

Approved
Minutes 2/16/17

Mental Health Advisory Board
January 19, 2017; 3:00-5:00 p.m.
1400 Emeline Ave., Bldg. K, Room 206, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Present: Hugh McCormick, Charlotte Reyes, Kathleen Avraham, Jennifer Kaupp, Greg Caput
Excused Absence: Richard Martinez, Jodie Wells, Maria Correia
Unexcused Absence: None

1. Regular Business: Minutes from the December 19th, 2016, not available until the February 16, 2017 meeting and will be read and voted on at that time.
 - New member Aimee Escalante will join next meeting. She will be attending the Feb 3, 2017 retreat training.
2. Public Comments
 - Sylvia Caras: Reminder about the general strike tomorrow and Women's March on Saturday
 - Rebekah Mills: Concerned about way mental health cases are treated in jails. State law requires safety room in jails for inmates to be placed if they are a danger to themselves or to others. They are not given normal clothing or any belongings, not even toilet paper for the bathroom or sufficient water. They are on camera. The rooms are unsanitary and weird lighting results in sensory deprivation. This is an inhumane way to treat people who are on suicide watch. Suggests positive items in the space or at least basic human needs.
 - Charlotte: What is the justification/procedure for placing inmates there? Suggests they have volunteers to sit with them.
 - Jenny: Suggests a volunteer network of psychologists be on call.
 - Rebekah: Explains that due to the 8-5 schedule of mental health workers at the jail, if you are placed in there at 5 PM you have to wait until a worker is back at 8. There is no provision for leaving cell if still on suicide watch.
 - Hugh: Explains the lighting in the room is very odd, often red, dim light.
 - Kate: The board is an advisory and fact finding board, I recommend we form a sub-committee to deal with this issue and file a complaint/request for information to the jails to deal with this.
 - Jenny: Asks Rebekah about her organization and if it deals with this.
 - Rebekah: Her organization is a prison abolitionist group, Sin Barras, which deals with incarceration and needs in the community. The overall vision is to not have people with mental health issues in jails or prisons, they advocate in jails in Santa Cruz County, and educate people on history.
 - Jenny and Charlotte are very interested in joining the sub-committee and writing a letter for the board to approve.
 - Greg: You will need to learn the procedures and conditions that occur in jails.
 - Charlotte: Asks what we, as the board, can do?

- Greg: The Advisory Board can look for the facts.
- Rebekah: I do not know the big picture or standard procedure, just individual accounts and my own experience.
- Kate: We can't change policy but we can find the facts.
- Rebekah: Sin Barras is also looking to get feedback on jail conditions and how people are treated in jails to obtain solid data on the matter.
- Kate: We have a process for visiting official buildings.
- Rebekah: Title 15 and 24 deal with this.
- Kate: Invites Rebekah to retreat.
- Greg: Have people committed suicide?
- Rebekah: There has been a couple; a women also died of dehydration.
- Jenny and Charlotte: Will look into site visit to find the facts.
- Charlotte: Suggests more mental health interns that check-in frequently.
- Rebekah: Says they do not have resources for this at the jail.
- Kate: We will put this in the sub-committee agenda for the retreat.
- Sylvia: They should also look into why people are in the jail (before putting them in isolation).
- Sarah Leonard: There have also been concerns that meds are not filled in a timely manner and people are at their worst when they go to court, when complaints were made to jails they responded with, "It's all fine."
- Rebekah: Custody is not necessarily unwilling to make changes but they do not have that perspective.

3. Standing Reports

- Greg: Jim Roszell has been approved for next board meeting (4th District). He will be a representative with Jodie Wells.
- Lynda Kaufmann: Asks about her application (has not gone through) she will re-send (for District 3)
- Reminder that the retreat is open to the public (by law)
- Greg: will send a copy of the drafted letter to the Grand Jury regarding looking into the jails
- Rebekah: restraints are also being used inappropriately (although this is a separate issue). They are not supposed to be used as punishment.
- Hugh: Where do the videotapes go? (No one knows)
- Erik: (Sent by email) is working with a committee to reduce mental health patients incarcerated, peer services are vital. Due to funding reductions (\$2 million this year and \$1 million next) we must look at effective, less costly practices.
- Hugh: Did site visit at Seventh Avenue with Rebekah. Seventh Avenue is a 99 bed I.M.D (Institute of Mental Disease) which "know one knows exists." Only 10 of the residents are from Santa Cruz resulting in the question of why our county is not utilizing this resource better. The conditions are better than they used to be.
- Sarah: The bedding is not great. Some people prefer Napa because conditions are better, there has been a history of sexual assaults at Seventh Avenue.
- Hugh: They now have video recordings and separate women's quarters.

- Lynda: Santa Cruz County residents are no longer priority, this has to do with relationships, other counties pay to have their residents there (and they pay more than Santa Cruz residents) – rates are published.
 - Hugh: Having friends and family near is crucial to recovery, it is better to keep people local.
 - Lynda: County general funds pay for services.
 - Charlotte: Is this (the money) the only reason there are less Santa Cruz residents?
 - Sarah: Napa may have nicer conditions still.
 - Hugh: Next site visit is Rose Acres.
 - Kate: For the retreat I want you all to be thinking about what is your greatest passion? As we will be choosing sub-committees to work on. We will also discuss prevention more at the retreat.
4. Rebekah Mills Presentation: Alternatives Conference
- Discusses Alternatives Conference in San Diego, a peer-focused conference. Reviews schedules and that it was well worth her time. She would like to see more people from Santa Cruz County able to go without paying out of pocket for next year's conference in Boston.
 - Lynda: Were there many social enterprises/peer-run business represented?
 - Rebekah: Not that I encountered, but there was a lot more to see.
5. New Business
- Kate: We would like to have a Mental Health Community Information Fair where groups in the mental health community come to share information and is open to the public. Maybe fall of this year. This could be a potential sub-committee. We need more presence in the community, to build a bridge, and reduce stigma (mental health should be thought of as medical health).
 - Charlotte: I would be willing to speak to generate excitement around it.
 - Sylvia: October 10th is World Mental Health Day, could do it the weekend before?
 - Kate: We will add this to the retreat agenda.
6. Old Business
- The retreat is February 3, from 9-3. Terry Bohrer, M.A., R.N. from San Francisco, will be the facilitator. Location to be determined. Food provided. We will publicize location and agenda. Any input/retreat requests?
 - Charlotte: Material that will inspire creativity.
 - We will discuss instruction on processes for the board, how the board of supervisors structure works, sub-committees, and also have icebreakers and fun. Packets will be mailed to all board members.
 - Next Board Meeting February, 16th from 3-5 PM
7. Adjourn
- Adjourn at 4:39: Jenny Kaupp motion to adjourn. Greg Caput, seconded. Approved unanimously