



# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

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# HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

**MINUTES – Approved**  
**July 20, 2023**

## **MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD**

JUNE 15, 2023 ♦ 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

1400 EMELINE AVENUE, ROOMS 206-207, SANTA CRUZ

Microsoft Teams Meeting (831) 454-2222, Conference 478 205 512#

**Present:** Antonio Rivas, Celeste Gutierrez, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes, Supervisor Felipe Hernandez  
**Excused:** Hugh McCormick, Stephen Busath  
**Staff:** Karen Kern, Jane Batoon-Kurovski

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- I. Roll Call – Quorum present. Meeting called to order at 3:02 p.m. by Chair Xaloc Cabanes.
- II. Public Comments
  - Perry Spencer – provided a flyer for the Vet Art Pop Up 2 Peace Arts Café in Santa Cruz on August 4<sup>th</sup>, Cooper Street, 2:30pm to 9pm. All are invited to this family friendly event.
  - Public member stated he made a complaint against MHCAN. He said they are failing as they are throwing people out and the Board needs to look at these organizations and make sure they are doing a better job and have higher standards.
  - Public member commended the MHAB and BH division for their dedication and commitment to providing mental health services in our community. The public member asked the following questions for the BH Division:
    1. One organization responded to RFP for psychiatric healthcare facility. Is Telecare running it next year? Is that why minors won't be accepted there as of July 1<sup>st</sup> due to the new contract?
    2. How is the interim facility in Watsonville coming along?
    3. If the County gets the Children's Unit for Crisis, who is going to run it?
- III. Board Member Announcements
  - Retreat on Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> at 10am
  - Reminder to board members to not "Reply to All" as outside communication for all MHAB members is forbidden per the Brown Act
  - Grand Jury Report – the MHAB will take the time to review and respond together as a Board.
  - Regarding Member-At-Large: need to figure out how various voices can be represented. Article in the Lookout says that over 70% on the boards and commissions are people from Westside Santa Cruz, are Caucasian and own their homes. The Chair stated he would like the MHAB to be at the forefront of doing everything possible to have the best representation on this board, and look forward to discussing possible barriers (work, childcare, etc.)

IV. Business / Action Items

A. Approve March 16, 2023 Minutes

Motion/Second: Laura Chatham / Michael Neidig

Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes

Absent: Celeste Gutierrez (joined at 3:41pm), Hugh McCormick, Stephen Busath, Supervisor Hernandez (joined at 3:41pm)

Motion passed.

B. Approve April 20, 2023 Minutes

Motion/Second: Jennifer Wells Kaupp / Jeffrey Arlt

Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Xaloc Cabanes

Abstain: Valerie Webb

Absent: Celeste Gutierrez (joined at 3:41pm), Hugh McCormick, Stephen Busath, Supervisor Hernandez (joined at 3:41pm)

Motion passed.

C. Approve May 18, 2023 Minutes

Motion/Second: Michael Neidig / Valerie Webb

Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb

Abstain: Xaloc Cabanes

Absent: Celeste Gutierrez (joined at 3:41pm), Hugh McCormick, Stephen Busath, Supervisor Hernandez (joined at 3:41pm)

Motion passed.

D. Vote to approve the Sweeps letter and send it to the Board of Supervisors.

Motion/Second: Michael Neidig / Antonio Rivas

Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Celeste Gutierrez, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes, Supervisor Hernandez

Absent: Hugh McCormick, Stephen Busath,

Motion passed.

V. Reports

A. Secretary's Report

- All board members have completed the required Ethics training.
- Training announcement – CalBHBC has a training tomorrow.

B. Board of Supervisors Report – Supervisor Felipe Hernandez

- Budget hearings are done. All items previously discussed have been funded, including the Bay Federal Building for youth.
- Santa Cruz County, Monterey County and City of Watsonville collaborated and received \$8 million for the tiny home project in South County.
- There are preliminary discussions with Watsonville Community Hospital for additional beds. More information to be shared later.
- Kaiser will not buy property in Live Oak as they have an interest to expand into Monterey County by 2025-2026. Their plan is to expand services in Watsonville and then expand to Monterey County in 2026.
- County CAO Office launched a program called Santa Cruz Like Me. The program is trying to encourage the community to apply for advisory bodies and commissions. Folks appointed to commissions will receive a stipend.
- Creation of a young Supervisors Academy – 4-week program for students who are junior, senior, or first-year local college students. The students will be taken to different departments within the county and throughout the community, to create new leaders and expose them to board meetings. The program will end with a mock Board of Supervisors meeting where students represent supervisors for their districts and work on an issue they feel strongly about, talk about the budget, etc.

- C. Behavioral Health Report – Karen Kern, Behavioral Health Deputy Director
- Crisis Continuum update – June 30<sup>th</sup> will be the last day youth can go to the current Crisis Stabilization Program operated by Telecare. BH has been working with Telecare on contract negotiations for the next fiscal year to expand all 12 beds to adults. In the interim, Watsonville Community Hospital will operate 4 chair CSU for youth only, which will be operated by Pacific Clinics. BH is proceeding with the construction, design and all the details for the 5300 Soquel building, which will be the future home of our youth CSU and crisis residential program for youth, 8 chairs for youth in the CSU to help patients under 24 hours and 16 beds for youth in the crisis residential.
  - California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) – currently in the Payment Reform initiative phase, moving from a cost reimbursement system to a fee for service system that is requiring the County to retrain both county clinic staff as well as community staff on how to code for all the services that are provided and different payment system.
  - Monitoring potential changes to MHSA that the Governor proposed. Discussions on what that might mean to services that are provided and how to maintain services to our continuum of care. The legislation is not complete, therefore do not have all the bills or all the proposed rules.
  - CARE Act – meeting monthly on how to implement CARE Court and what it means for community members eligible for services. There is a lot of guidance around the Court rules and on the Behavioral Health side, working through how those folks will get assessed.
  - Requesting support for the INN presentation at the June 27<sup>th</sup> Board of Supervisors meeting. Public comments will be open for 30 days, then the MHSOAC must approve before starting implementation.

D. Ad Hoc Committees

1. Budget
2. Peer Support Specialist Certification
3. 988
4. Ideal Crisis System
5. Community / Publicity

The Ad Hoc Committee meetings were moved to a later time to accommodate the guest presenters. The meeting went over the scheduled time and as a result, committee updates were not provided.

E. Patients' Rights Report – George Carvalho, Patients' Rights Advocate

May report was provided. George attended the meeting.

- George thanked Karen Kern for helping to get funding back, no more furloughs for Advocacy, Inc.
- Mandated reporting requirements - there are issues of Telecare reporting. George sent several emails requesting information, and still no response from a couple of weeks ago. George said this is important as the information is used to monitor charts. George submitted a 5pt plan to the administrator which includes requests to review policies and procedures.

VI. Presentation: Veterans Services and Mental Health - Travis Deyoung, Santa Cruz County Veterans Advocate

- Travis said he is usually out in the community, connecting with veterans where they are at, doing outreach to hospitals, jails, assisted living facilities, and doing home visits.
- Holistic Approach to Wellbeing – important to recognize mental health is not just mental health services or therapy and counseling. Housing, employment, healthcare, social support is all mental health support. The 8 Pillars of Holistic Healing are: Physical, Emotional, Social, Spiritual, Environmental, Financial, Occupational, Intellectual.
- Employment Services for Veterans – EDD has dedicated veterans' benefits person who works specifically with veterans who are trying to overcome challenges to employment.

The Veterans Rehabilitation Services, Inc. can help with getting clothing or things that are needed for finding employment.

- Housing Programs: 1) Paget House is a 60–90 day program which provides a supportive environment, to surround the veteran with services; 2) Supportive Services for Veterans and Families do case management, financial assistance, and payments for a rental deposit; 3) Housing Urban Development VA Supportive Housing is a Section 8 voucher for veterans; 4) Veterans Transition Center is a 2-year program for veterans who are needing more time and more support.
- Branches of the VA- 1) Benefits, 2) Healthcare, 3) Vet Centers, 4) Cemeteries
- VA Benefits (monetary benefits) – 1) VA Disability Claims, 2) Non-Service Connected Pension set up for veterans who have low income or high medical expenses, 3) VA Education Benefits, 4) Survivors Benefits
- Mental Health Programs (Inpatient) available through the VA: 1) Acute Psych Care, 2) Men’s Trauma Recovery Program, 3) Woman’s Trauma Recovery Program
- Mental Health Programs (Outpatient): 1) Psychiatric and psychological counseling, 2) Treatment for co-occurring disorders, 3) PTSD Intensive Outpatient Program, 4) Peer Support Programs, 5) Women’s Counseling Center
- Substance Abuse Treatment Programs (Inpatient/Outpatient): 1) Addiction Treatment Services, 2) Intensive Outpatient Services, 3) Foundation of Recovery, 4) First Step, 5) VA contracts for residential care (The Camp in Scotts Valley)

[Click here to view the presentation, which includes the Veteran Suicide Prevention Services slides.](#)

VII. New Agenda Items

1. Vote for Chair, Co-Chair and Secretary of the Mental Health Advisory Board  
The current chair and secretary will remain in their positions for the next year. No board member expressed interest in serving as the co-chair. Co-chair vacancy to be discussed at the next meeting.
2. Discussion and vote on letter regarding Sweeps, camping and parking bans and clearing of the San Lorenzo Park Benchlands.  
Please see Item IV.D for voting results.

VIII. Future Agenda Items – none discussed.

IX. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:17 p.m.