



Minutes

Present: Sally Ragonut, Vice-Chair; Zachery Ramos, Secretary; Supervisor Lloyd Pareira; Mary Ellis; Iris Mojica de Tatum; Vicki Humble; Ted Werner; Manvindar Kaur; Sharon Mendonca

Absent: Bruce Metcalf, Chair; Vince Ramos; Linda Deol, Keng Ger Cha

Others Present: Charles Bruce, Chris Kraushar, Veronica Gallacher, Yesenia Curiel, Amy Houghtaling (Recorder)

Call to Order / Roll Call

Due to COVID-19, today's meeting was held in a hybrid format, in-person and via video conference. Vice Chair, Sally Ragonut, called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Audible roll call was taken by Recorder, Amy Houghtaling.

Review Teleconferencing Status

Discussion/Conclusion: Sally asked BHRS Assistant Director, Sharon Mendonca, for an update on the state of emergency status. Sharon expressed that, although the County is no longer in a State of Emergency, the State is still in a State of Emergency status. Based on that update, Sally stated that the Board finds a State of Emergency still exists at State level and that continuing hybrid format for another thirty days would allow safe attendance for all parties.

Recommendation/Action: M/S/C (No motion requested). Sally called for a roll call vote to continue teleconference status for the next Board meeting. The names of all present Board members were called and asked for their individual approvals. Use of teleconferencing at the next scheduled meeting was approved by a unanimous vote of members in attendance.

Pareira – Aye	Mojica de Tatum – Aye	Ellis – Aye	Deol – Absent
Ramos, V. – Absent	Cha – Absent	Ragonut – Aye	Kaur – Aye
Metcalf – Absent	Ramos, Z. – Aye	Humble – Aye	Werner - Aye

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement was read by Board member Mary Ellis.

Approval of Minutes from May 3, 2022 (BOARD ACTION)

Discussion/Conclusion: No edits or corrections were presented for the minutes.

Recommendation/Action: M/S/C (Ramos, Z/Humble) to approve the May 3, 2022 minutes as written. Sally called for a roll call vote on the minutes. The names of all present Board members were called and asked for their individual approvals. Minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of members in attendance.

Pareira – Aye	Mojica de Tatum – Aye	Ellis – Aye	Deol – Absent
Ramos, V. – Absent	Cha – Absent	Ragonut – Aye	Kaur - Aye
Metcalf – Absent	Ramos, Z. – Aye	Humble – Aye	Werner - Aye



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Opportunity for public input. At this time any person may comment on any item which is not on the agenda.

Discussion/Conclusion: No public comment.

Recommendation/Action: None

Director's Report

Discussion/Conclusion: Sharon Mendonca, Assistant Director – Administration for BHRS, gave a report on behalf of Director, Genevieve Valentine. The North County clinic is now open for services. It will be open five days a week in the new Winton location, whereas Livingston was only providing services three days a week. BHRS will stagger services, with nursing services some days and counseling other days. They hope to have an open house eventually. They will eventually have a full scope of services at that location. This includes medication services, children's, adults, alcohol and drug, and a wellness center. Although no longer located in Livingston, BHRS still has a Livingston School District partnership and are looking at how to partner with the Livingston Medical Clinic for medication services. Sharon asked if there were any questions from the Board. Sally asked if there is a projected completion date in Winton. Sharon shared that the architects are still drafting the plans and end of next year would be an aggressive goal.

Training/Presentation – Through the Eyes of the Client

Discussion/Conclusion: Chris Kraushar announced that today is her last report, as the project has reached its completion. She spoke to the data recently received from a revisit to the Marie Green Psychiatric Center. The response this time around was slightly more than the first time. Seventy percent of the responses were positive. Comments stated that consumers were thankful for the rest they were able to get while at the Marie Green facility and complimented staff. The project itself ran over the last two fiscal years, covering five BHRS service locations. Ninety-nine total consumers responded throughout the project. The overall positivity rate was sixty-five percent, negative was just over fifteen percent, and neutral responses were at sixteen plus percent. Chris reminded the Board that some responders were not receiving services voluntarily, which can skew responses. Sally called for any questions on this presentation. No questions were posed. Sally then thanked Chris for her work on this two-year project for the BHAB.

Recommendation/Action: Information only

Training/Presentation – Children's System of Care

Discussion/Conclusion: Veronica Gallacher, Director of the BHRS Children's System of Care (CSOC), presented on services provided by that division. The Children's campus is at the corner of thirteenth and B streets and is a three-building campus. It is currently in the middle of a full remodel, which should take about eighteen months. The CUBE will be converted from a wellness center to an outpatient center during this remodel. CSOC serves children from zero to twenty-five years of age and currently has just under seven hundred clients, the majority of which are in the fifteen and under age group. Ninety-two of their clients are in the Foster Care system. Between two thousand nineteen and two thousand twenty-two, there was significant increase in services. Their busiest time is in the Fall, when children are returning to school, so they will know more about this year's data at the end of the calendar year. Their Pathways to Wellbeing program is dedicated to serving Foster youth and creates a no wrong door environment of partnerships. This program is co-located within the Child Welfare system. They also have a First Episode Psychosis program that focuses on prevention of psychotic hospitalization. The CUBE is the Community United by Empowerment program for Transitional Age Youth (TAY) and that wellness center provides an active social, educational and skill building environment. The CUBE re-opens June twenty-fourth. These services are being relocated to the Wellness Center. Effective July first, they will be extending their hours on Mondays and Tuesdays to seven in the evening. This was requested by many of their clients. They have a Youth Mobile Clinic in the North County and that includes staff that can provide services on school campuses. They also have dedicated staff for Livingston and Los Banos. BHRS CSOC also has a Youth Crisis Stabilization Unit, which averages about twenty-five clients a month. The goal is to stabilize the youth



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and prevent hospitalizations. The CSOC division contracts for additional services with Aspiranet, Turning Point, Sierra Vista and Stars Behavioral Health. Lastly, Veronica described the Student Resiliency Center, which is a program funded by the MHSSA grant, which is a four-million-dollar grant received by BHRS to expand school-based mental health services. They are partnering with Merced County Office of Education (MCOE) to build a school-based wellness center that will be the first of its kind in Merced. MCOE will provide school resources and BHRS will provide prevention and intervention services right in the same building, allowing youth to literally have a warm hand-off to services. This should be ready for services in the Fall of two thousand and twenty-two. Veronica closed by calling for questions. Iris asked how the center will serve the rural areas. Veronica responded that they are partnering with some of their rural districts to let them know that staff will be available in the resiliency center and in their home areas, where they can go onto the school campuses. Sally asked about how Turning Point works with children. Veronica stated that this contracted vendor works specifically with the eighteen and older clients. No other questions were brought forward.

Recommendation/Action: Information only

Chair’s Report

Discussion/Conclusion: Sally shared that this is the last meeting of the fiscal year and the Annual Meeting for the Board. As such, certain items will be done today. Committee appointments will be finalized, officers will be elected for the new fiscal year and discussion will take place on the Board’s Priorities and goals for the new fiscal year. That discussion will lead to the Board determining a project they can request BHRS complete for Board during the new year.

Recommendation/Action: Information only

Election of Officers (BOARD ACTION)

Discussion/Conclusion: Sally addressed that ballots for Board Officers were distributed via email as well as hard copy at this meeting. She then reviewed the ballot with the group. Bruce Metcalf has agreed to serve a second year as Board Chair and no other member has expressed interest in running for that position. Sally Ragonut, current Vice Chair, and Zachery Ramos, current Secretary, are on the ballot to exchange officer roles which would have Zachery move to Vice Chair while Sally moves to Secretary. The Representative to a State Level Organization is currently vacant and no nominees were brought forward for that position. Sally indicated that a nominee would not be added for that officer role today. Iris shared what this representative role would entail, as she was the last holder of the that position. County Counsel, Charles Bruce, confirmed that the Board may do one vote to accept the slated nominees, as there was only one nominee for each position.

Recommendation/Action: M/S/C (Pareira, Mojica de Tatum) to approve the ballot as discussed, making Bruce Metcalf Chair for a second year, Zachery Ramos the new Vice Chair and Sally Ragonut the new Secretary for fiscal year two thousand twenty-two/twenty-three. Sally called for a roll call vote. The names of all present Board members were called and asked for their individual approvals. The new officers were approved, as stated here, by a unanimous vote of members in attendance.

Pareira – Aye
Ramos, V. – Absent
Metcalf – Absent

Mojica de Tatum – Aye
Cha – Absent
Ramos, Z. – Aye

Ellis – Aye
Ragonut – Aye
Humble – Aye

Deol – Absent
Kaur - Aye
Werner - Aye



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Committee Appointments

Discussion/Conclusion: Sally reviewed the committee appointments reviewed and approved by the Chair at the last Executive Committee meeting. Members were supplied with a handout showing all new committee members for the new fiscal year. A revision was made to remove Mary Ellis from the Liaison to the Quality Improvement Committee. No other member requested to fill that role, so that liaison role is now vacant. Mary then asked to join the Nominating Committee, with Zachery. A revised committee list, with these two edits, will be distributed to the members.

Recommendation/Action: Information only.

FY 22/23 Top Priorities, Goals and Project

Discussion/Conclusion: Sally opened discussion on Top Priorities by reading some suggestions to the members and asking them where their interests and passions lie within behavioral health. She invited them to take this time to discuss how that information can be formed into top priorities for this Board to focus on in the new fiscal year. Discussion was guided by Sharon Mendonca on how various interests can be built into a list of overall Board priorities and how that list could then be honed down to specific goals for the new fiscal year. After discussion, Sharon suggested that it sounds like the Board feels strongly about two particular subjects and something the Board could do is list their Top Priorities as continued education for this Board and making our communities more aware of how to get help, then combine them into a goal for the new year. They could then use that goal to create a project that has both BHRS and Board members attending community events and meetings and reporting back to this Board. This gives the Board a finger on the pulse of community needs and knowledge gaps and allows them to be part of the work that is already in place with BHRS outreach and partnership work across Merced county. Iris liked that this would be a project that Board members could be an active part of with BHRS. She also suggested that Board members could focus on attending things in their own districts. Zachery shared the details of a project idea he submitted for consideration by the Board, which included BHRS staff and Board members attending various meetings and events in the communities of Merced County. It was suggested that the BHAB Liaisons to the MHSA Ongoing Planning Council, which are Linda Deol and Iris Mojica de Tatum for the new fiscal year, could provide the linkage to information from the MHSA group that would inform the Board members of meetings and events in their areas, which they can then attend and report back on to the Board. Sally shared her concern about county residents who receive outreach and offers for services, but refuse, often ending up in jail. This is a big issue and a concern on her mind. Sharon shared that what Sally described relates to something new in legislation right now called CARE Court, which will lead to a much higher volume in conservatorships. She also noted that the subject of CARE Court fits right into the two top priorities as determined today by this Board. Sally called upon each member present to make sure everyone had a chance to give input to the discussion. Amy asked if the Board would like to boil down their Top Priorities to the simply stated terms of 1. Education (Board and Community) and 2. Awareness (Consumer, Caregiver, Family, etc.). Zachery added that Board involvement should be part of the priorities in the new year. Sharon expressed that it would fit directly into the two priorities. Sally asked for verbal group agreement on the two priorities as worded here. The group agreed. At the July meeting the Board will finalize any goals and discuss a project to give BHRS.

Recommendation/Action: Information only.



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Recommendation to the Board of Supervisors (BOARD ACTION)

Discussion/Conclusion: Sally shared that, at the last meeting, Chris Kraushar requested something be done to honor a well-respected former Merced County mental health professional who passed away in December. Sally expressed that the Executive Committee suggests the Board recommend to the BOS that they close a meeting in honor of Mr. Comer. Sally called for a motion on this recommendation.

Recommendation/Action: M/S/C (Mojica de Tatum/Ellis) to approve a recommendation on this to the BOS.

Sally called for a roll call vote. The names of all present Board members were called and asked for their individual approval. The recommendation received a unanimous vote of members in attendance.

Pareira – Absent for vote	Mojica de Tatum – Aye	Ellis – Aye	Deol – Absent
Ramos, V. – Absent	Cha – Absent	Ragonut – Aye	Kaur - Aye
Metcalf – Absent	Ramos, Z. – Aye	Humble – Aye	Werner - Aye

Announcements

Discussion/Conclusion: None

Recommendation/Action: Information only

Future Agenda Items / Possible Action Items

Discussion/Conclusion: Sally noted that discussion on the goals and project for the new fiscal year will continue at the next meeting. Iris asked if anything had been done on Board Retreats for the new year. Sally informed her that it has not at this time. Sally also shared that Board Evaluations need to be done.

Recommendation/Action: Information only.

Adjournment: Sally adjourned the meeting at 5:58 pm.

Submitted by: _____
Amy Houghtaling
Recording Secretary

Approved by: (Approved 7/5/22. Signed 7/11/22). _____
Zachery Ramos, Secretary
Merced County Behavioral Health Board

Date: _____

Date: _____