



**Executive Director's Staff Report**  
**May 21, 2026**  
**(April 17 – May 21, 2026)**

**BOARD / STAFF**

- **Personnel Committee** – The committee met virtually April 24 at 2:00 PM to review and approve two new job descriptions, use of a performance-based merit matrix for staff salary increases, and to receive an update on planned next steps following the recent resignation of Accountant Deanna Shea.
- **Program Committee** – The committee met virtually April 27 at 11:00 AM to discuss two program-related items:
  - *Setting Funding Caps* – Trustees' discussed establishing funding limits or caps per project. Committee members mentioned the possibility of evaluating funding caps on a case-by-case basis. Trustees expressed concern that organizations could become stagnant and that MHB should add stipulations when returning applicants reapply; this would allow these organizations to demonstrate their growth and explain challenges they overcame.
  - *Recommendation to Support Implementation of a Local Behavioral Health Care Team* – MHB worked with Alana Green, Founder and Principal of Community Development Solutions, to establish a framework for a behavioral health care team to respond locally to natural and manmade disasters. This framework developed identifies five pillars that establish a clear structure for behavioral health readiness and activation in St. Louis. Formalizing the response will move behavioral health providers from an informal, relationship-based disaster response to a defined, predictable response system embedded within the existing emergency response structure.
- **Executive Committee** – The Executive Committee met virtually on May 4 at 4:00 PM for a specially called meeting to review and discuss an emergency gap funding request from permanent supportive housing partner organizations Peter & Paul Community Services and Horizon Housing Development Company. In addition to the three officers, two representatives from the MHB Housing Committee were invited to attend, Chair Brian Phillips and long-time Housing Committee member and former MHB Board Chair Phil Minden. The executives from Peter & Paul Community Services and Horizon Housing Development Company were also invited to join a portion of the meeting to answer the committee's questions regarding the funding request. The Executive Committee will present a resolution pertaining to the request at the May 21 Board Meeting.

- **Finance/Investment Committee** – The committee met virtually May 11 at 5:30 PM to review and approve the FY26 Q3 Financial Statements prior to their presentation at the May 21 Board Meeting.

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| <b>COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS / ALLOCATIONS</b><br><b>(CCSF, CMHF, Funding Partnerships &amp; Initiatives)</b> |
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- **Early Childhood Projects Renewal Process** – Early Childhood Program Director Denise Carter led the process to review project performance of the early childhood funded partners. This included conducting a semi-annual site visit with each agency, reviewing quarterly programmatic and financial reports, and conducting in-person cohort meetings. Data and Performance Analyst Xinyue Zhang and Program Assistant Cameron Saari also supported the performance review process.
- **FY27 CCSF/CMHF Competitive Application Cycle** – All MHB staff have been involved in the application review process and have contributed valuable expertise in evaluating the feasibility of proposed projects. The team is also beginning to discuss the strengths of the evaluation criteria and process used this year and opportunities for improvement.
- **Chiron Community Partnership Systems Change Leadership Roundtable** – The roundtable, a component of the Chiron Community Partnership (St. Louis Community Foundation, United Way of Greater St. Louis, Chiron Community Giving Foundation and MHB), met in-person on April 30 at 12:00 PM at Peabody Plaza. Topics of discussion included:
  - *Kansas City Community Care Link Pilot* – Rob Whitten, CEO of the Jackson County Children’s Services Fund (JCCSF), presented on their two-year pilot to test using a third-party Medicaid billing organization (Community Care Link) to support increased Medicaid utilization by three of JCCSF’s funded partners in year one. The \$1 million pilot project aims to increase Medicaid revenue in 2026 by \$400K for the initial three partners. In year two, the pilot will add five additional partners, primarily focusing on therapy-related services. The goal is to eventually create a third-party billing hub that could support smaller organizations in credentialing staff, billing Medicaid, securing reimbursement, and potentially reducing dependence on grant funding over time.
  - *Update on Service Provider Barriers and Access Solutions* – Mo Farrell and Abigail Barker from Washington University’s Center for Advancing Health Services, Policy & Economics Research discussed challenges with Medicaid billing for providers, particularly the administrative burden and complexity in working with managed care organizations. They shared findings from interviews with providers, including high claim denial rates (40-90%) and long credentialing processes taking 6-8 months. Service providers expressed interest in solutions like increased transparency in claim denials, streamlined billing processes, improved credentialing timelines, and a centralized billing intermediary model.
  - *Medicaid Billing Project* – The Roundtable discussed the importance of aligning strategies across the St. Louis region and mentioned outreach from St. Charles County regarding regional approaches. The group agreed to conduct a statewide summit planned for October 2026 to address health care coverage and service

delivery issues, with emphasis on the need to convene partners from across the state rather than focusing only on specific regions like St. Louis. Roundtable members explored opportunities to leverage local tax dollars to match federal funds for various health services, including references to existing programs like the autism waiver and adolescent CISTA funding. Deputy Director Serena Muhammad requested interested parties contact her if they wished to participate in summit planning.

- **Chiron Community Partnership Year 2 Grant Review Meeting** – Serena and Cassandra participated virtually in the Chiron Community Giving Foundation Grant Review Committee meeting May 19 at 1:30 PM to respond to questions regarding MHB’s year two funding request. A decision is expected by June 1.

#### FEDERAL PROGRAMS / STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- **System of Care St. Louis** – On May 21, Clinical Partnerships Director Poli Rijos led the third and final convening that will help inform the sustainability plan for System of Care – St. Louis.
- **St. Louis Area Violence Prevention Commission** – Prevention Partnerships Director Jessica Meyers participated in the Missouri Foundation for Health’s Firearm Violence Prevention Grantees in-person convening in St. Louis from April 22 – 24. This is a cohort of MFH’s grantees from across Missouri who meet to learn about new approaches to common issues and provide technical support to one another.

#### ADMINISTRATION

- **FY27 Budget** – Controller Susan Kabat has initiated the budget development process scheduled for completion in May. The proposed budget will be presented to the Finance – Investment Committee at an upcoming June meeting for review and approval, prior to presenting the budget for approval by the full Board at its June 18 meeting.
- **FY24 Audit** – The audit is nearing completion and will be presented to the Board for acceptance prior to the end of the FY26 fiscal year.

#### OTHER

- **Missouri Behavioral Health Strike Team** – Poli Rijos completed all of the trainings required for the Missouri Department of Mental Health’s Behavioral Health Strike Team membership.
- **Disaster Preparedness** – Poli Rijos attended the American Red Cross of Missouri’s Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Training at the Urban League April 23.
- **Student Presentation** – Prevention Partnerships Director Jessica Meyers presented to the St. Louis University High School Voices for Peace group on April 22. This group of students want to learn more about gun violence in their community and how they can get involved to reduce it.

- **Professional Development** – Clinical Partnerships Director Dave Haasis attended a webinar from the Corporation for Supportive Housing: “Three Strategies to Protect Medicaid Healthcare Coverage: SOAR, Application Assistors and Medically Frail.”
- **Mayor’s State of the City Address** – Deputy Director Serena Muhammad attended the Mayor’s address April 17 at City Hall.
- **Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) 2027 Learning Conference Host City Committee Meeting** – Cassandra Kaufman attended a statewide meeting of funders to learn about expectations for serving on the host city committee and sponsorship opportunities.
- **St. Louis Early Childhood Implementation Plan** – Cassandra, Serena, and St. Louis County Children’s Service Fund Executive Director Emily Koenig met with Dr. Jason Purnell, President of the James S. McDonnell Foundation, and Dr. Kelvin Adams, CEO of the St. Louis Community Foundation, on May 8 at 2:30 PM to discuss several items pertaining to the implementation plan.
- **University of Pennsylvania High Impact Philanthropy Academy** – Cassandra and Serena, together with two representatives from the St. Louis Community Foundation, two representatives of the Chiron Community Giving Foundation, and one United Way representative attended the 3-day in-person portion of the 6-session training in Philadelphia May 12 – 14. One half of Academy tuition costs were subsidized by the Chiron Community Giving Foundation grant. The Academy is a certificate program for individual donors, professional grant makers, and other philanthropic leaders seeking to make greater impact through their giving. Cohort participants learn the principles of high impact philanthropy and how to apply them in real-world situations. Along with the program’s esteemed faculty, peer participants bring a wealth of experience and create a valuable community of practice for long after the program ends.