

MINUTES – APPROVED
June 20, 2019

MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

May 16, 2019

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

1400 Emeline Avenue, Room 206, Santa Cruz, CA

Present: Hugh McCormick, Kate Avraham, Lynda Kaufmann, Rebekah Mills, Xaloc Cabanes, Supervisor Greg Caput

Excused Absence: Bek Phillips

Unexcused Absence: Erika Miranda-Bartlett, Antonio Rivas

1. Public Comments – Xaloc Cabanes, Chair for the Mental Health Advisory Board stated that the board will ensure Public Comments are accurately captured before moving on to the next public comment.
 - Serg Kagno – wanted to know if the Board would be interested in having a table at Project Connect on June 19th. The Community Engagement Committee will address participation.
 - Carol Williamson – Thanked everyone who donated to the Human Race. Donations went from \$7K to \$30K in the last week. NAMI had a great meeting last night with guest presenter.

2. Approved meeting minutes for April 18, 2019
Motion by Rebekah Mills to approve April 18, 2018 MHAB minutes as amended. Second by Lynda Kaufmann.

AYES: Hugh McCormick, Kate Avraham, Lynda Kaufmann, Rebekah Mills, Xaloc Cabanes, Supervisor Greg Caput
NAYES: 0
ABSENT: Bek Phillips, Erika Miranda-Bartlett, Antonio Rivas

3. Standing Board of Supervisors (BOS) Report, Supervisor Greg Caput
 - June Budget Hearings – 4 days straight. On the evening of June 17th, the County will hold a public hearing on the budget in Watsonville and on the evening of June 18th, the County will hold a public hearing on the budget in Santa Cruz.
 - There will be a new Mental Health Advisory Board member next month.

4. Standing Behavioral Health (BH) Directors Report, Erik Riera
 - Update on the Behavioral Health Building in Watsonville – close to completion. Plan is to close down couple of days to move in and setup. An open house will be scheduled in June.
 - Cassandra Eslami is the South County Manager and oversees the services in Watsonville. I will also be working in Watsonville 2.5 days / week.
 - Cassandra submitted an application to the state to expand our crisis services for children in South County and were informed that we are going to get funding. The focus will be on crisis services for kids and young adults. A mobile Behavioral Health office will be purchased to provide a private space to meet with individuals throughout the community. Bilingual services will be available.

5. Suicide Prevention Task Force Strategic Plan Presentation – Cassandra Eslami, Chief of South County Behavioral Health Services and Community Engagement
 - Miscellaneous Items
 - Thank you to all our community partners for their support regarding the CHFFA Grant. We were able to obtain letters of support from NAMI, Watsonville Police Department, Project Thrive and numerous partners in Watsonville that helped show CHFFA that we are serious about enhancing clinical services for youth in Watsonville.
 - We are dedicated to hiring Bilingual staff, and not only hiring a clinician but also hiring peer support family specialist.
 - Key areas of the Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan:
 - National average of suicide rate is 10.4 per 100,000 deaths. We are above 16 in Santa Cruz County.
 - Suicide Prevention Task Force started in September 2018. It is a community effort including law enforcement, NAMI, PVPESA, local health care agencies, hospice, non-profits, etc.
 - Collective Values of the Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan
 1. Culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS); cultural sensitivity
 2. Investigate and understand existing resource or similar resource in community
 3. Fills a gap/need (general population vs. targeted services); prioritizing populations to serve
 4. Accessibility; ease of linking to services
 5. Cost-effective
 6. Seek subsidies/leveraging other resources
 7. Long-term sustainability or with understood launching strategy
 8. Operationally effective and yield future data
 9. Broad-based community representation
 10. Broad-based community input
 11. Supports infrastructure development; Senior management buy-in
 - Main areas of development: Prevention, Intervention, Postvention. Sub-committees for each area to do the work around implementation and launch will be set up in a couple of months.
 - Limiting access to firearms – task force is having discussions on how to address gun clubs and where firearms are sold; locking up guns and providing gun safes; as well as safe holding by law enforcement.
 - The detailed report of the Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan can be viewed on the Santa Cruz County website at:
<http://www.santacruzhealth.org/Portals/7/Pdfs/MHSA/2019%20Santa%20Cruz%20County%20Suicide%20Prevention%20Strategic%20Plan%20Draft%20for%20Public%20Review.pdf>
- ◆ Motion by Lynda Kaufmann to approve the resolution to the Santa Cruz County Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan 2019. Second by Kate Avraham.
 AYES: Hugh McCormick, Kate Avraham, Lynda Kaufmann, Rebekah Mills, Xaloc Cabanes, Supervisor Greg Caput
 NAYES: 0
 ABSENT: Bek Phillips, Erika Miranda-Bartlett, Antonio Rivas

6. Ad Hoc Committee and Standing Committee Reports:

a. Jail Committee Report – Chair: Rebekah Mills

- Jail Information packet project should be done by the next meeting.
- Summary of what the Jail Committee has done and what needs to be done will be presented to the Board soon.
- Future project: Jail Information Packet for those newly incarcerated. There will be a resources section in the packet with NAMI resources, community resources, etc.
- Considering a different format for continuing this work by focusing on one topic, seeing it through to completion, and then moving on to another topic.

b. Community Engagement Committee Report – Chair: Kate Avraham

- Brainstorming session postponed to next meeting.
- NAMI guest speaker Dr. Shakir talked about new frontiers of better and conclusive treatment on depression. Presentation was inspiring and enlightening. He spoke about personalized medicine. A detailed description will be provided at a later date on how this is the missing piece on how people are diagnosed, how the regime of treatment takes into consideration genetics and enzymes, and how medication is absorbed.
- Mental Health Advisory Board Business cards – Board members encouraged to distribute business cards at public functions/engagements that board members attend.
- Outreach opportunity - Project Connect. Table at the Santa Cruz Portuguese Hall on Wednesday, June 19, 2019 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Lynda Kaufmann and Rebekah Mills to attend. Kate to email Board Members for additional volunteers.

c. MHSA Advisory Committee – Chair: Lynda Kaufmann

- Stakeholder Empowerment Kickoff Meeting on July 8th, 9am-11am, Rooms 206-207. Going forward, the steering committee meeting will be held on the 2nd Monday every month.
- Regional Meeting on November 20th and November 21st with guest speaker Andrea Crook. The region includes our county, San Benito, San Mateo, Monterey and Santa Clara. First day is leadership meeting, second day is stakeholder engagement meeting.

d. Membership Committee – Chair: Hugh McCormick

- Currently, there are two vacant board member positions.
- Clarify to prospective Members-At-Large that the transition to a Board Member is not automatic when there is a vacancy. All individuals interested in becoming a Board Member must submit an application for consideration and must be approved by the Board of Supervisors.

e. Site Visit Committee – Chair: Hugh McCormick
-No report.

7. Unfinished Business

- a. Nominating Committee for Board Member Positions - Nominations postponed to next month.

b. Focus Intervention Team (FIT) Presentation Clarification

- Background information on Measure G and funding for Mental Health by Rebekah Mills dated 05/16/19:

Measure G (county sales tax increase) was passed by voters in November 2018. The wording of the initiative on the ballot was: "To continue funding 9-1-1 emergency response, paramedic, sheriff, fire, emergency preparedness, local street repairs, mental health services, homelessness programs, parks, economic development and other general county services, shall the County of Santa Cruz be authorized to increase by ordinance the sales tax on retail transactions in the unincorporated area of the County by one-half cent for twelve years, providing approximately \$5,750,000 annually, subject to annual audits and independent citizens oversight?"

(source: <http://www.votescount.com/Portals/16/nov18/CO%20sales%20tax%20reso.pdf>)

*Leading up to the election, the proposed program that is now the Sheriff's Focused Intervention Team (FIT) Program was marketed to voters as a mental health program that would be supported by Measure G funds. This is the program we had a presentation about at April's meeting. We learned then that the FIT program is **NOT** a mental health program (even though Behavioral Health staff work in the program) and only maybe 6 of 30 individuals enrolled in the program qualify to receive County mental health services.*

On December 11, 2018 the Board of Supervisors voted on how to spend some Measure G funds, including funding the FIT program. (source:

[https://santacruzcountyca.igm2.com/Citizens/Detail_LegiFile.aspx?](https://santacruzcountyca.igm2.com/Citizens/Detail_LegiFile.aspx?Frame=&MeetingID=1673&MediaPosition=3742.000&ID=6385&CssClass=)

*Frame=&MeetingID=1673&MediaPosition=3742.000&ID=6385&CssClass=) The agenda item made it sound like this was a mental health expenditure. No expenditures for mental health programs (except FIT, which is **NOT** a mental health program) were approved on that date. On August 7, 2018 this agenda item of the Board of Supervisors*

(https://santacruzcountyca.igm2.com/Citizens/Detail_LegiFile.aspx?ID=5800) says the FIT program (called the "Focused Deterrence Initiative" at that time) was estimated to cost \$1 million annually. I am not sure where to find current budget numbers for anticipated expenditures on FIT for FY 2019-2020.

Have any other expenditures of Measure G funds been approved since December 11, 2018? Voters voted to use Measure G funds to support mental health services. The Sheriff's FIT program is not a direct mental health service. Are there any plans to spend Measure G funds on actual mental health programs? Has our behavioral health director or Health Services Agency director asked for funds from Measure G for mental health programs in the upcoming budget? What mental health programs would we like to see in our county, that are not available because of lack of funding? Should the MHAB write a letter requesting some Measure G funds be used to support mental health services, as the text of the measure states? (Side note: Santa Barbara County spends \$150,000 to support a program I like the sound of called "Growing Grounds" that pays mental health clients to work growing flowers and vegetables, see article at <https://www.independent.com/2019/04/24/dirt-therapy-program-looks-to-county-for-budget-dust/>)

In the County budget for 2018-2019, total Behavioral Health expenditures of \$81,541,556 were supported by only \$5,046,091 of General Fund expenditures (source:

[http://sccounty01.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/prop_budget2018-19/113-](http://sccounty01.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/prop_budget2018-19/113-174_Health_&_Human_Services.pdf)

174 Health & Human Services.pdf page numbered 128) Increasing the general fund money spent on mental health by even \$500,000 would be a major percentage increase in County support for mental health services, and would be in line with what voters approved when voting for Measure G.

- Request Erik to respond to questions and send to Recorder. Recorder will forward to the Mental Health Advisory Board for review. The Mental Health Advisory Board may call an emergency meeting to write a letter to the Board of Supervisors if necessary.

8. New Business

- a. Meeting to discuss the Substance Use Disorder Commission and Mental Health Advisory Board merger. Meeting will be on May 29th from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Board members to attend meeting: Lynda Kaufmann and Kate Avraham
- b. Discussion of a new committee to replace jail committee. Jail Committee will end in about 2 months. Suggestion is to look at the summary report that will be presented to the board on what the jail committee has done and what still needs to be done, then address possible new committee(s) at that time.

Motion to adjourn made by Rebekah Mills. Second by Hugh McCormick. Meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.