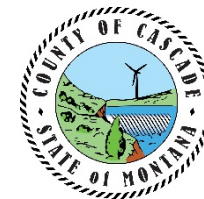




# Cascade County Mental Health Local Advisory Council Minutes

Monday, January 9, 2023



<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88465507144?pwd=L1pCL2g2OEVvSzZCM1M2Qkp2b1ZiQT09>

**1:30-3:00pm**

Return to Linda Daggett 415 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. S. Great Falls, MT 59405

**Members Present** Jennifer Whitfield (Zoom), Shawn Matsko, Randy Lynes, Greg Tilton, Capt. John Schaffer, Linda Daggett, Tom Osborn

**Guests Present** Martin No Runner, Lauren DeFrancisi

**Call to Order** Jennifer called the meeting to order at 1:43 PM.

**Public Comment** There was none

**Guest Presentation:** Lauren DeFrancisci, LCSW, from Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinator (CEPC) with the Suicide Prevention Team for the Montana Veteran's Health Administration, presented:

From 2001 through 2019, adjusted suicide rates among Veterans were greater and rose faster than for non-Veteran US adults, but Veteran suicide have reduced by nearly 10% in 2019 compared to 2018, pointing to the work done by the VA in that year.

MT Veteran suicide rate is still 58.2%. vs National Veteran Rate 31.6%. There were 53 Veteran suicides in Montana in 2020.

VA's public health strategy combines partnerships with communities to implement tailored, local prevention plans while also focusing on evidence based clinical strategies for intervention. Montana is among the highest for population of veterans. There has been a 6.8% decrease in suicide by firearm for Veterans compared to 2018.

The VA's continued plan is to 1) identify Service Members, Veterans, their Families and Screen for Suicide Risk. 2) Promote Connectedness. 3) Improve Care and Transitions.

She wants to work with other groups that have a shared vision of suicide prevention, work to develop a needs assessment. In the short term, her goal is to enhance the network here, increase health-seeking behavior, increase access to firearm storage safety, and reduce suicides in Veterans. She does outreach by making local connections.

The LAC can help by connecting her with those in the community that were involved with our Suicide Prevention Committee. Greg and Jennifer will assist her with that.

Martin commented on his, and other Vets, experience moving to Great Falls for the affordability, but found services here lacking compared to other Montana cities. He emphasized how important those services are.

**Minutes from December 2022** Jennifer relayed message from Susie McIntyre noting a correction in the December Minutes. The Library report should read: "A mil levy would make permanent funding for a contract with qualified agency to provide counselors and/or Peer Supporters continuing to be at the Library". Linda will make the change. The minutes were approved as corrected.

**Finance Report from December 2022** Shawn/Jennifer. The County Budget/Finance Officer, Mary Embleton, has retired so a budget report was submitted by the office at the last minute. Jennifer will review it and send it out to the members.

### **New Business**

**Board Membership:** Jennifer announced that Commissioner Rae Grulkowski has agreed to take Don Ryan's position as the Commissioner representative on the Council. She talked with Jennifer and said she was unable to be here today.

**Alluvion** – Cassidy Bloomgren is planning to submit her application.

**Legal** – Greg is working on a candidate.

**Mini-Grants:** Jennifer and Randy reported:

- United Way did their wellness and self care project during finals week at the high schools.
- Randy reported the GFPS Indigenous Club did their Warrior function and they are planning another one in January.
- The Mental Health America Great Falls would like to see an application. Linda will send one to the group.
- There is \$2,000 left to give out. The plan is to do that this month.

**Grant Writing:** Greg reminded us that we may want to call on services of grant-writers.

### **Continued Business**

**Strategic Plan** – Jennifer remarked that it is a work in progress, will continue to refer to it.

**Work Group Update-** Randy/Ginny/Greg  
Website/Facebook

Jennifer Whitfield

### **Representative Reports**

North Central MT – Crisis Intervention Collaborative (NCMT-CIC)

Captain Schaffer/Cassidy

Mobile Response Team

MH Court

Suicide Prevention Committee-removing?

Greg Tilton

CSAA Report

Greg Tilton

MT Peer Network Report

Ginny Carnes

BHAC Report

Jennifer Whitfield

Healthy Lives/Vibrant Futures

Susie McIntyre

NAMI

Randy Lynes

NCILS/Library/Provider Project

Tom Osborn/Susie McIntyre

### **Community Reports/Announcements from Board Members**

LAC members

### **Adjourn**

Next meeting February 6, 2023 @ 1:30-3:00PM via Zoom (Jennifer will be traveling)