



# BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

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# HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

**MINUTES – Approved**  
**August 17, 2023**

## **MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD**

JULY 20, 2023 ♦ 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

1400 EMELINE AVENUE, ROOMS 206-207, SANTA CRUZ

Microsoft Teams was unavailable for this meeting due to technical issues.

**Present:** Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham,  
Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes, Stella Peuse  
**Excused:** Celeste Gutierrez, Hugh McCormick, Supervisor Felipe Hernandez  
**Staff:** Karen Kern, James Russell, Jane Batoon-Kurovski

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- I. Roll Call – Quorum present. Meeting called to order at 3:13 p.m. by Chair Xaloc Cabanes.
- II. Public Comments
  - Perry Spencer inviting all to attend the Vet Art Pop Up 2 Peace Arts Café in Santa Cruz on August 4<sup>th</sup>, Cooper Street, 2:30pm-9pm.
  - Q.Z. – former MHCAN client who was voted out of MHCAN by entire staff for taking notes. He mentioned the public is no longer allowed to attend meetings, the kitchen has been closed 3-4 months, Shadow Speaking program where participants get paid is over, video project where clients can make money also no longer available. Due to loss of funding, two staff members were laid off. Q.Z. also said security guard who works at Emeline doesn't want to be assigned there due to drugs, alcohol, sex, and fights.
- III. Board Member Announcements
  - The Sweeps letter will be part of the Written Correspondence at the August 8<sup>th</sup> Board of Supervisors meeting.
  - Sober Center building - starting to set up on Water Street across from jail.
  - Stephen Busath stepped down from the board due to other commitments.
- IV. Business / Action Items
  - A. Approve June 15, 2023 Minutes  
Motion/Second: Antonio Rivas / Michael Neidig  
Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes  
Absent: Celeste Gutierrez, Hugh McCormick, Supervisor Hernandez  
Motion passed.
  - B. Approve June 16, 2023 Minutes  
Motion/Second: Valerie Webb / Antonio Rivas  
Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes  
Absent: Celeste Gutierrez, Hugh McCormick, Supervisor Hernandez  
Motion passed.

- C. Approve to add a meeting in November, and no meeting in December.  
Motion/Second: Michael Neidig / Laura Chatham  
Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Michael Neidig, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes  
Absent: Celeste Gutierrez, Hugh McCormick, Supervisor Hernandez  
Motion passed.
- D. Vote Michael Neidig as the Co-Chair for the upcoming year.  
Motion/Second: Antonio Rivas / Jennifer Wells Kaupp  
Ayes: Antonio Rivas, Jeffrey Arlt, Jennifer Wells Kaupp, Laura Chatham, Valerie Webb, Xaloc Cabanes  
Abstain: Michael Neidig  
Absent: Celeste Gutierrez, Hugh McCormick, Supervisor Hernandez  
Motion passed.

V. Reports

A. Secretary's Report

- Training – Laura and Jeffrey have completed their 2 training courses for the year. Xaloc has completed one training.
- Ethics Training – Celeste and Jennifer are due to take the Ethics training.
- Attendance – Hugh has 4 excused absences, 1 unexcused, and another absence for today. Based on the bylaws, he may be released from the board.

B. Behavioral Health Report – Karen Kern, Behavioral Health Deputy Director

- MHSA Innovation Project for Crisis Now – attended the June 27<sup>th</sup> Board of Supervisors meeting to do a presentation and the Board voted 5 to 0 to move forward with the project. The MHSA Innovation Project formal public comment period is open from July 15 to August 17<sup>th</sup>.

Public Comments:

1. Antonio Rivas – requests specific information on what will be done in the programs in Watsonville.

2. Jennifer Wells Kaupp – asked how much due diligence was done before choosing RI International and asked how they were chosen.

Karen Kern response: MHSOAC wanted CA counties to adopt the Crisis Now model. MHSOAC approached all 58 CA counties, and they retained RI International for that process.

3. Laura Chatham – stated that the main problem the grand jury found regarding the inability to hire people was not addressed. Page 23 of Crisis Now is a plan to make a plan. One of the categories is Workforce and nowhere in the plan do they ask about how hiring can be improved. Laura requests that the program by Ben Adam Clymer be considered instead.

James Russell response: RII fits with what is happening at the state level. CAHOOTS is not in tune with recent mandates coming down from the State. RII has a workforce of 60% lived experience or peers, and a big part of their curriculum is how to incorporate peer support within our model. This package provides different capabilities with folks that have experiences with behavioral health, intervention folks that can potentially be EMT's and be certified peers. The county is not bound to any one model.

Karen Kern response: Part of the Innovation requirements is providing evaluations, to understand if the interventions or the programming that is put out there is working. Karen said the County is trying to develop programming that can be sustained with funding that is available and this is partly why the state can dictate what can be done. This is not a workforce project; the project is about providing crisis services. The workforce is a part of this project where EMT's, unlicensed people that have experience providing behavioral health support or crisis support, and peer support can grow exponentially in Santa Cruz County. The goal is to move away from the

traditional license clinician model which is difficult to recruit/hire and move into this model that pulls in different types of staff.

4. Dr. Kashino – stated that he commented on the annual MHSA update, and it is a hard report to read, 168 pages with a lot of acronyms. He recommends a definition section for future reports to make it easier to read. Dr. Kashino also stated that although RI International is more expensive than the other program, if it maximizes the funds the county gets, then it may be a win overall.

C. Ad Hoc Committees

The Ad Hoc Committees discussion was moved to a later time on the agenda. As a result, the board did not have enough time for a discussion.

D. Patients' Rights Report – George Carvalho, Patients' Rights Advocate

June report was provided. George attended the meeting.

- Issues are more intricate and involve coordination with other agencies such as APS.
- There is a decrease of reports in residential facilities.
- George provided clarification regarding the use of medication. Under LPS – every individual in the mental health system is deemed competent and has a right to receive informed consent (what is meds for, long/short term side effects, reasonable alternatives for meds, etc.). Doctors provide the information and if clients don't want to hear it and refuse meds, then the doctor has another recourse through Capacity Hearing. If a person is deemed by a judge not to have capacity, then they can have authority to medicate over their objections.

VI. New Agenda Items

1. Grand Jury Report Review and Discussion

The Board discussed and answered the questions in the Grand Jury Report packet. Due to time constraints of the meeting, the board decided they will attend the Board of Supervisors meeting to provide their comments during Public Comments, instead of providing a written response/explanation.

2. Co-Chair Vacancy – Michael Neidig volunteered to be the Co-Chair for the upcoming year. See Section IV.D to see the outcome of the votes.
3. Change meeting schedule – the Board approved to add a meeting in November and remove the December meeting. See Section IV.C to see the outcome of the votes.
4. Change agenda format – The board agreed that presenters will be on the agenda immediately after regular business, before the standing reports so they do not have to wait until the second hour of the meeting to give their presentations.

VII. Future Agenda Items – none discussed.

VIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.