



**SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD (BHB)**

*Regular Meeting*

Via teleconference

February 17, 2021 – 5:00 -7:00 P.M.

**MINUTES**

**Board Members Present:**

Chair Tasso Kandris  
Vice Chair Patricia Barrett  
Carolyn Cooper  
Douglas Vigil  
Gertie Kandris  
Joe Dittmann  
John Weston  
Sabrina Flores-Eng  
Supervisor Miller  
Joretta Burlington  
Karen Ivy  
Dr. Mudalodu Vasudevan

**Also Present:**

Greg Diederich, Director HCS  
Tony Vartan, Director BHS  
Angelo Balmaceda, Management Analyst II  
Isabel Espinosa, Office Secretary

**Board Members Absent/Excused:**

Cary Martin  
Jeff Giampetro  
Tashante McCoy

**Guests:**

Virginia Wimmer, Director of Veterans Services.  
Michael Fields, Executive Director, Peer Recovery Center  
Samira Abdo, Peer Recovery Center  
Jason Wollins, Chair of PRS and Wellness Center Board  
Karen Walker, Manteca Wellness center  
Priscilla Timmons, NAMI  
Andrea Wagner

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Behavioral Health Board meeting was convened on Wednesday February 17, 2021 via Zoom teleconference. Chairperson Tasso called the meeting to order at 5:11 PM. The meeting began with a moment of silence, pledge of allegiance and roll call. There was a quorum in attendance at this meeting.

**II. INTRODUCTIONS**

Introductions began with the audience members as the board members introduced themselves during roll call.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – OPEN TIME**

Public comment time was announced and closed with no comments.

#### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chairperson Patricia Barrett motioned to approve the January 2021 minutes and was seconded by Board member Karen Ivy. Motion passed 11-0-0.

#### V. PRESENTATION

##### A. MHSA Community Planning updates

- *Angelo Balmaceda*, Management Analyst II

The MHSA Community planning included seven sessions, with 120 attendees.

The common topics and issues include:

- Telehealth
- Housing and Homeless access.
- Zoom training and computer literacy.
- Additional training for Contractors
- Outreach and engagement for faith based communities with emphasis on cultural needs.
- Additional peer services
- Wellness Center expansion
- more services for 0-5 population
- technology access and training for 65+ population
- More outreach in Spanish and Asian languages and in faith based organizations.
- More outreach to Migrant farmworkers
- Assistance navigating community resources, and where to get help

Angelo will return in April and May to discuss the results of the Community Planning meetings as well as conduct a public hearing. Information will be presented to the Board of Supervisors on June 8, 2021.

##### B. LEAD (Lived Experience – Advocacy – Diversity) Program

- *Michael Fields*, Peer Recovery Services

Peer Recovery Center is the only peer run organization in San Joaquin County. The California Association of Mental Health Peer Run Organizations (Camhpro) received funding through the Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) to do a statewide project listening to consumers opinions regarding mental health services. In August, we hope to have an in person meeting with the state. Peer Recovery Services is involved in the Consortium meeting with Angelo Balmaceda. Peers have a good relationship with the county. The leadership is wonderful. Peer Recovery Services is one of fifteen selected in the state. The meetings focused on Veterans, Rural, and Latinx population. Douglas Montadon of LOVE Inc. facilitated. Virginia Wimmer of Veterans Office commented that we were able to gather 25 people from the community to voice their opinions. There was a diverse group of people in the meeting including veterans and veteran advocates. It was an

opportunity to hear from stakeholders. One veteran said being part of the talk was the best therapy he ever had. People needed a place to share their thoughts and feelings.

March 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Peer Recovery Services with CAMPRO and Painted Brain are having a two-day summit, contact Peer Recovery Services for more information. The lead program goes to the capital in August.

## VI. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Vaccination of clients

County Behavioral Health Directors Association (CBHDA) and some counties are advocating at the state level to move behavioral health clients up in the categories to get them vaccinated sooner. In the meantime, we have instructed our case managers to ensure that clients are vaccinated through primary care if they qualify.

There are some changes to expedite overall vaccinations in California by adding a contractor. We should start seeing more expedited vaccinations.

All frontline staff who wanted the vaccine have received the vaccine. Phase 1B for those 65+ opened up, law enforcement, office of education, and educators, childcare workers, and Agriculture from fork to table. We do not have clearance to vaccinate congregate settings yet. The state is moving towards the 16-65 age group with physical health condition, which could include BHS consumers.

### B. Stipends

Stipends will be resumed for in person meetings.

### C. BHS Budget proposal

The budget is in process, and will go to the Board of Supervisors in June.

### D. Homelessness in San Joaquin County – *Supervisor Miller*

It is important to remember that serious mental illness plays a large role in homelessness and is part of the definition of homeless. A lot of the funding is tied to mental health.

The National Alliance to end Homelessness defines chronic homelessness as at least a year of repeated homelessness while struggling with serious mental illness, substance use disorder, and/or a physical disability.

Permanent supportive housing is a key component. There are several projects to address this issue including Project room key – emergency housing for those with high-risk uses Cares Act funding. The county extended the program through March. It provides safe isolation hotels for 100 who are chronically homeless. The county is collaborating with Central Valley Low Income Housing (CVLIHC) and the City of Stockton to build permanent

supporting housing for Project Home Key. Home key founded 40 town center studios using 4 million of state funds. This is a remodel of a motel. The first tenants arrived in December.

Crossways residence and Sonora square SJ County are a collaboration between BHS and the Housing Authority of San Joaquin County (HACSJ). Crossways is a conversion of the previous headquarters of the Housing Authority. The first units were occupied in December. Additional residences will be occupied this year. Sonora square will have an additional 38 units.

In French Camp, BHS will create 16 beds of emergency shelter for males with co-occurring disorders. The project will receive 1.3 million from Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) along with funds from the county and continuum of care. The actual cost is 2.5 million however, staff are trying to fund the 1.1 million short fall. This board should encourage the BOS to fund the balance of the project.

Stockton Self-Help Housing (SSHH) is collaborating with BHS Progressive Housing. They have several homes in San Joaquin County.

Victory gardens is using U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Veteran’s Affairs (VA) vouchers to house 49 homeless veterans. The housing is located near the county hospital and the VA clinic. The 27 million in funding is for the land and wraparound services for residence. There will be an on-site community center, technology center, multipurpose room, community garden, and caseworker office.

The Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) awarded 12 million in funds to SJ County and the City of Stockton. The county opted to collaborate, to see which projects to receive funding. We did not all end up funding the same projects. As the county, we are obligated to fund countywide. The citywide funds go to the city. We are funding the Gospel Center Rescue Mission have expansion on the drawing board.

**VII. DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

- *Tony Vartan*, MSW, LCSW, Behavioral Health Director

Services have continued during COVID. The Binax test is a 15-minute COVID test, and is available in PHF. We continue to do work with homeless outreach and mobile crisis. We made some plans and recommendations for school-based providers who are suffering due to COVID. Staff are busy with contracting and budgets. We have 75 contracts that we are expanding into 3 year contracts. The department is also working on an MHSA plan.

Psychiatry: We had two doctors leave, with an additional two retiring. We are expediting our recruitment. We have two in the contracting process, and three in the interviewing stage. BHS is also looking for a Medical Director.

Youth services is seeing an increase in needs of the community. There are some placements from out of state that are returning to California due to discontinued funding. Eight found placements. The increase in Mary Graham has increased BHS services in the area. We are minimizing future needs and bottlenecks. Youth services has been very active and maintaining timeliness of services.

DMC-ODS working with expanding of continuum. We are negotiating additional contracts to give us better coverage. We are working with local providers to increase capacity. Our recommendation includes a significant increase to attract more providers. We are anxiously waiting for the state to give out guidelines to expand peer services.

CalMHSA is taking a new approach to Stigma and Suicide Prevention which will include local county related messaging to make sure it is California wide and specific to each location.

SB 1796 passed, and changed the process of Laura's law. The counties who do not want to implement must opt out by 07/01. We asked that there be some additional stakeholder meetings to ensure we have proper feedback from the public, law enforcement, da, and the court, and how they recommend moving forward.

We have two grants with California Health Facilities Financing Authority (CHFFA), for additional facilities in French camp. One 16 bed facility for females , and one for a 16 bed facility for males. These programs are for dual diagnosis clients and we are hoping that those will reduce homeless by providing treatment and supportive service. Those are projected to be completed by mid-year 2023.

There will be a Black history month program via zoom. If you need additional information, ask Isabel for a flyer. It will be similar to last years program but adapted to be online.

## VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Executive Committee
- B. Legislative Committee
- C. Children's Committee
- D. Grievance Committee
- E. Housing Committee
- F. Substance Use Disorder

## IX. REMINDERS

- A. Next Behavioral Health Board meeting will be March 17, 2021. For information, please contact *Isabel Espinosa* at 209-468-8750 or via e-mail at [iespinosa@sjcbhs.org](mailto:iespinosa@sjcbhs.org)

## IX. ADJOURN TO MARCH 17, 2021 AT 5:00 P.M.

Adjourned: 07:11