



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DIVISION

**MINUTES – Approved
August 21, 2025**



Salud Mental y
Tratamiento del Uso
de Sustancias

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

JULY 17, 2025, 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

KATHLEEN A. KING COMMUNITY ROOM, 85 NIELSON ST, WATSONVILLE, CA 95076
MICROSOFT TEAMS (831) 454-2222, CONFERENCE ID 113 677 024#

Present: Antonio Rivas, Hugh McCormick, Jeffrey Arlt, Kaelin Wagnermarsh, Michael Neidig,
Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes
Absent: Dean Kashino, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Supervisor Kimberly De Serpa
Staff: Karen Kern, Jane Batoon-Kurovski

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- I. Roll Call – Quorum present. Meeting called to order at 3:04 p.m. by Chair Xaloc Cabanes.
 - II. Public Comment – 1 person addressed the BHAB in the community room.
 - III. Board Member Announcements
 1. Kaelin volunteered to be the timekeeper for meetings.
 - IV. Approved May 15, 2025 Minutes
Motion / Second: Antonio Rivas / Kaelin Wagnermarsh
Ayes: Rivas, McCormick, Arlt, Wagnermarsh, Neidig, Webb, Cabanes
Nays: None
Abstain: None

Approved June 12, 2025 minutes
Motion / Second: Mike Neidig / Hugh McCormick
Ayes: Rivas, McCormick, Arlt, Wagnermarsh, Neidig, Webb, Cabanes
Nays: None
Abstain: None
 - V. Secretary's Report
 - No attendance issues.
 - Continue to send completed trainings to Jeffrey.
 - SB707 addresses the use of technology for remote participation. Jeffrey recommends contacting John Laird to ask him to modify SB707 to allow members to attend remotely to count toward quorum.
 - VI. Patient's Rights Report – George Carvalho, Advocate
May and June reports were provided. George attended the meeting.

George expressed his concern regarding the closure of the Telos facility and asked if the board has any input regarding the ICE situation. Additional information provided by George:

- Most reports at 7th Avenue have been similar types of situations. Main complaint is the food situation.
- Release of Information should be on record for WCH to be able to inform family members that person transferred to Telecare.
- Confirmed that the person feeling over medicated and did not have recollection of incident is an isolated incident.
- Confirmed that 7th Avenue has security cameras in courtyard where violent interaction took place.

VII. Behavioral Health Director's Report – Karen Kern, BH Deputy Director

- Staffing changes- James Russell left the County on July 7th. Karen Kern leaving Santa Cruz County effective July 31, 2025. Recruitment is open and closes on July 25th.
- Children's Crisis Center Update- the BOS approved the designation for the Youth Crisis Stabilization Unit and the Crisis Residential Program. The licensing and certification are both underway with the State. Active negotiation with the provider to finalize contract for program operations. It is furnished with a couple of construction touches being completed. Ribbon cutting is planned for September 15th, and Family Day will be on September 20th. Anticipate opening on October 1st.
- Behavioral Health Bridge Housing Project Low Barrier Navigation Center is now named Bridge House. Demolition is complete. It is located on Soquel right next to the CSP/PHF. Anticipate opening/move in December 2025 or January 2026.

VIII. Site Visit Ad Hoc Committee Update – Kaelin Wagnermarsh

- Jail visit scheduled for 09/03/25. Time to be determined.
- Calendar of site visits for next 13 months will be set, 1 per month
- 7th Avenue site visit to be held in October

IX. Review and discussion of Mike Beebe's Report

- Ask Mike Beebe to speak at BOS meeting to have biggest impact; or do a joint presentation with him.
- Concern – BHAB doesn't control the money and can't set goals as a Board
- Come up with innovative recommendations to not spend more money, just smarter. Consider program recommendation to increase outpatient services that are cost effective that reduce inpatient care and incarceration rates.
- Proposal to join NAMI and create an alignment. Essential to have vision, how to structure the board to make change. Have representative from Board or ad hoc group that meets regularly with Mike and NAMI.
- Create an ad hoc committee presenting possible solutions.
- Set up short term/long term priorities. Have ad hoc with BHAB and some staff from BH, and do framework, then staff will do presentation to County BOS.
- Suggest to use Beebe data to make program recommendations. Look at what programs are effective to reduce hospitalization and incarceration. Begin to eliminate out of county placements. Peer support is going to cure the vacancy problem. It is going to make services more available to those people more resistant to treatment.

X. 2025-26 Goals and Objectives

In addition to the goals set at the retreat:

- Suggest expansion of programs to address hospitalization rates, incarceration. Presentation to the BOS regarding program suggestions.
- Look further into Beebe report on program level, peer support, clubhouse and funding level. Ad hoc committee can recommend where the BHAB needs to spend their energy.
- Jeffrey to draft letter to BOS requesting to start the process of having a summit where they invite all service providers for the purpose of integration of all the services and at the same time look into the different models that are successful.
- Impact of SB326 -only one opportunity for community to advocate for the next three years.
- Publicity - BHAB members to meet with their respective Board of Supervisor individually, on a regular basis.

XI. Formation of Ad Hoc Committees

1. Site Visit – Kaelin and Dean
2. Beebe Report – Mike, Valerie, Hugh (peer), Kaelin, Jeff
3. SB326 Impact – consolidate ideas to provide input – Jeffrey

XII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.