



Community Suicide Prevention Community Meeting Minutes from August 7th, 2025

In Attendance

In person:

Tara Parsons	Brandi Daw	Lisa Elkins	Rick Croft
Timalee Geisler	Lynne Wayde	Eric Adams	Stephanie Schindler

On Zoom:

Liz Behrend	Jan Eastman	Andrea Hamilton	RaeAnne Buerstatte
Melinda Kettles	Betsy Hammar	Senia Canales	Tina Ricks
Tina Wheatley	Brandie Weaver		

Excused

Bonny Jennings	Russ Wheatley	Christine Adams
Melissa Schrade	Sara White	

Rick welcomed and had attendees introduce themselves. Those attending in person were welcomed to lunch.

Tara Parsons, the elected County Coroner for Butte County was the guest speaker.

She gave some background on Butte County demographics and suicide. In the past 7 years, Butte County experienced six suicides, 5 males and 1 female. 1 of the 5 males was Tara's grandfather. All the men died by firearm; 1 additionally hanged himself. The female died by firearm.

Stats in Butte County are more recent cases – the past seven years. No youth have died by suicide in Butte County, although one young man that graduated from Butte County died by suicide in another county.

There is no in person counseling in Butte County. No local resources, nowhere for people struggling to go.

Liz Behrend stated that Southeastern Idaho Public Health offers counseling in Butte County on a sliding scale fee, if needed. It is in person. Liz would like to share her resources with Tara. Call 208-233-9080 and they can schedule the appointment. Chris is the counselor, and his direct line is 208-239-5221.

Butte County is well connected socially. But it does not have the local resources. Vern Kubiak is at the clinic treating mental health. The number of mental health transports to Madison Health or EIRMC BHC has increased in the past few years.

There was a question about training for EMT's, law enforcement, etc. Tara is the trainer for EMT and has a monthly meeting as talks about mental health. Tara gets some with her coroner meetings. Law Enforcement, as Tara understands, does not get additional training. Not a large number of officers and it covers 2500 square miles.

Betsy asked if 988 is being promoted in Butte County stating that 988 can connect to mobile crisis response, as well. Tara has shared 988 with courts, schools, and parole.

The first peer support group is taking place at 6 pm on the evening of August 7.

Betsy asked how Tara cares for herself following a traumatic EMT response? She has a strong faith and how she was raised, she cries privately, she reads including romance and true crime. She can return home and be at peace with most calls. She gets text messages from others who know when a call might be difficult, and she can talk to them about the call.

Rick asked about families who lose someone to suicide, how do you handle if through the investigation it was clearly a suicide and then the families asks that the death not be reported as a suicide. Tara has not had that experience. Would she meet the family's request? Tara would not. The family can ask, but the coroner does not have to change the manner of death. She is the voice of the deceased person.

A death certificate can be changed 1 time. Tara has had to correct 1 in the past 10 years. Although the death occurred before she was coroner.

Betsy stated that data from false death records hinders the ability of leaders in suicide prevention from understanding the true picture of what is happening.

CSP Updates

September is suicide prevention awareness month, and we are busy with events and activities.

September activities – see attached calendar

- . Memorial Walks
- . Conference – September 19, registration is open
- . Parade

Jan Eastman won a prestigious award and was recognized. She was one of 4 awarded out of 4000 nominees. We are so grateful for her hard work. The Idaho Community Foundation Grant who gave the award asked her to nominate a non-profit. Jan was nominated for CSP, and we were awarded a \$10,000 grant. On Friday, August 15 at 10 am in Pocatello, they are celebrating the non-profit award winners

School District 25 update from Tina Ricks. Tina e-mailed Superintendent Howell of School District 25 trying to offer support as needed. His response was short back and stated they had what they needed in the school district. But in the event the director of special services needs additional support/health, she can reach out to CSP. Tina responded if they need information or a presentation to the school board we could help. The superintendent did not respond. CSP will keep trying.

Parents have had some concern about how School District 25 handles suicides. There have been a handful of high school suicides in the district. Parents have reached out and now CSP has reached out.

No community updates.

Next CSP Community Meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, September 4th, 2025**, at Noon at Eastern Idaho Public Health, 1250 Hollipark, Idaho Falls.