

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, October 23, 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, David Glass, and Deb Bailey
- Virtual Conferencing:** Bill Slaughter and Jan Ligon, Ph.D.
- Absent:** Bubber Epps, Amanda Owens, Jean Sumner, M.D. and Jimmy Thomas

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*, Jason McSwain, *Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Operations and Chief Information Officer*, Brenda Woodard, *General Counsel and Ethics Officer*

Agenda

Call to Order: Chair Lasa Joiner called the meeting to order at 1:02 P.M.

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

Recovery Presentation

Chair Lasa Joiner invited Mr. Gene Conroy, Assistant Executive Director of Operations at the Georgia Council for Recovery, to the podium to introduce the guest speaker for the day. Mr. Conroy thanked the Board for inviting the Georgia Council for Recovery to speak to them today and invited Ms. Jasmine Turner to the podium to share her recovery story. Ms. Turner approached the podium and shared with the Board members how life in recovery has brought hope, healing and connection to her life and others within the community. She shared that she was a single parent using drugs in another state, and her child asked why she was using drugs; it was at that moment that she decided she needed help, and she needed to change her environment. She moved to Georgia, got connected with the Georgia Council for Recovery and started taking her recovery journey seriously. This year Ms. Turner served as the Recovery Bus Tour Manager and worked alongside colleagues to ensure every stop throughout the state of Georgia provided awareness, support, compassion, connection and transformation. She expressed that the bus tour is life-changing for those in the community who are struggling to ask for help, because at times they can feel alone. Seeing people in the community encouraging others to seek help, get connected, in hopes to live a drug-free life is the most inspiring part of her job. Ms. Turner mentioned that they were able to connect with faith-based communities, as well as state, local and county governments, and that they were able to invite legislators to several bus stops. Ms. Turner closed by stating that her story is one of the many powerful stories within the community, and that together these stories serve as a reminder of the importance of community, as individuals continue to support, uplift, and bring awareness to the state.

Chair Lasa Joiner thanked Jasmine Turner for sharing her story with the Board members and introduced the agenda items requiring Board action.

Action Items

1. Board Meeting Minutes – August 28, 2025. 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. David Glass made a motion, which was seconded by Deb Bailey. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Consideration of Easement Amendment for Southern Natural Gas. Brenda Woodard approached the podium and provided information regarding the documents in their folder relating to the easement and asked whether the Board members had any questions. After seeing there were no questions or concerns, Chair Lasa Joiner asked for a motion. Deb Bailey made a motion, which was seconded by David Glass. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Northeast Georgia Health System Resolution. Chelsee Nabritt approached the podium to read the Northeast Georgia Medical Center Resolution. Chair Lasa Joiner

asked for a motion. Deb Bailey made a motion, which was seconded by David Glass. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner's Report:

Commissioner Tanner opened his report by inviting Ms. Rachael Holloman, Senior Director of Federal Grant Programs and Suicide Prevention at the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, to the podium. Ms. Holloman provided a brief update on suicide prevention and shared some data about the Annual Teen Summit: "Hope Changes Everything". Ms. Holloman mentioned that the Summit was held in Atlanta, GA, and that for the first time, parents were invited to attend to learn more about how to support teens who are struggling with their mental health. Resources were provided to both teens and parents, and the teens were able to hear from inspiring peers. Ms. Holloman also shared that her team has been active in the community, attending the Sounds of Support event in Newton County, Georgia, where they provided suicide prevention resources to over 100 families throughout the day. Her team also presented at the Collegiate Middle Level Association Summit on youth suicide prevention, which included students from surrounding colleges and out-of-state institutions, who came to learn more about suicide prevention. Commissioner Tanner thanked Ms. Holloman for presenting to the Board and expressed that the Teen Summit is a huge success every year. He also shared that it was a great idea to invite the parents to join the teen summit because they should have the opportunity to learn and be aware as well.

Commissioner Tanner then invited Ms. Cassandra Price-Bagley, Senior Director of Addictive Diseases Division of Behavioral Health at the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, to the podium to present the key initiatives in substance use prevention, treatment and recovery. Ms. Price-Bagley shared that the continuum of care consists of four stages: promotion, prevention, treatment, and recovery. She explained how each stage affects a person and how the system manages each stage to ensure a person's journey is effective. She shared that there are thirty-six adult residential treatment service sites and twenty-one women's treatment and recovery service sites throughout the state, offering resources to those seeking treatment. Ms. Price-Bagley was also happy to share that the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Opioid Crisis Abatement Trust are partnering to equip every Georgia public school with opioid overdose reversal kits. Ms. Price-Bagley also provided the Board with statistics from the Georgia Recovery Bus Tour, informing the members that there were 75 total stops, and over 12,756 signatures on the bus. The community members engaged were individuals in recovery, family members and allies, judges, members of the General Assembly, sheriffs, mayors, county and city officials and members of the media. Ms. Price-Bagley shared a few pictures from the Recovery Bus Tour and thanked Board members and Commissioner Tanner for attending some of the stops. Commissioner

Tanner thanked Ms. Price-Bagley for presenting to the Board and thanked Amanda Owens for showing support at the Savannah bus stop and attending the Savannah Rotary Club luncheon with him.

Commissioner Tanner then invited Ms. Elizabeth Holcomb, Executive Director of Governmental Affairs and Ms. Brittany Smith, Nurse Director for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Northeast Georgia Healthcare Center, to the podium to present on peer support and recovery programs at Northeast Georgia Health Center. Together they spoke about the Maternal Peer Support Program in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, the Emergency Department Program for Substance Use Disorder and Overdose- related incidents, and the Emergency Department Program for Alcohol Use Disorder. These three programs connect individuals to Certified Addiction Empowerment Specialists and operate through funding from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to provide resources and support for patients and families across the region. Northeast Georgia Medical Center's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit is the first in the nation to implement Peer Recovery Coaches. The program was established in 2018, and the average length of stay is currently five to six days. The Emergency Department Peer Support for Substance Use Disorder Program has successfully served 6,675 individuals, with approximately 1,459 repeat Emergency Department encounters, and 22,714 successful follow-ups with individuals. The Alcohol Use Disorder Peer Support Program, launched in 2021, provides wraparound services such as: inpatient detox, treatment vouchers for sober living, health checkups, coaching sessions and more. Overall, the program has achieved a 50% success rate for those who participated. Commissioner Tanner thanked Ms. Holcomb and Ms. Smith for presenting to the Board and informed the Board members that Deb Bailey helped initiate the programs presented today.

Lastly, Commissioner Tanner informed the Board members that Chair Joiner is interested in having all Board members involved in the community to better understand the impact the Department has on organizations and individuals they serve. He mentioned that together the Board attended five events within the community and thanked them for showing support to the agency and those served. Commissioner Tanner then informed the Board that if an event is scheduled in a Board member's region, Chelsee Nabritt and Ashley Dickson will notify them and encourage them to join if they are available.

Commissioner Tanner closed his report.

Chairman's Report

Chair Lasa Joiner thanked everyone for presenting and asked Elizabeth Holcomb and Ms. Brittany Smith to take a picture with the Resolution and the Board members after

the meeting adjourns. Chair Lasa Joiner also thanked Jasmine Turner for sharing her story and expressed that she did not realize how powerful and moving the Recovery Bus Tour was in Georgia until she was out of state and someone mentioned how they wished their state took recovery more seriously and helped spread awareness like Georgia. Chair Lasa Joiner thanked Commissioner Tanner for continued support to the recovery community and expressed appreciation to Deb Bailey for initiating some of the programs within the Northeast Georgia Healthcare System. Deb Bailey acknowledged Elizabeth Holcomb and Brittany Smith and said they did an excellent job presenting to the Board and how she is extremely proud that the programs are so successful. Chair Lasa Joiner mentioned that she is extremely grateful that some of the Board members were able to connect with others in the community, and she encouraged them to continue doing so throughout the year.

Chair Lasa Joiner closed her report.

Public Comment

There were no public comments at this meeting.

Adjournment

Chair Lasa Joiner asked if there was 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 David Glass, which was seconded by Deb Bailey.

The meeting adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

Special Notes

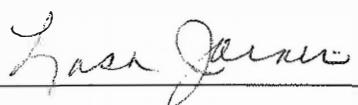
The next scheduled meeting of the Board of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities will be held on **Thursday, December 18, 2025**.

Respectfully submitted by:

Chelsee Nabritt, Board and Special Project Manager

Signatures:

Chair



Secretary

