



Georgia Department of Behavioral Health &
Developmental Disabilities

Kevin Tanner, Commissioner

DBHDD

Office of the Commissioner

Board of Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Thursday, February 27, 2025 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

200 Piedmont Avenue, S.E.

West Tower, 5th Floor, Board Room 512

Atlanta, GA 30334

This meeting was conducted in person and via WebEx for the public and Board Members.

Meeting Called By:

Lasa Joiner, Chair

Recording Secretary:

Chelsee Nabritt, Board and Special Project
Manager

Board Members

- **In-person:** Lasa Joiner, Bubber Epps, Amanda Owens, and Bill Slaughter
- **Virtual Conferencing:** David Glass, Deb Bailey, Jimmy Thomas, Jan Ligon, Ph.D., and Jean Sumner, M.D.
- **Absent:**

DBHDD Leadership:

Brandon Kenney, *Assistant Commissioner of Operations*, Monica Patel, *Assistant Commissioner for Agency Affairs and Chief Legal Officer*, Allen Morgan, *Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Field Operations North*, Jennifer Dunn, *Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Field Operations South*, and Ronald Wakefield, *Executive Director, IDD*

Agenda

Call to Order: Chair Lasa Joiner called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

Chair Lasa Joiner welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Chelsee Nabritt to conduct the roll call.

Recovery Presentation

Chair Lasa Joiner informed the Board members that there will not be a recovery speaker for the day, because they will hear several stories from different organizations throughout the meeting.

Chair Lasa Joiner introduced the agenda item requiring Board action.

Action Items

1. Board Meeting Minutes – December 12, 2024. Chair Lasa Joiner reminded the Board members that they received the Board meeting minutes in advance for review and asked for a motion to approve. Bubber Epps made a motion, which was seconded by Bill Slaughter. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner's Report:

Commissioner Tanner opened his report by introducing Ronald Wakefield, Executive Director of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, to the podium. As Mr. Wakefield was walking to the podium, Commissioner Tanner highlighted Mr. Wakefield's tremendous work within the IDD community and shared that he plans to retire soon, however, his impact on the department has been very impactful and he mentioned that his team is doing amazing work. Mr. Wakefield thanked Commissioner Tanner for his kind words and informed the Board that they will hear from several Developmental Disabilities organizations for the duration of the meeting. Mr. Wakefield introduced Danny Hoover with Diversified Enterprises, who explained what his organization does, and asked for the family of an individual in services to share their story with the Board members, he then asked for an individual who is receiving services from their organization to share their story with the Board members. Mr. Hoover then turned the meeting over to Ms. Cathy Durham, the Executive Director for Orange Grove, a Developmental Disabilities Provider. who shared some of the programs they provide individuals at their organization. Next, Mr. Hoover invited Ms. Michelle Schwartz, Executive Director of Sangha Unity Network, to share about her organizations work. After doing so, Ms. Schwartz asked an individual who is receiving services to speak about their experience Mr. Hoover. Mr. Hoover thanked the Board for giving them the opportunity to share their experience revolving around the innovative changes happening in the Intellectual Developmental Disabilities field and returned to his seat.

Commissioner Tanner then informed the Board that he would like to present the Amended Fiscal Year 2025 budget adjustments and the Fiscal Year 2026 budget adjustments. Commissioner gave a detailed overview of both and explained how the adjustments would affect the Department. Commissioner Tanner also gave the Board

members an update on the Department's crisis bed capacity and how staff is working their hardest to develop innovative ways to create more bed capacity. He also mentioned how the Department is working with consulting firm Guidehouse, to forecast future demands to continue to improve the planning list. He also mentioned that the Crisis Services Diagnostic Center in Macon will be opening in May of 2025. Commissioner Tanner was also happy to report to the Board members that the provider rates were implemented in November of 2024 and 90% of the Fiscal Year 2025 claims have been paid at the new rates. Commissioner Tanner thanked the Governor and the General Assembly for their hard work and for working with the Department to help us continue to be innovative and serve the community.

Lastly, Commissioner Tanner informed the Board members that he is very interested in including Board members in site visits to see the impact the Department has on providers and individuals that we serve. He mentioned that Ron Wakefield invited Board member Bill Slaughter to tour Diversified Enterprises and Orange Grove to see the positive impact they have on their patients and their community. Commissioner Tanner also thanked Board members Bubber Epps and Jean Sumner, M.D. for attending the Serenity Courtyard Ceremony, hosted by Riveredge, and for inviting him to the Middle Georgia Regional Commission Council meeting in Macon, GA. Commissioner Tanner then informed the Board that if there is an event in a Board member's region, Chelsea Nabritt and Ashley Dickson will inform them and encourage them to join us if they are available.

Commissioner Tanner closed his report.

Chairman's Report

Chair Lasa Joiner mentioned how grateful she was to report that all Board members were in attendance for the meeting and how she was so happy to see change being implemented for future meetings. She encouraged the Board members to engage with the Department and informed Commissioner Tanner that she will support the Department and the community as much as possible, and if they need anything from her or any Board member to please let her know. Chair Joiner thanked the presenters for sharing their stories with the Board and asked for a group photo before everyone departs once the meeting is adjourned.

Chair Lasa Joiner closed her report.

Public Comment

There was 1 public comment at this meeting.

Adjournment

Chair Lasa Joiner asked if there were any further business for the day, after hearing none, Chair Lasa Joiner asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Bill Slaughter, which was seconded by Amanda Owens.

The meeting adjourned at 2:24 p.m.

Special Notes

The next scheduled meeting of the Board of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities will be held on **Thursday, April 10, 2025.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Chelsee Nabritt, Board and Special Project Manager

Signatures:

Chair



Secretary

