



Cuyahoga County Diversion Center Board Meeting

May 29, 2025 -- 3:00-4:30 pm

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chairperson Donna Weinberger called the meeting to order.

2. ROLL CALL

A roll call was conducted. Dr. Julia Bruner, Joan Englund, Judge Donna Congeni Fitzsimmons, Chris Julian, Dr. Ted Parran, Chief Annie Todd, Donna Weinberger and Chief Calvin Williams were present.

A quorum was established.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Larry Heller signed in for public comment and provided remarks on his support for the Diversion Center. He referenced the SAMSHA Sequential Intercept Model and provided information on how the Diversion Center supports community wide crisis response. He also asked questions about the planned Behavioral Care Center at the jail, the planned Crisis Center, and ongoing needs for increased re-entry resources.

Ms. Rosie Palfy signed in for public comment and provided remarks on meeting accessibility and proposed changes to board bylaws. She also advocated for having representation on the board from someone who had lived experience. She also asked questions about the planned Crisis Center and potential plans to include a psychological emergency department.

4. VOTING ITEMS

- A. *Approval of Minutes from February 2025*- The minutes from the previous meeting held on February 27, 2025 were presented for review. No corrections or amendments were proposed. Dr. Parran moved to approve the minutes as presented. Chief Todd seconded the motion. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved unanimously.

5. OLD BUSINESS

- A. *Diversion Center Performance Metrics*- Clare Rosser from the Cuyahoga County ADAMHS Board presented quarterly data. Englund asked if there are any cities within Cuyahoga County that have not participated in CIT training at all. Rosser indicated that all cities within the county have participated in training at some point, although saturation within cities varies. Dr. Bruner asked for clarification around length of stay data. Rosser and Dr. Megan Testa from the Diversion Center indicated that lengths of stay vary for many reasons. Reasons for departure can range from someone leaving against medical advice to someone who is transferred to a different level of care, but many people successfully complete their stay.

- B. *Evaluation Update*- Michelle Riske-Morris of Case Western Reserve's Begun Center for Violence Education, Prevention and Research presented information on their efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of the Diversion Center. The evaluation team had recently received approval from the Institutional Review Board, which approves all data collection plans. Upon approval, the evaluation team started receiving data from all service delivery partners and analysis was underway. Additional evaluation methods include anonymous client interviews and focus groups with board members, law enforcement and other stakeholders.
- C. *Crisis Center Update and Discussion*- Eric Morse provided an update on the Crisis Center. Demolition is complete and interior plans are finalized. Building permits are pending. Opening is still targeted for September 2026. Multiple policy level discussions are scheduled to take place throughout the summer, to include transport policies, final definition of residential or longer-term care on the second floor, court ordered holds, differentiation from the psychological emergency department in Cleveland Heights, and proposed coordination with the planned Behavioral Care Center at the new jail. Board members asked for additional information on the capital campaign and ongoing costs.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- A. *Bylaws Discussion*- Board Members were invited to review the Bylaws and suggest changes or updates. The group specifically was given the opportunity to amend the bylaws to allow for alternate representation or to offer a virtual attendance option. The group came to consensus that the time commitment was manageable, and they did not wish to have alternates or virtual meetings. The group did notice that the bylaws include a requirement for an annual report. The ADAMHS Board produces a year-end report and presents it at the first meeting of the new year, but additional recommendations will be made at the next meeting to ensure compliance.
- B. *Community Input Committee Report*- Heller presented to the Board Members from the community perspective. He continued to support the use of the Diversion Center and invited Board Members to speak with him directly if there were any items or questions they had that required community input. The board had a brief conversation on the nature of diversion and how many jurisdictions, including Cleveland, have refined the crimes for which they arrest, resulting in fewer arrests overall. This impacts diversion efforts because the population that is most likely to be diverted from jail by going to the Diversion Center is now less likely to face arrest to begin with. Data on jail census will be made available to Board Members.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on August 14, 2025.

8. ADJOURNMENT