



Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Local Advisory Council

General LAC Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, October 7, 2025

1. Introductions

The meeting opened with introductions from attendees representing a broad range of community organizations, including:

- Kayleigh Brown, Rural Behavioral Health Institute
- Lewis & Clark Public Health: Jolene Jennings, Julie Bir, Drenda Niemann, Fajar (visiting fellow)
- Heather Hundtoft, Boyd Andrew Community Services
- Mikayla Kappan, Our Place
- St. Peter's Health: Annette Luckett, Erin Olson
- Andy Hunthausen, County Commission
- Emily Dean, City Commission
- Lieutenant Shanks, Police Department
- Jillian Danesi, Criminal Justice Services

2. Approval of September Meeting Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded.
- No edits, objections, or changes were raised.
- Minutes approved.

3. Financial Report

Presented by Jolene

- **Current balance:** \$6,777
- Past fiscal year spending included:
 - **\$376** for LAC brochures
 - **~\$2,012** for awareness and outreach materials (brochures, branded tablecloth, flashlights with 988 messaging, etc.)
- Promotional items have been distributed widely and are very popular at community events.



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- Nearly all 500 brochures purchased last year have already been handed out (~25 remain).
 - Group will need to consider reordering materials soon.
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4. Montana Nonprofit Association (MNA) Membership

- Voting members previously approved joining MNA following last month's presentation on membership benefits.
 - Membership includes:
 - **\$45 annual fee per voting member**
 - **\$500 All-Access package** for unlimited trainings
 - LAC's non-501(c)(3) status means the onboarding process is slightly different; MNA is helping them navigate it.
 - Voting member applications were distributed; non-voting participants may apply to become voting members.
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5. Staffing Update

- **Jolene** announced that this is her final week with Lewis & Clark Public Health.
 - **Julie Bir** will temporarily support the LAC until the new Behavioral Health Systems Improvement Specialist is hired.
 - Job posting closes Friday; hiring/transition expected by December.
 - Participants expressed gratitude for Jolene's years of service, leadership, and foundational work in crisis and behavioral health systems.
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6. Major Presentation: Our Place Drop-In Center

Presenter: Michaela Kappan

A detailed overview was provided on **Our Place**, a low-barrier, peer-run drop-in center serving individuals experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental health challenges.



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Program Structure

- Peer-run staff with lived experience.
- Home-like environment focused on stability, connection, and recovery.
- Temporary location at **1531 National Ave** (lease ends **March 31**); searching for a permanent location.
- Hours: **8:30–3:00 pm** with a daily group from **1–2 pm**.
- Saturday service currently paused due to staffing shortages.

Services Provided

- **Recovery Groups:**
 - Wellness, gender-specific recovery, Wellbriety, WRAP (16-week), Celebrate Recovery (when staffed).
- **Basic Needs:**
 - Clothing, hygiene items, tents, sleeping bags (Project Warmth donations)
 - Coffee, snacks, donated meals
 - Laundry room with free detergent (high usage)
 - Safe storage system (footlockers with locks)
- **Outreach & Support:**
 - Housing, employment, ID/birth certificate assistance
 - Help with Medicaid and SNAP applications
 - Warm handoffs to other agencies
 - Pretrial check-ins weekly
 - Coordination with law enforcement and Parks & Rec during encampment cleanups
- **Community-Building:**
 - New recreational items from grant funding (games, foosball, puzzles, cornhole, etc.)



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Current Needs

- Coffee, creamer, snacks, laundry supplies, hygiene products.
 - Volunteers to run groups (art, life skills, budgeting, etc.).
 - Support in identifying a long-term facility.
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7. NAMI Updates

- NAMI's annual behavioral health conference will be held **October 23–24** at the Delta.
 - National-level speakers; open to the public.
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8. Homeless Services & Winter Shelter Planning

A major discussion arose regarding **God's Love no longer providing floor sleeping space** this winter.

Key points:

- No current formal city/county winter shelter policy exists.
 - Past solutions included God's Love overflow nights and hotel voucher funding.
 - County commissioners acknowledged the need for immediate planning.
 - Service providers will engage with city/county leadership to develop:
 - A winter sheltering policy
 - Emergency temperature thresholds
 - Funding mechanisms
 - Potential use of other facilities like The Journey Home
 - FUSE planning group preparing a draft policy for presentation at a joint City-County meeting.
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9. Additional Community Updates



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- **FUSE Summit**: October 14; focus on service mapping and community resource flow.
 - **Big Shower Day Anniversary**: October 28; community services event with haircuts, hygiene support, health services.
 - **Boyd Andrew TL Facility** now provides **women's transitional living beds**; openings are available.
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10. Closing

- No further public comment.
- Meeting adjourned around **12:20 pm**.
- Jolene will send out an AI-generated summary to members.
- Julie will begin preparing the November agenda.

Participants thanked Jolene warmly before signing off.

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AI-generated minutes, please let us know if anything needs corrections