

**MINUTES – APPROVED**  
**March 18, 2021**

**MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD**

February 18, 2021

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Health Services Agency, 1400 Emeline Avenue, Room 206, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**Present:** Antonio Rivas, Erika Miranda-Bartlett, Jennifer Wells Kaupp; Serg Kagno, Stephan DuBose, Xaloc Cabanes, Supervisor Greg Caput

**Absent:** Catherine Willis, Hugh McCormick, Lynda Kaufmann, Valerie Webb

1. Public Comments
  - Carol Williamson from NAMI Santa Cruz – happy for all the work the MHAB is trying to get done. NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness. NAMI provides education, advocacy, and support. Ending the Silence Program is now available for teachers on Zoom, allowing them to bring it to their classroom. Also do presentations for parents and teachers.
2. January 21, 2021 meeting minutes to be approved at next meeting – no quorum.
3. Secretary's Report – Serg Kagno
  - Attendance Tracking of Committees – committee chairs to report to Secretary and Recorder.
  - Training attendance tracking – each board member sends email to Secretary and Recorder information of the training attended (date, time, website link) approximately a week before MHAB meeting.
  - Secretary reports trainings attended, onboarding, ethics training, etc. at the MHAB meetings.
4. Standing Board of Supervisors (BOS) Report, Supervisor Greg Caput
  - Vaccines delivered to Emeline and distributed to numerous locations throughout the County. Fairgrounds opened, providing 400-500 vaccines in a day. Opened a vaccination site at fire station on Casserly and Mount Madonna Road. Received a report that out of 58 counties in CA, Santa Cruz ranked 9 in distribution of vaccines.
  - Watsonville Hospital – prior owners went bankrupt; Prospective is currently the interim leader of the hospital. The hospital has distribution site for vaccines.
  - Working on Pajaro River Flood Prevention Program.
5. Standing Behavioral Health Director's Report, Erik Riera
  - Working with staff and community providers to make sure front line health care workers are vaccinated. Most staff have been vaccinated at this point.
  - There are significant reductions in state and local funding which has impacted our budget. MHSA for example, projected a number of significant reductions which combined state and local funding reductions total \$2 million. Also projecting \$1.6 million reduction in federal funding, and increased costs of about \$2.5 million.
  - Currently looking at our ability to continue to support services to people without insurance. Likely to be significantly reduced or eliminated next year.
  - Looking at opportunities to apply for state grant funds for next year to create crisis diversion programs. About 21% of our budget is spent on inpatient and locked care costs which increase 3-5% per year. The state is providing opportunities to potentially reduce those costs over time and develop some local capacity. The potential site for the crisis diversion program is next to our psychiatric health facility.
  - Contract agencies will receive financial numbers in the coming week and begin negotiations on what they can and cannot continue to provide. The department will

present the proposed budget to the Board of Supervisors in June, and the public can make comments at that time.

- Referrals from schools have gone down 50-60%. Staff will continue to work with the schools to support them in developing a plan to reopen.

## 6. Standing Reports

- MHSA Advisory Committee (Members: Lynda Kaufmann, Erika Miranda-Bartlett, Antonio Rivas)
  - No report.
- Site Visit Committee – (Members: Serg Kagno, Hugh McCormick, Valerie Webb)
  - No report.
- County Behavioral Health Budget Committee (Members: Antonio Rivas, Stephan DuBose)
  - No report.
- SUDSC/MHAB Merger Committee (Members: Xaloc Cabanes, Lynda Kaufmann, Jennifer Wells Kaupp)
  - No report.
- Community Engagement Committee – (Members: Valerie Webb, Catherine Willis, Stephan DuBose)
  - No report.
- Mental Health and Law Enforcement Committee (Members: Hugh McCormick, Serg Kagno, Catherine Willis, Jennifer Wells Kaupp)
  - No report.

## 7. Patients' Rights Report – by George Carvalho, Patients' Rights Advocate

[Click here to view the December report.](#)

[Click here to view the January report.](#)

## 8. New Business

- CAHOOTS Report – Jennifer Wells Kaupp
  - ACLU meeting was well attended - Police Chief, Suicide Prevention, MHCAN all present. CAHOOTS started in Oregon and has been around for 30 years. The program involves a group of people in vans who go to mental health emergencies. There is a mental health person and medic for conflict mediation, welfare checks, and supply food and other items people need. They can talk people down and does not require police presence.
  - [Click here to view the CAHOOTS Report.](#)
- Weekend and Evening Dispatch for Behavioral Health calls

Per Erik Riera, BH Director - Part of the focus of the Mental Health Liaison Program is to have trained staff respond to 911 calls. If law enforcement doesn't need to be directly involved, they step back and allow the mental health liaison to take over the assessment process and work with the individual. The problem is it is difficult for the 911 dispatcher to determine if law enforcement involvement is needed or not. There have been a number of incidents where our mental health liaison responded, and the person has become assaultive, attacked the police officer and our liaisons. Our approach also

includes training officers in CIT across the county. CIT, which is a de-escalation model, assists them in deescalating potentially volatile situations in the community. In addition to the CIT Training, officers are getting the coaching from our Mental Health staff working directly with them in the car responding to these calls as well.

9. Future Business

- Public Hearing regarding MHSA Report

Meeting adjourned at 4:24 p.m.