

## Executive Director Updates: March 2026

**SFY 2027 Application for Funding:** Agencies submitted their funding applications. Board staff are reviewing them and seeking clarifications and additional information, where needed. A summary of the applications will be brought to the April board meeting.

**Woods at Dairy Lane:** Svea and I met with the Architect to discuss a phased strategy and to identify how much we could implement with the two million that is currently committed. He is reviewing costs and plans and will get back with us. We have engaged Sunday Creek Horizons to pursue funding through federal and state legislature-directed funding (earmark).

**Serenity Village:** One of the vacant units is in process of being leased by a referral from My Sister's Place. Rental assistance will be provided by the Homeless Crisis Response Program.

**Board Vacancies:** We welcome a new governing board member from Hocking County—Mr. Justin Maiden—who was referred by former board member Candy Kemmerer. That leaves us with three vacancies—two from Athens county and one from Hocking county. To keep gender balance per ORC, two of the three should be men. Interested persons can be referred to the Board's webpage to complete an interest form: <https://www.317board.org/board-members/>

**Signed Contracts:** Three routine annual contracts were renewed for the same terms as the previous year:

1. Fine Landscaping – grounds upkeep and snow removal; up to \$13,000
2. Clem House – mowing; \$240/week
3. Myles Cleaning – office cleaning; \$5,560

In addition, an \$8,000 contract was signed with Sunday Creek Horizons for legislative work to secure funding for the Woods at Dairy Lane.

**Federal budget:** The 2026 budget was passed on February 3<sup>rd</sup> to fund most agencies through September 30, 2026.

**Other Behavioral Health Providers:** In addition to our contract agencies, there are 8 additional Ohio Department of Behavioral Health certified treatment agencies providing services in the Board area. A copy of their certification is posted on the board-member page. We have been told there are even more organizations offering telehealth services; however, we do not receive certification forms for these agencies if they do not have a brick-and-mortar location in our board area.

**Recovery Housing and Athens Zoning:** I have continued to engage with city staff, the planning commission, community members, and our local recovery housing providers around proposed changes to Athens City Zoning Code with regards to recovery housing. The process has raised many questions about how to regulate housing and insure quality support for residents and

accountability to neighbors. Because the Nex Level recovery house was not properly registered, they have moved residents out of the houses and back to Columbus. Whether or not this is permanent or temporary remains to be seen.

**Staff Updates:** Board staff participated in 120 meetings, trainings or events in the month of February and 111 in January. Here are a few highlights:

- Sherri led county crisis stakeholder meetings which continue to focus on building out key metrics that can be used to assess progress toward the goal of increasing crisis response before the emergency department or police are needed. Using the Office of Criminal Justice Services grant, Hopewell Health Centers hired a case manager who will be focused on crisis services in Hocking and Vinton counties. Sherri has also led efforts to request an amendment to the OCJS grant to utilize unspent grant funding for the Ascend data system that will provide crisis alerts, familiar faces and population overlap reports. This is a successful model being used in other areas, including Muskingum, Washington and Fairfield Boards.
- Svea and I participated in several meetings with the Voinovich School after they invited us to collaborate on a OneOhio grant application to implement SAMHSA's *Talk. They Hear You* prevention initiative in the Board area. The other counties in Region 10 would also be included in the collaboration.
- Our Board Association shared that Managed Care Organizations are discussing ways to control Medicaid costs through increased monitoring and prior authorization requirements. We will monitor the impact of these changes.
- Amanda attended the annual Auditor of State training on Public Records and Sunshine law.
- The 211 Information and Referral service is expanding from Fairfield County into Hocking County. The Hocking County Health Department led the effort to raise funding from all county agencies toward the cost. The Board is contributing \$1,000.