



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

MINUTES – Approved
March 21, 2024

MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

FEBRUARY 15, 2023 ♦ 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

1430 FREEDOM BLVD, SUITE E, UCCE AG EXTENSION AUDITORIUM, WATSONVILLE

In-person meeting only, no virtual option.

Present: Antonio Rivas, Celeste Gutierrez, Dean Kashino, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes
Excused: Hugh McCormick, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Supervisor Hernandez, Stella Peuse
Absent: Jeffrey Arlt
Staff: Tiffany Cantrell-Warren, Jane Batoon-Kurovski

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- I. Roll Call – Quorum present. Meeting called to order at 3:21 p.m. by Chair Xaloc Cabanes.
 - II. Public Comments - none
 - III. Board Member Announcements
 - The Chair requested that the subcommittees start to meet to discuss schedule, ideas and tasks.
 - The Biennial Report is not complete. It will be reviewed and voted on at the next meeting.
 - IV. Business / Action Items
 - A. Approve January 18, 2024 Minutes.
Motion/Second: Valerie Webb / Dean Kashino
Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Celeste Gutierrez, Dean Kashino, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes
Nays: None
Absent: Hugh McCormick, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Supervisor Hernandez
Motion passed.
 - B. Approve the draft Proposition 1 opposition letter with changes as discussed (see item VI.B.2)
Motion/Second: Laura Chatham / Michael Neidig
Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Celeste Gutierrez, Dean Kashino, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes
Nays: None
Absent: Hugh McCormick, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Supervisor Hernandez
Motion passed.
 - V. Reports
 - A. Secretary's Report – Jeffrey was absent, no report.
 - B. Patients' Rights Report – George Carvalho, Patients' Rights Advocate
The January report was provided. George was not present at the meeting.
-Antonio is requesting more specific information about Willowbrook.
 - C. Board of Supervisors Report – Supervisor Hernandez was absent, no report.

D. Behavioral Health Updates: Tiffany Cantrell-Warren, Director of County Behavioral Health

- Response to question from the last meeting about the new law that passed which states that the County is no longer able to have independent contractors unless the County pays for their insurance and benefits, and the board was wondering how that would affect the contractors in their network. Tiffany said it will not affect the County because they already have strong regulations around independent contractors, however it could affect some of the organizations that BH contracts with if they have independent contractors. BH has seen increases in the cost that they are requesting BH to pay for the services they deliver but can't say if that cost is because of this law or just because of general health care expenses. The cost of delivering health care services have increased since 2020.
- BH is in communication with their contractors getting ready for another contracting cycle for next year. BH is hearing a lot from their contractors about the struggle for them to operate in the new CalAIM BH Payment Reform Fee for Structure system. It is hurting BH financially and hurting their contractors as well. BH is gearing up trying to identify some additional investments to support these specialty mental health and drug medical networks in Santa Cruz County that the County BH department is responsible for.
- MESA in its current iteration is a millionaire's tax of 1.0% on top of incomes above a million dollars. There are less incomes above a million dollars right now because of stock market performance in the past year or two, so the State's revenue is extremely down. The state is hurting in a budget deficit, and MESA is also decreasing the projected amount that BH would receive this year and next year.
- The interim Children's unit in Watsonville will open in early March. They have executed contracts with Watsonville Community Hospital and Pacific Clinics. Pacific Clinics has hired one team but needs two teams to cover 12 hours/day, 7 days/week.
- The Sobering Center opened on February 1st and is staffed by Janus, which is BH's largest SUD Contractor, can get reimbursed through the County and Medi-Cal. Because Janus provides a withdrawal management, narcotics treatment program, and a lot of other substance use disorder services, they can connect individuals in through their system of care, and once somebody is given that outpatient or inpatient service through Janus, the County BH department is the medical plan that pays for that individual's treatment, if they are a Medi-Cal beneficiary. BH is connected, but Janus is the operator. BH provides funding to Janus for the Sobering Center, the funding comes directly from Medi-Cal, not through the County, and there is a portion of funding coming from the Sheriff's Department. The duration of stay is 24 hours until they sober up from that incident. It is an opportunity to provide a connection to someone back into services.
- Waiting lists for treatment programs – In the system of care, there is not enough capacity to treat individuals who have SUD. They have 94 beds for adults who are Medi-Cal recipients/beneficiaries. There is zero beds for children, youth age 17 and under. BH has a contract with The Camp in Scotts Valley to provide residential substance use disorder treatment for youth who are Medi-Cal. The Camp doesn't accept Medi-Cal, so BH pays 100% of the cost of SUD residential treatment for Medi-Cal youth in this County. For the adult population, the Feds match more than 50% of the cost and then BH pays the rest. BH did increase capacity for outpatient narcotics treatment program. They were able to use some of their Opioid settlement funds to increase that capacity. Janus used to provide less than 5 days/week, and now they are providing 2 more days to be able to have people enter that treatment most days of the week. Janus provides residential and outpatient treatment.

VI. New Agenda Items

A. Review draft Biennial Report and vote to submit to the Board of Supervisors – draft not complete. Report to be reviewed next month.

B. Proposition 1

1. Oppose Proposition 1.

Motion/Second: Antonio Rivas / Mike Neidig

Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Celeste Gutierrez, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes

Nays: Dean Kashino

Absent: Hugh McCormick, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Supervisor Hernandez

Motion passed.

2. Approve draft opposition letter with the following changes:

- Add last digit to phone number.
- Remove from RE: “as it reduces funding for existing BH services and crisis response and”
- Add in the last paragraph, “This is a brief summary of our opposition” and “contact the MHAB for additional information.”

C. Revise bylaws to include the SUDS Commission and change name from MHAB to Behavioral Health Board – discussion postponed to next month.

VII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m.