

Athens-Hocking-Vinton 317 Board Annual Meeting

Minutes

September 22, 2025

- Present:** Rhea Hopstetter, Chair, Heather Batin, Tonya Bowden, JoAnna Carter, Dr. Tom Davis, Dr. Ron Luce, Robert Orth, Anne Rubin, Dumitru Sabaiduc, Shei Sanchez, and Wenda Sheard
- Absent:** Maeve Gallagher, Patricia Robinette, Robert Salizzoni, and Tom Williamson
- Staff:** Kim Crum, Svea Maxwell, Beth Mohammed, Kim Robinson, and Diane Pfaff

The 2025 Annual Meeting recognizing community advocates was held at the Old Dutch restaurant in Hocking County.

I. Award Presentations

Ms. Hopstetter called the Annual Meeting to order at 6:00 pm and welcomed guests, board members, and agency staff.

Advocacy awards were presented to individuals from the three county area for their dedicated service to the Athens, Hocking and Vinton communities.

Behavioral Health Awards

- The Athens County Behavioral Health Advocate award was presented to Autumn Brown. Ms. Brown is a champion for peers with lived experience of a MH and/or co-occurring SUD- she was instrumental in helping to develop and implement The Gathering Place's plan and partnership with the City of Athens- in creating the Athens County Emergency Warming Center in the winter of 2025- without her community leadership of advocating for interim and long-term solutions for unhoused residents, and countless volunteer hours- the project would not have been a success.
- The Hocking County Behavioral Health Advocate award was presented to Candy Kemmerer. Ms. Kemmerer is a well-known, effective community advocate and respected financial professional. She has dedicated her career to working on behalf of the families of Hocking, Athens, Perry and Morgan counties. She has been a champion in leading the development of behavioral healthcare support systems necessary to combat the damage caused by the opioid crisis plaguing the state of Ohio.

- The Vinton County Behavioral Health Advocate award was awarded to Trisha Sands. Ms. Sands has been director of Shepherd's house in Vinton County for a number of years. She not only provides services thru Shepherd's House, she also is a key member within the community for resource information and support for the clients she serves. Ms. Sands was unable to attend, Misty Napier accepted the award on her behalf.
- The Rita Gillick Mental Health Advocate award was presented to Stephanie Seibel. Ms. Seibel leads a county-wide support group, offering a safe space for others to grow and be heard. Through organizing community events, she raises vital awareness around behavioral health and domestic violence. Her courage in sharing her testimony inspires others and breaks down stigma. Her leadership is a powerful example of resilience and change.
- The Valeria "Taffy" Marks Substance Abuse Prevention award was presented to Reggie Robinson. Recently retired, Mr. Robinson has over 30 years of service in prevention/intervention services. He is very well known in Athens, Hocking and Vinton Counties. His message of prevention is strong, as is his over 30 years of sobriety. He has dedicated his life to helping people make positive choices in their lives. He is most deserving of an award for his many years of professional services.

Submitted by,

Diane Pfaff, Executive Director

Rhea Hopstetter, Chair