

**LOCATION: Zoom Meeting**

**TIME: 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.**

**MHDS COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Diane Brecht  
Mike Fidgeon  
Sue Gehling  
June Klein-Bacon

Kathy Norris  
Jack Seward, Jr.  
Dr. Kenneth Wayne

**MHDS COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Betsy Akin  
Linda Dettmann  
Kellee McCrory

Terri Steinke  
Sen. Sarah Trone Garriott  
Rep. Jeff Turek

**OTHER ATTENDEES:**

Theresa Armstrong  
Carlyn Crowe  
Adrienne LaToure  
Melissa Loehr

Billi Mitchell  
Katie Peck  
Libby Reekers  
Flora A Schmidt

**Materials Referenced:**

*I-PAC\_MHDS Commission March 19, 2025 Joint Meeting Minutes DRAFT*  
*MHDS Commission Sunset Report 2025 FINAL DRAFT 20250411*  
*MHDS Commission Sunset Report Appendix B Acronyms*  
*Sunset Report letter SEWARD 16APR 2025*

**Welcome and Introductions**

Diane Brecht, Chair, called the Mental Health and Disability Services (MHDS) Commission meeting to order at 9:35 am and led introductions. The quorum was established with 7 voting members attending virtually. Diane Brecht reviewed conflicts of interest and informed the Commissioners to disclose any conflicts of interest on voting items.

**\*Review and Vote on Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Diane Brecht inquired if any Commission members had questions or changes to the March 19th, 2025, meeting minutes. Hearing none, Diane Brecht entertained a motion to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. Sue Gehling motioned to approve and was seconded by June Klein-Bacon. There was no additional discussion by the Commissioners. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

**Behavioral Health and Disability Services – Theresa Armstrong**

Theresa Armstrong, Behavioral Health Division, Iowa Health and Human Services (HHS) provided an overview of the changes occurring with the Iowa HHS Behavioral Health and Disability Services.

Iowa's Annual Governor's Conference on Substance Abuse will be held April 22-24, 2025. Any interested stakeholder should consider attending.

Iowa HHS is monitoring and responding to any changes in federal dollars and staying on track of any changes to funding. There was funding related to COVID and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) that ended on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, which otherwise was ending by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at the latest. HHS was able to honor the contracts in place and any positions that were covered by those dollars are now covered with other funds. The federal HHS is coming out with budget numbers that Iowa HHS is waiting to review.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has experienced some changes in regional project officers. HHS is adjusting to some changes in positions and some position eliminations. The Centers for Disease Detection (CDD) office that distributes tobacco funding was eliminated, and HHS is now waiting for more information.

The Iowa HHS Behavioral Health Service System alignment work continues, and the townhalls are the best way to keep informed of the changes that are occurring. The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) document is regularly updated. Both of these items can be found on the Iowa HHS webpage. The Behavioral Health State plan is finalized and should be published publicly soon.

The Administrative Service Organization (ASO) Advisory Councils are continuing to be formed. Iowa Primary Care Association (Iowa PCA) still intends to have meetings across the districts and updates are regularly posted on the Iowa PCA webpage. Iowa PCA has held focused meetings with each region. Iowa PCA is reviewing all the contracts for the Mental Health and Disabilities Services (MHDS) Regions and all contracts that are transferring from Iowa HHS. Iowa PCA will be scheduling meetings with providers in May. The focus will be on streamlining and reducing administrative red tape and standardizing the contracts. Iowa PCA is working collaboratively with HHS to formalize and implement system navigation, as well as building accessible crisis system navigation.

Project Recovery Iowa, which provides crisis counseling and assistance in response to natural disasters that happen in the state, is funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grants administered by SAMHSA. Project Recovery Iowa has provided outreach and education in the communities affected by tornado and flooding disasters last spring in Iowa. Outreach includes ongoing training and education to the affected communities. Project Recovery Iowa has had a continued presence and takes data on the contacts, or touches, made with individuals. March data shows a total of over 70,000 touches in the affected areas.

Theresa Armstrong thanked the Commission and past members for their work.

## **2025 MHDS Sunset Recommendations Report Discussion**

## MHDS Commission          April 17, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Diane Brecht led a discussion of the drafted MHDS Sunset Recommendations Report and the accompanying attachment, Appendix B, Acronyms. The Commission was reminded that the report will be submitted to the HHS Council to pass along the knowledge of the MHDS Commission.

Jack Seward proposed that individual Commission members could draft letters to accompany the report, and he shared a letter he had drafted. He stated that the mandate of the MHDS Commission was to advise and report on the status and performance of MHDS services. He shared that he believes the Commissioners have a wide range of perspectives on MHDS issues, and that it would be of value to share them apart from the mandatory reports of the Commission.

Jack Seward moved that Commission members be allowed to attach individual letters as appendixes to the Sunset report, subject to the approval of the Chair. There was not a second to the motion, and it did not move forward.

Diane Brecht entertained a motion to approve the *MHDS Commission Sunset Report 2025*. June Klein- Bacon motioned to approve the report, Dr. Kenneth Wayne seconded the motion, Jack Seward opposed the motion. The motion carried and the report was approved.

### **MHDS Commission Sunset Reminder**

Diane Brecht thanked the Commissioners for their time on the Commission and reminded them that this was the final meeting.

### **Public Comment**

There was an opportunity for public comment with none being offered.

### **Adjourn**

Mike Fidgeon motioned to adjourn the meeting; June Klein-Bacon seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:26 am.

*Minutes were not voted on and approved by the Commission as it was sunset effective June 30, 2025. This was the last meeting of the MHDS Commission. Minutes respectfully submitted by Patti Manna.*