable to openly discuss and ask questions about the organizations. Chair Poirier suggested a roll call later in the meeting to hold a closed session.

b. **FY26 Strategic Plan Update** – Executive Director Cassandra Kaufman provided a status update on the implementation of key strategies from the FY26 – 28 Strategic Plan during the period January 1 – June 30, 2026. During the first six months of plan implementation within the two strategic priorities and 10 key strategies, the staff's FY26 six-month workplan included 45 activities 73% of which were achieved with 27% in progress at June 30, 2026. The update was provided in preparation for the annual board retreat scheduled for November 14 from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. in the 15th floor conference room at Peabody Plaza, 701 Market St., St. Louis, MO 63101.

c. **Domestic Violence Fatality Review Panel Presentation** – October was National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Prevention Partnership Director Jessica Meyers presented the findings of the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Panel on which she served. Trustees engaged in a brief discussion regarding how the panel's findings would be used to inform work with survivors and perpetrators of intimate partner violence.

d. **Partnership Update** – Deputy Director Serena Muhammad presented an update on MHB funding partnerships:

i. Chiron Community Partnership (United Way, St. Louis Community Foundation, and Chiron Community Giving Foundation) whose goal is to increase access to high quality mental health care in St. Louis City and County;

ii. Serving as a pass-through for the Missouri Department of Mental Health's (DMH) GROW initiative to reduce opioid deaths among Black males in St. Louis City and County;

iii. Working in partnership with the St. Louis County Children's Service Fund to address the six regional themes from the joint 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment by focusing on provider staff wellness and increasing parents' and caregivers' access to education and outreach across the lifespan with a specific focus on the needs of middle and high school aged youth;

iv. Working in partnership with the Deaconess Foundation to offer a series of capacity-building workshops for currently funded partners as well as potential future applicants in spring 2027; and

v. Working in partnership with the Incarnate Word Foundation to offer Youth Mental Health First Aid training for teachers and staff at parochial schools in St. Louis City and County in spring 2027.

4. **Staff Report** – Executive Director Cassandra Kaufman provided a written report on the major activities and accomplishments of the staff covering the period from September 18, 2026 – October 15, 2026. The report was posted to the Trustee Portal following the meeting.

5. **Closed Session** – Board Chair Rob Poirier made the motion to close the meeting for the purpose of discussing sealed bids and proposals, and related documents, or documents related to a negotiated contract, pursuant to Section 610.021(12), RSMo. Donna Schmitt seconded the motion and Chair Poirier conducted a roll call vote to close the meeting:

Trustee	**Vote**		
Andi Blaylock	Absent	Ronald Griffin	Absent
Evanna Burkett	Yes	Marcia Hayes-Harris	Absent
Vander Corliss	Yes	Carolyn Jackson	Yes
		Trustee	**Vote**

Julia López	Yes	Rob Poirier	Yes
Brian Phillips	Yes	Donna Schmitt	Yes
Cassandra Pinkston	Yes	Janice Thomas	Yes

The closed session began at 6:57 p.m. The board discussed performance updates for six funded projects.

Board Chair Rob Poirier then made a motion to end the closed session, seconded by Vander Corliss. Chair Poirier conducted the roll call vote to end the closed session:

Trustee	**Vote**	**Trustee**	**Vote**
Andi Blaylock	Absent	Julia López	No response
Evanna Burkett	Yes	Brian Phillips	Yes
Vander Corliss	Yes	Cassandra Pinkston	Yes
Ronald Griffin	Absent	Rob Poirier	Yes
Marcia Hayes-Harris	Absent	Donna Schmitt	Yes
Carolyn Jackson	Yes	Janice Thomas	No response

The closed session ended at 7:18 p.m.

6. **Adjournment** – There being no further business before the board, Chair Rob Poirier made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Carolyn Jackson. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting of the City of St. Louis Mental Health Board of Trustees adjourned at 7:19 p.m.