

MINUTES - DRAFT

MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

May 21, 2020

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

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

Present: Antonio Rivas, Hugh McCormick, Joanna Whitcup, Maryanne Tong, Serg Kagno, Xaloc Cabanes, Supervisor Greg Caput

Excused Absence: Erika Miranda-Bartlett, Lynda Kaufmann, Rebekah Mills

1. Public Comments

- Stephan DuBose – employed with one of the mental health contract agencies, here to be more involved. Thanks for the County and all the people working together to make a difference.
- Helen – represent MHCAN, work hard to stay together and keep MHCAN open.
- Monica McGuire – bothered that several people are picked up for behavioral health issues, taken to places and not given rights, not treated with care. Requesting information on number of suicides attempted. Huge health issues because they cannot go see doctors. Also asking for number of domestic violence cases.
- Ana – live alone. Scared about living beyond this crisis. What can be done? Who can help?
- Chris Ferry – Trauma Recovery meetings through Zoom. Teach breathing, meditation, talk about what we are going through. Teach for free and offering to anybody who wants to attend - clients, community members in Santa Cruz. Best way to contact Chris is by email: CMRFerry@gmail.com
- Melinda McComb – policy of picking up people for wellness checks and putting in psych units instead of doing a physical exam and finding out what are the physical needs. Making accusations of someone acting crazy and having picked up. Feel my doctor should have been contacted. I was treated inappropriately. Being picked up like that was a violation of constitutional rights.

2. Standing Board of Supervisors (BOS) Report, Supervisor Greg Caput

- Meeting with Veterans Services – VFW and American Legion having trouble paying bills
- Fiscal impact – people living paycheck to paycheck. Recent poll shows 11% people who have rent/mortgages failed to make payments, 7% of landlords voluntarily lowered rent.
- Over last 6 years saved up to \$58 million in reserves for emergencies. Used \$20 million to keep budget level. Remaining balance will be used from now to end of year and possibly into January/February to pay bills
- Going to receive \$28 million stimulus check from the State of CA
- County has \$10 million bond expiring in January.
- Strong possibility of furlough. Lower pay for Board of Supervisors and Department Heads, and for the 2,400 County employees

3. Standing Behavioral Health Director's Report, Erik Riera

- Update on Behavioral Health staffing: Shaina Zurlin, SUDS Director returning in June. Karen Kern, Adult Services Director starting on June 15th. Karen has extensive experience in mental health and substance use disorder services and is currently working for nonprofit in Portland, Oregon.
- Funding comes from four primary sources: realignment funds from State, MHSA funds, County funds, which is used to leverage against Federal funds. Projecting significant losses in all 4 areas.

- Priorities in terms of considering of what funding reductions we may need to take
 - Minimize impacts to any State mandated services
 - Minimize impacts to programs that leverage Federal funds
 - Reduce impact to staffing and critical safety net services that are provided in the community
 - Look at borrowing on funds to get us through next year and spend the next 10-12 months doing more thoughtful planning with the community and stakeholders on what specific reductions we need to make.
4. Presentation on Projected Fiscal impact on Santa Cruz County schools' budget due to Pandemic 2020 by Dr. Faris Sabbah, Santa Cruz County Office of Education Superintendent
- March 16th – declared school closures.
 - April 1st – announced closing schools for the rest of the academic school year. Until then, focus was transitioning services to distance learning and providing essential services for the students.
 - May revise came out May 14th - drastic cuts for schools that will have deep impact on services offered at the schools. Waiting for State budget to be approved in June and won't know real status of our funding until July when taxes are collected. Warned that there will be additional cuts to our programs.
 - COVID-19 has accentuated a lot of inequities that exist in our County:
 - Basic Needs (food, financial insecurity, housing insecurity, especially mixed status families)
 - Internet Access (device, high speed internet, 20% especially in Watsonville area do not have access to internet)
 - Mental Health issues (huge increase as a result of isolation, increased number who are depressed, and going through anxiety, one of the challenges is the inability or lack of resources available to provide the safety net services and resources for them)
 - Unique Needs (language, students with unique and special needs - ability to do online format is difficult)
 - Pressure Adaptation (students, parents, and teachers feel overwhelmed)
 - Abuse and Neglect (large increase in domestic violence and abuse)
 - May revise requires 10% reduction to Local Control Funding Formula allocations (most of the funding for schools comes from LCFF), with COLA = 7.92% in cuts
 - Working on advocating to elected officials and legislatures to protect school funding and protect essential services. Shifted mindset about academic achievement not being a priority, but student wellness is the priority. Focus is making sure students are having basic needs met, socially and emotionally supported, and experiencing a sense of wellness and safety that is necessary.
5. Ad Hoc Committee and Standing Committee Reports:
- a. Jail Committee Report
 - PDF of Jail Information packet on NAMI Santa Cruz website
 - Will add updates and post on the MHAB website
 - b. MHSA Advisory Committee – Chair: Lynda Kaufmann
 - No report
 - c. Site Visit Committee – Chair: Hugh McCormick
 - No new site visits.

- d. SUDC/MHAB Merger Committee – Chair: Lynda Kaufmann
 - No report

- 6. Patients' Rights Report – no report.

- 7. Unfinished Business
 - a. Recovery Café discussion regarding letter to Board of Supervisors
Antonio Rivas to write a letter supporting the concept/idea of Recovery Café Santa Cruz;
hold off on the support for funding at this time.

- 8. New Business/Future Agenda Items
 - a. Conflict Resolution Center of Santa Cruz – will provide a mediation training.
 - b. Trauma Recovery Training – postponed to next month's meeting.
 - c. Correspondence

Motion to adjourn made by Antonio Rivas. Second by Serg Kagno. Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

NOTE: No official action was taken by the Mental Health Advisory Board at this meeting. All items on the May agenda will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting, scheduled on June 18, 2020.