BURKE COUNTY GOVERNMENT · OPIOID RESPONSE DEPARTMENT

FACILITY-BASED CRISIS CLINICAL ADVISOR

Clinical Advisor Selection

Procurement Process & Recommendation for Approval

Presented by Katie Samuels · Opioid Response Department To the Board of County Commissioners · September 21, 2026

RFQ-2026-0828
Burke County FBC Center

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WHERE THE PROJECT STANDS

Funded, sited, and in architectural planning

Secured approximately **$6.5 million** in capital project funding	Complete
Purchased 722 E. Union Street, Morganton for **$865,000**	March 4, 2026
Completed environmental due diligence	Complete
Evaluated six A&E firms, interviewed the top three, and selected **Holland & Hamrick Architects**	July 2026
Procure a Facility-Based Crisis Clinical Advisor	Tonight



THE FACILITY

A licensed 16-bed Facility-Based Crisis Center — 24-hour nursing, psychiatric and medical assessment, withdrawal management, counseling, peer support, and care coordination, with IVC designation intended.

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WHY THIS ROLE EXISTS

Design decisions made now determine whether the building can be licensed and operated later

Burke County defined the need for a separate Facility-Based Crisis Clinical Advisor to bring direct FBC operating, clinical, regulatory, and workflow expertise into the architectural design and construction process.

What the architect brings

HOLLAND & HAMRICK ARCHITECTS

- Architectural and engineering design
- Code, permitting, and construction documents
- Adaptive reuse of the Union Street building
- Construction administration

What the Clinical Advisor adds

THE OPERATOR'S PERSPECTIVE

- Patient and staff flow through the building
- Safety and clinical functionality
- Therapeutic environment
- Regulatory and licensure considerations
- Readiness for eventual operation

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HOW THE ADVISOR WAS SOLICITED

An open, qualifications-based solicitation

RFQ-2026-0828 sought an experienced behavioral health professional or organization to serve as the County's FBC subject-matter expert during planning, design, and construction.

Aug 7
RFQ Opened
Advertised publicly for the Facility-Based Crisis Clinical Advisor role

Aug 28
Initial Deadline
2:00 p.m. — two Statements of Qualifications received

Sept 4
Extended Deadline
Reopened one additional week to broaden competition — no additional proposals received

Tonight
Recommendation
Approval to begin scope and fee negotiations

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS RECEIVED

Phoenix Counseling Center

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS RECEIVED

Recovery Innovations, Inc.

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WHAT THE PANEL SCORED

Six criteria, 100 points

Published in the RFQ Five independent evaluators

40	**Direct Facility-Based Crisis operational experience**	Has the respondent actually operated an FBC?
20	**Proposed Clinical Advisor**	Qualifications and availability of the named individual
15	**Understanding of the Burke County project**	Grasp of this site, this community, and this scope
10	**North Carolina regulatory and licensure experience**	DHSR rules, service definitions, current NC practice
10	**Healthcare facility planning & design collaboration**	Track record working alongside design teams
5	**References**	

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WHO EVALUATED THE SUBMISSIONS

A five-member independent panel

Each panelist reviewed and scored both Statements of Qualifications independently, using the 100-point criteria established for the procurement.

Burke County Government
PROJECT SPONSOR & OWNER

Katie Samuels
Opioid Response Director

Hugh Sandoe
Burke County Government

Partners Health Management
BEHAVIORAL-HEALTH MANAGING ORGANIZATION

Paul Holden
Partners Health Management

Jamie Sales
Director, Network Operations

Holland & Hamrick Architects
PROJECT ARCHITECT

Greg Melton
Holland & Hamrick Architects

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FINAL EVALUATION RESULTS

Phoenix scored higher with every evaluator

Independent scores **100 points** maximum each

EVALUATOR	PHOENIX COUNSELING CENTER	RECOVERY INNOVATIONS, INC.	DIFFERENCE
Katie Samuels · Burke County	**98**	94	+4
Paul Holden · Partners Health Management	**98**	93	+5
Greg Melton · Holland & Hamrick Architects	**89**	69	+20
Hugh Sandoe · Burke County	**91**	83	+8
Jamie Sales · Partners Health Management	**92**	90	+2
COMMITTEE AVERAGE	**93.6**	**85.8**	+7.8

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BASIS FOR THE SCORING DIFFERENCE

Two qualified respondents, one closer fit

Both respondents demonstrated substantial behavioral health crisis expertise. Recovery Innovations presented extensive national crisis-system and facility planning experience.

Where Phoenix scored higher across the panel

- Direct North Carolina Facility-Based Crisis operations
- Western North Carolina and regional familiarity
- Current North Carolina regulatory and licensure experience
- Regional accessibility
- Relevant partnerships
- Senior-level direct involvement
- A practical operator perspective on facility design and clinical workflow

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COMMITTEE & STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Phoenix Counseling Center

The highest-qualified respondent under the qualifications-based evaluation — and the closest operator-side fit for a licensed Facility-Based Crisis Center.

- Higher total score from each of the five independent evaluators
- Direct North Carolina FBC operating experience
- Current NC regulatory and licensure knowledge
- Senior-level involvement and regional accessibility to the project team

COMMITTEE AVERAGE SCORE

93.6/100

Ranked first by all five evaluators

98 · 98 · 89 · 91 · 92

individual evaluator scores · out of 100

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DISCLOSURE & SAFEGUARDS

The Clinical Advisor and operator procurements remain separate

Phoenix Counseling Center has disclosed that it may compete in the future operating-provider procurement. Selection as Clinical Advisor does not guarantee or provide preference in that procurement.

This procurement

RFQ-2026-0828 · CLINICAL ADVISOR

An advisory role during planning, design, and construction. The Advisor reviews the developing facility from an operator's perspective and works alongside County staff and the project architect.

The future operator procurement

SEPARATE COMPETITIVE SOLICITATION

A distinct, competitive procurement conducted later for the organization that will run the facility. If Phoenix competes, it will not participate in development, scoring, evaluation, interviews, or selection activities for that procurement.

Serving as Clinical Advisor confers **no advantage and no preference** in the selection of the future FBC operating provider.

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WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

From approval to opening

Tonight's vote authorizes the first step on this list.

01	**Board approval of the Clinical Advisor selection recommendation**	Tonight
02	Scope and fee negotiations and a professional services agreement with Phoenix Counseling Center	
03	Continued architectural programming and design with Holland & Hamrick Architects, incorporating Clinical Advisor input at key milestones	
04	Schematic design, design development, construction documents, and DHSR plan review	
05	Renovation and construction	
06	Separate competitive procurement for the future FBC operating provider	
07	**Licensure, operational readiness, provider startup, and transition to service delivery**	

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WHY THE ADVISOR MATTERS

Protecting a $6.5 million investment in Burke County's crisis continuum

- Local alternative to emergency departments
- Reduced behavioral health boarding in hospitals
- EMS and law enforcement diversion support
- Expanded access to crisis stabilization services
- Improved transitions to ongoing treatment and recovery
- Serving adults throughout Burke County

Joins the BEAR Team, Recovery Court, low-barrier medication-assisted treatment, family-centered treatment, and other opioid settlement initiatives in one comprehensive, community-based behavioral health system.

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FOR BOARD ACTION

Advance the selection and authorize contract negotiations

SUGGESTED MOTION

Approve the selection of **Phoenix Counseling Center** as Burke County's Facility-Based Crisis Clinical Advisor under RFQ-2026-0828, and authorize staff to proceed with scope and fee negotiations and development of a professional services agreement.

→ **If negotiations succeed**
The professional services agreement returns to the Board for final approval.

→ **If negotiations fail**
Staff returns to the Board with next steps, including the next-ranked respondent.

Burke County Opioid Response Department · September 21, 2026

Questions welcome

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