

MINUTES APPROVED
01/18/18

MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

December 21, 2017

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

1400 Emeline Avenue, Room 206, Santa Cruz, CA

Present: Aimee Escalante, Bek Sabedra, Hugh McCormick, Jim Roszell, Jodie Wells, Kathleen Avraham, Rebekah Mills, and Supervisor Greg Caput

Excused Absence: Charlotte Nolan Reyes

Unexcused Absence: N/A

1. Approved meeting minutes for October 19, 2017

AYES: Aimee Escalante, Bek Sabedra, Jim Roszell, Jodie Wells, Kathleen Avraham, Rebekah Mills, and Supervisor Greg Caput

ABSTAIN: Hugh McCormick

ABSENT: Charlotte Nolan Reyes

2. Standing Board of Supervisors (BOS) report:

- Approved new Behavioral Health Services building to be located at 1430 Freedom Blvd. Ground breaking in January.
- Working to save 75-80 year old pines on same parking lot.
- To encourage young people to use parks will be building a bike jump track at Pinto Lake. Will continue to look for more park space.
- Working with SC City Council on homeless issue; would like City to take more interest in solution.
- Low income Pippin Apartments (46 units) scheduled to open next summer.

3. Standing Behavioral Health (BH) Directors report:

- Drug/Medical expansion waiver program approved; 2 years of negotiating with the State & Federal Government. Projection, increased capacity from 1500 to 3000. Would expand residential and outpatient capacity and get people into treatment early. Will not have the capacity or funding to handle a larger volume.
 - Intended to serve youth and adults with Medical and 'requesting' substance use disorder treatment.
 - Treatment wait list extensive.
 - Concerns regarding what is happening at the Federal level, if they pull back funding and what impact it will have on other programs/projects.
- Ground breaking ceremony for new Behavioral Health building in January.
- Staff retirement: Alicia Najera, SR Behavioral Health Manager for South County facility, last day 12/22/17. Recruitment in process, Feb/March timeline for hire. Incumbent will have more active community involvement via frequent Town Hall meetings throughout the year (not wait till end of year.) Recommend Board play a role in facilitating some meetings to encourage active dialogue among community.
- Biggest need within Behavioral Health is supervised residential treatment programs, would decrease the need for locked facilities. Working to identify someone in the community with property that can be used for this purpose.

- New Re-entry program (AB109) for folks released from Jail; hiring 3 Mental Health Client Specialists; will help with transition from jail to community; and, will have a permanent case worker assigned.
 - Budget review – projected \$1M deficit effective 2018, per year, based on how many people will want to be served.
4. MHAB updates:
- Jail Committee, established September 2017; asking for volunteers to join, who have had experience with the jail system and mental illness; first meeting to be held in January with new members.
5. Presentation: Older Adult services, Steve Ruzicka, Behavioral Health Supervising Client Specialist and Jasmine Najera, Behavioral Health Program Manager.
- Must have co-occurring complex medical condition in addition to mental illness to receive services, Alzheimers or Dementia not included.
 - Have two full time case managers, 1 occupational therapist, one Psychiatrist (geriatric specialty), 1 peer counselor, 1 housing coordinator, and two senior companions (volunteers with no Behavioral Health experience) who go into the clients home, run errands and/or take them to appointments. Work with Front St. Inc., (contractor) to provide additional case management and 7 day/week coverage.
 - Housing coordinator works to find housing/program space that is a safe place to reside; limited beds within skilled nursing homes.
 - Main focus is independent living.
6. New Business:
- MHAB Bi-Annual report, due to Board of Supervisors 1/31/18. Board members to submit notes on action items and goals from previous two years to Chair for integration into report.
 - Discussion regarding homelessness within SC City.
 - Santa Cruz City Mayor, David Terrazas voiced concerns that there was no interaction with City staff (police chief, fire chief, city manager) with regards to the 3-year draft plan of the Mental Health Services Act. Would like input in prioritizing and allocating funds for programs and recommend tapping into the surplus funds for the city. Would like to see more services directed to this population. (Note: Behavioral Health Director, Erik Riera clarified that homelessness was not part of the MHSA mandate.)
 - City Councilmember, Sandy Brown – ‘we have the majority of mentally ill/homeless in the county.’
 - Lynda Kaufman, MHAB member recommended the board re-educate themselves on the intention of the MHSA and where the funds are to be allocated.
 - Erik Riera recommended contacting Rayne Marr, Homeless Liaison for the County Administrative Officer, for more information on what the countywide plan is for the homeless.
 - MHSA re: discussion of MHSA budget
7. The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.