

**MINUTES – Approved
June 15, 2023**

MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

MARCH 16, 2023 ♦ 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

1400 EMELINE AVE, ROOMS 206-207, SANTA CRUZ

Microsoft Teams Meeting (831) 454-2222, Conference 311 318 08#

Present: Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham,
Michael Neidig, Serg Kagno, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes
Excused: Hugh McCormick, Stephen Busath, Supervisor Felipe Hernandez
Staff: Karen Kern, James Russell, Jane Batoon-Kurovski, Arianna Lomeli

- I. Roll Call – Quorum present. Meeting called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Chair Xaloc Cabanes.
- II. Public Comments
 - Nicholas Whitehead – article in Growing Up in Santa Cruz stated that there is a 50% increase in attempted suicide in girls ages 12-17.
 - Perry from Up 2 Peace – provided update regarding the event on August 4th at 2pm on Cooper Street. They are moving forward and getting contacts.
- III. Board Member Announcements
 - April 26th, 7pm at Resource Center for Nonviolence – several leaders in our community will be speaking about a world without violence including Chris Murphy, President of Santa Cruz Warriors, Faris Sabbah, Superintendent of Schools for Santa Cruz County, Brandon Kahl, Martial arts instructor and Human Rights Advocate, and Deutron Kebebew, Founder and President of MENtors.
 - The MHAB currently meets monthly except for the month of November. The board is considering to change the schedule with no meeting in December instead of November.
- IV. Business / Action Items
 - A. Approve February 16, 2023 Minutes.
Motion/Second: Serg Kagno / Jeffrey Arlt
Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Serg Kagno, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes
Absent: Hugh McCormick, Stephen Busath, Supervisor Felipe Hernandez
Motion passed.
 - B. Change the Community / Publicity Committee from standing to ad hoc committee.
Motion/Second: Antonio Rivas / Jennifer Wells Kaupp
Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Serg Kagno, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes
Absent: Hugh McCormick, Stephen Busath, Supervisor Felipe Hernandez
Motion passed.
 - C. Motion to accept letter regarding the Shelter and forward to Board of Supervisors.
Motion/Second: Serg Kagno / Laura Chatham
Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Serg Kagno, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes
Absent: Hugh McCormick, Stephen Busath, Supervisor Felipe Hernandez
Motion passed.

- V. Presentation – Dr. Robert Ratner, Director of the Housing for Health Division
Dr. Ratner stated there is a funding opportunity that was recently released by the State of CA called the Behavioral Health Bridge Housing Program. Santa Cruz County is set to receive up to just under \$10.2 million. Applications to secure this funding are due April 28th and the intention behind this program is to create bridge housing, which means temporary housing programs for people who are experiencing homelessness in our community, who are struggling with serious mental health or substance use disorders or both. The term bridge housing refers to housing that has services to help people get off of the streets in an unsafe situation, into a safe, welcoming environment with supports that are intended to help people move into more permanent housing long term. The money must be used as follows:
- 25% of the funding for infrastructure
 - 75% of the funds for helping to operate the program and for services.
- People who are referred to Care Court get priority for any bridge housing program slots that get created.
- MHAB will write a letter of support.
- VI. Mental Health Services Act 3-Year Plan Fiscal Years 23/24 – 26/27
Karen Kern, Adult Services Director
- The purpose of the three-year plan is to identify persistent mental health service gaps and develop strategies to address them over the next three fiscal years based on community needs assessment and stakeholder input. Karen stated they are wrapping up their community planning process, which included several focus groups and stakeholder meetings. They are collecting all the data and the plan is being prepared in draft form, which means that all individuals will have the opportunity to read through the plan and provide feedback. The draft plan will be posted on the MHSA website and feedback can be provided via email, telephone, or completion of the online form on the website. Public comment will open on Monday, March 20th and close at the next Mental Health Advisory Board meeting on April 20th.
 - Reminder to all that the Mental Health Services Act funding through Prop 63 runs services in a few different buckets: 1) community services and support which funds some services through children’s community gate, probation gate, child welfare gate, education gate and family partnerships. It also funds some crisis response, consumer peers, family support services, and some other community support services which include the family partnership at Volunteer Center, Community Connections, as well as MHCAN Peer Drop-in Center, Mariposa Center in Watsonville, and Second Story; 2) Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) funding which looks at suicide prevention, stigma and discrimination reduction and outreach for increasing signs of mental illness. It funds the Veterans Advocate Agency, County Office of Education, Senior Council, Triple P at First Five, as well as the Wellness Connect program for transitioning to youth, and suicide prevention efforts through Family Services Agency, and senior outreach for Family Services Agency, and NAMI and MHCAN for stigma and discrimination reduction.
- VII. Reports
- A. Secretary’s Report
- Training that was completed last year does not count for 2023.
 - No issues with attendance.
 - No update on available training.
- B. Behavioral Health Report, Karen Kern, Adult Services Director
- 1) Introduction of James Russell, Senior Behavioral Health Manager for Access and Community Crisis Continuum. James started his new role on March 6th and is in both North and South County offices. James has had a variety of employment experiences which led him into the behavioral health field specializing in crisis intervention, including substance use counseling, street outreach with the downtown outreach workers, forensic behavioral health and mobile crisis response. He completed a brief

internship with Children's Behavioral Health, was a case coordinator on the MOST team, was a Santa Cruz Sheriff's Office mental health liaison, promoted to Supervisor for the mental health liaisons and FIT Teams, before promoting to the Behavioral Health Program Manager for Forensic Services and then the the Community Crisis Continuum. James enjoys roles that involve implementing new or improving upon existing programs and looks forward to implementing the State mandates covered in CalAIM and AB988.

- 2) Crisis Stabilization Program Update –the County is moving forward with building a new crisis stabilization program for youth with 8 beds at 5320 Soquel, hoping to open late 2024. At the same time, Telecare will not accept youth under the age of 18 starting March 27th. HSA is looking at a youth crisis stabilization receiving center as a temporary plan which will be ready as early as 5 months from now. The program will work with someone for a period of 24 hours before either a) finding alternative placement option in the community safety planning or b) they are going to be inpatient. The MERT team will continue to go into the ER to reassess within several hours of someone being there to see if we can safety plan and safely get them back out with their families or care team.
- 3) April 11th and April 12th – Behavioral Health will be visited by the External Quality Review Organization, who reviews our mental health plan, DMC-ODS plan. This review includes the site visit, policy review, documentation review. They will meet with the consumers and do an overall compliance analysis to see where we are with our required metrics that we do for the plan for the State.

C. Committee Updates

1. Standing Committees

- a. Budget – did not meet due to no quorum. Informal conversations included: holding meetings in central location so commute is equal for everyone; how to create a persistent presence using social media and engaging the community more; and improving the use of letters of recommendation to the board and to the director by gathering more input and attending Board of Supervisors meetings when the letters are submitted to show additional support.
- b. Community/Publicity Committee
See Section IV.B. to see the votes changing the status of the Community/Publicity Committee from standing to an ad hoc committee.

2. Ad Hoc Committees

- a. Peer Support Certification – no report.
- b. 988 – there is currently a work group between 911, 988 and 211 which was presented at the Board of Supervisors meeting. United Way say that they have access to 400 services they can refer people to. There will be an April meeting to go over numbers, including a call for service numbers. Regarding 211, calls are not being put into Behavioral Health Service support statistics.
- c. Ideal Crisis System
 - Introduced to James Russell who is working on the Crisis Now project.
 - Looking at letters of recommendation and items related to mobile crisis as the goal of the committee is to coordinate with the Crisis Now project.
 - Next meeting will be on April 14th, 3:30-4:30pm via Zoom.

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

George was present at the meeting. February report was provided.

- Davi Schill was on an authorized leave during February.
- Advocacy, Inc. continues to have 2 days / month furlough.
- Benefits Management – no oversight, transparency. Dozens of people are affected, eating out of garbage, no funds. Reached out to Santa Clara County

counterparts. Hard to hear about all impacted people not getting funds. Might reach out to Supervisors for help with benefit management.

VIII. New Agenda Items

1. Retreat – will be on Friday, June 16, 2023, 10am to 3pm

2. Kaiser and Behavioral Health Unit Discussion

Jeffrey expressed at the last meeting that the MHAB should provide a letter of recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to ask Kaiser Permanente to provide some integrated behavioral health services. Jeffrey called Kaiser and has not heard back to confirm anything different than what they are publicizing, which is that it will have a 24-hour medical urgent care and there will be offices for 160,000 square feet, three story building. The draft letter is asking Kaiser Permanente as a health care provider coming into Santa Cruz County, that they provide behavioral health care services for their clients as they serve approximately 6000 people, and approximately 1200 of those people will have some kind of behavioral health needs with a couple hundred who will have serious mental health needs.

Discussion included a request for County staff to do a presentation on Kaiser and if a Kaiser Representative can be invited to the emergency meeting to explain and provide clarity on the services they will be providing. The Emergency Meeting will be on Thursday, March 23, 2023, 3pm to 3:30pm to vote on approving draft letter to be sent to the Board of Supervisors.

3. Santa Cruz Mental Health Advisory Youth

- The MHAB wants youth to participate in the MHAB. Ideas include making formal requests with various groups such as NAMI, Twin Lakes Church, County Office of Education.

-Xaloc will reach out to Student Activities at the County Office of Education to share a flyer.

- A representative from Monarch Services, who manages the Youth Mental Health Advisory Commission attended the MHAB meeting and she stated she will ask if youth from that group are interested in joining the MHAB.

4. Vote on Letter to Board of Supervisors

Background information: Serg witnessed somebody who works at the Veterans Hall building attack a homeless client who had been in the shelter by a nonprofit. Santa Cruz County contracts with the nonprofit, has an agreement with the building. There is no oversight or complaint system, there is no recourse, the person can't make a complaint that goes to the County. Intent is to make a system and process that protects people. Julie Macecevic, Executive Director of the Walnut Avenue Family and Women's Center has agreed to co-sign this letter.

See Section IV.C. to see the votes approving the letter.

IX. Future Agenda Items

1. Letter of Support regarding the Behavioral Health Bridge Housing Program

X. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.