

Southwest Opioid Response District (SWORD) Meeting Minutes – Approved 10/8/2025

Wednesday, September 10, 2025, 1:00pm at the Durango Public Library

Attendees:

Voting Members	Attendance	Proxy
Laurel Schafer (Chair), Assistant Director Montezuma County Public Health	Present	
John Ranson (Vice Chair)	X	Marsha Porter-Norton
Adam Rogers (Treasurer), Finance Director La Plata County	X	Shaine Gans
Erin Hyder (Secretary), Assistant City Manager City of Durango	Present	
Andy Brock, Assistant Chief of Police, City of Cortez	X	
Amie Gardiner, Trustee Town of Silverton	X	
Austin Lashley, San Juan County Commissioner	X	
Ashley Wilson, Director Archuleta County Public Health	X	
Becky Joyce, Director San Juan County Public Health	X	
Bill Rockensock, Police Chief Town of Pagosa Springs	Present	
Bob Brammer, Assistant City Manager City of Durango	X	
Bobbi Lock, Director Montezuma Public Health	Present	
Brice Current, Police Chief City of Durango	X	Chris Gonzalez
Chauncey McCarthy, Town Manager Town of Rico	X	
Eric Stiasny, Dolores County Commissioner	X	
Justen Goodall, Town of Mancos Marshall	Present	
Malynda Evans, Director Dolores County Social Services	X	
Marsha Porter-Norton, Commissioner La Plata County	Present	
Martha Johnson, Director La Plata Human Services	X	Marsha Porter-Norton
Nathaniel Baca, 6 th Judicial District Judge	X	
Shaine Gans, Grants Specialist, La Plata County	Present	
Tracy Anselmo, Director La Plata County Public Health	Present	
Travis Anderson, County Administrator Montezuma County	X	

Advisory/Non-Voting Members	Attendance
Ashley Micikas, La Plata County Public Health	X
Donna Mae Baukat, Community Compassion Outreach	X
Haley Leonard-Saunders, Axis Health Systems	Present

Jacob Abbas, Therapist	Present
Imo Succo, Indigenous Wellbriety Program	X
Mary Katherine, Psychologist	X
Will Finn, Physician	Present

Facilitators and Guests	Role
Claire West, SWORD Project Manager	Facilitator
Laura Lewis Marchino, Region 9 Economic Development District	Facilitator
Phil Weiser, Colorado Attorney General	Presenter
Audrey Royem, Region 9 Economic Development District	Guest
Shak Powers, Region 9 Economic Development District	Guest
Stefani Burditt, Region 9 Economic Development District	Guest
Amber DeFrenchi, Pura Vida for Good	Guest
Andrew Urenda, Manna	Guest
Charlee Sharp, Silver Lining Recovery Homes	Guest
Denise Vincioni, Denver Recovery Group	Guest
Doty Shepard, Resilient Colorado	Guest
Katie Stewart, State Rep HD59	Guest
Lisa Pool, Senator Hickenlooper's Office	Guest
Lori Spurgeon, Denver Recovery Group	Guest
Mary Bono, MAPDA	Guest
Mason Dyar, Upper Pine Fire	Guest
Mindy Baumgardner, Colorado Attorney General's Office	Guest
Mozhdeh Bruss, Healthy Archuleta	Guest
Nichole Glaser, Axis Health	Guest
Richard Diworth, NINA	Guest
Steve Nowlin, Montezuma County Sheriff	Guest
Tonya Wheeler, Advocates for Recovery Colorado	Guest
Valentina Atencio, Advocates for Recovery Colorado	Guest
Sean Smith, La Plata County Sheriff	Guest

- Chair, Laurel Schafer, called the meeting to order at 1:11pm

I. Welcome and Agenda Review

- a. Laura Lewis Marchino welcomed attendees to the meeting and introduced the agenda. She then introduced Laurel Schafer, SWORD Chair, to conduct the meeting.

II. Approve August 2025 minutes*

- a. Laurel Schafer made a motion to approve the August 2025 meeting minutes. Council members raised their hands following the discussion to indicate approval. **Motion passed.** Due to not following Robert's Rules of Order properly, approval will be affirmed at the next SWORD meeting.

III. Funding Request Recommendation*

- a. Authorize Fiscal Agent to request full amount of available funds from COAG. These funds will be amended to our 2026-two-year-plan after the next funding retreat. Laurel Schafer made a motion to approve the funding request of \$751,064.47. Council members raised their hands following the discussion to indicate approval. **Motion passed.** Due to not following Robert's Rules of Order properly, approval will be affirmed at the next SWORD meeting.

IV. Attorney General's Address

- a. Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser spoke to the SWORD Council and guests regarding the opioid settlement work and Colorado's recent data showing a decline in opioid deaths. He addressed questions and concerns brought up by County Sheriffs in attendance around the emergency need for medical detox in our area.

V. Celebration

- a. Claire West, SWORD Project Manager, provided information on the goals of SWORD which include:
 - Focus on solutions.
 - Use the settlement dollars to benefit the entire 5 county region.
 - Leverage additional funding.

- Address more than opioid use but the entire substance misuse continuum.
- b. Claire provided information on the continuum of care and where our region's gaps are. A review of the initial feasibility study which explored residential treatment (Denier in particular) was found unfeasible in terms of the staffing, regulation, and other cost barriers. SWORD decided to focus on a peer led recovery campus based off the Recovery Kentucky Model which allowed those to have housing, recovery curriculum, and peer support for a longer time period. The key populations to focus on recovery include adult males and youth with mental health co-occurring concerns and tribal populations. A consultant was hired to move this project forward, but an operator needs to be identified, and Colorado has some additional barriers that make directly replicating this model challenging.
- c. Next steps include looking at whether a single campus is the best option. There are several buckets to address treatment barriers, such as vouchers, transportation, expand sober living in our communities or other programming. The current grant program is working to build the recovery ecosystem. Claire asked for input on possible pivots and putting together a subcommittee to make recommendations to SWORD. That idea received agreement.

VI. Next Steps: Reconvening the Future's Committee

- a. There was significant discussion regarding the needs in the region, particularly the services for the jail population needing medical support around substance use. There were concerns about the state and federal funding changes that will impact local services and programs including detox. Claire invited the attendees to put their ideas on flip charts around the room, visit with initial grantees and learn about their programs, as well as network and enjoy snacks.
- b. The next **SWORD meeting will be** October 8th, 2025, at 2:30pm via Zoom and those interested in being on the email invite were encouraged to reach out.

Meeting adjourned at 2:35pm for networking and to learn about the work of current grantees.

Minutes prepared by Claire West & Laura Lewis Marchino

- Following the official SWORD meeting, area law enforcement were asked by La Plata County Commissioner, Marsha Porter-Norton for more specifics around what they are seeing as another crisis—the lack of medical detox—happening in emergency rooms and jails.
- The next step is to have a meeting with area hospitals and law enforcement, including AXIS and an elected from those counties with jails regarding solutions.
- We will also get information on other programs including New Mexico and the San Luis Valley on what they are doing/working on.