



## Minutes

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**Present:** Bruce Metcalf, Chair; Sally Ragonut, Vice-Chair; Supervisor Lloyd Pareira; Mary Ellis; Vince Ramos; Iris Mojica de Tatum, Keng Ger Cha; Vicki Humble

**Absent:** Zachery Ramos, Secretary; Micki Archuleta; Genevieve Valentine

**Others Present:** Sharon Mendonca; Dr. Jin Soofi; Chris Kraushar; Charles Bruce; Christopher Jensen; Veronica Gallacher; Linda Deol; Pangcha Vang; Renee Smyth, A/V; 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. Chair, Bruce Metcalf, called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Audible roll call was taken by Recorder, Amy Houghtaling.

### **Mission Statement**

The Mission Statement was read by Mary Ellis.

### **Approval of Minutes from July 6, 2021 (BOARD ACTION)**

**Discussion/Conclusion:** Sally had one edit to a date on page 7 of the minutes, which was noted.

**Recommendation/Action:** M/S/C (Ragonut / Ellis) to approve the July 6, 2021 minutes. Bruce 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 with a majority for members in attendance.

Pareira – Not present for Voting  
Ramos, V. – Abstain  
Metcalf – Aye

Mojica de Tatum – Abstain  
Cha – Abstain  
Ramos, Z. – Absent  
Archuleta – Absent

Ellis – Aye  
Ragonut – Aye  
Humble – Aye

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

**Discussion/Conclusion:** No public comments

**Recommendation/Action:** None



## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES

### Behavioral Health Advisory Board Meeting

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#### Director's Report

##### A. SUD Expansion

1. Links (LB) Pilot
2. City of Merced Collaboration

##### B. Navigation Center Update

**Discussion/Conclusion:** **A1.** Sharon Mendonca, who was in attendance for Genevieve Valentine, shared that, under the SUD expansion, the Links program is where we will have a new Clinician and AOD Counselor working together in the Los Banos Emergency Room to try to identify consumers in need and link them directly into services. This is currently a pilot program. **A2.** The second part of the SUD expansion is our collaboration with the City of Merced. Christopher Jensen has been working with the City, as well as Police, Sheriff and Probation departments, on this collaboration project. Christopher shared that this collaboration stems from a State Grant under Proposition Sixty-four, that utilizes a surplus of funding from the taxation of retail Cannabis. Merced County did not qualify as a direct contractor with the State on this, but the City of Merced did qualify and were therefore allowed to apply for the grant. The City wanted to continue working with Merced County BHRS on the organization and implementation of this three year pilot program. The goal of the program is specifically to reduce Cannabis use in youth on probation. These youth often end up violating their probation by possessing Cannabis, which then leads to being sent back to incarceration at a juvenile institution. This cycle takes a lot of resources. The program strives to decrease use of Cannabis and increase protective factors through an intervention level program containing mentoring and vocational training. City of Merced would be the administrative fiscal agent contracting with the County of Merced to offer Recovery Assistance For Teens (RAFT) as a recovery program, and students will be referred to it by the Probation department, receiving three months of education along with case management and family support. In addition, RAFT would coordinate with City Parks and Recreation to assist youth with interests in certain fields by offering internships in various City departments, which would include an assigned mentor. At the conclusion, the youth could choose to continue work for the department, earning a stipend of up to two hundred dollars for ten hours of paid work. This creates incentive for the youth to come back for the paid work on a voluntary basis, not part of program completion. The program would serve up to forty youth a year, or ten per quarter. The program also includes a monthly outing to Yosemite, giving the youth exposure to the outdoors and wilderness, building a sense of unity, positivity and accomplishment to help prevent return to the behaviors causing them to be in the program. The goal is to build resiliency and instill a knowledge that adults care about them and that healthy behaviors lead to a successful transition into adulthood. Funding would cover one full-time Counselor and a Recreational Coordinator. A retrospective survey will be done at the end of each participant's three month period in the program. It was clarified that the age group for this program will be ages twelve to eighteen years of age, Junior High through High School. **B.** Sharon shared that the Navigation Center, as of last Friday, had sixty-three clients. They have been able to work closely with the construction company to get their list of items taken care of and they now have a dog wash area. Staff are working hard to get things up and running smoothly. Bruce shared that they started at sixty-six and climbed to seventy-five, but COVID caused them to quarantine, which will end this Friday. We dropped to fifty due to the quarantine. It has been operating for four months now and things are generally going well. They continue to work on reporting. Bruce has personally led the project of adding shade to a concrete area near the dog wash. They have interns, a staff member from HSA, and one from Golden Valley Health Center. Also, three full-time Case Managers and a full-time Housing Navigator. It really is a one-stop shop in many ways. There have been difficulties with finding housing, but about seven have been placed already. Sally asked if Golden Valley Health Center is offering vaccinations at the Navigation Center. Bruce said they are working with the County Public Health Department to provide vaccinations and there is an incentive of fifty dollars for people to get vaccinated right now.

**Recommendation/Action:** Information only

#### Budget Update

**Discussion/Conclusion:** Sharon Mendonca went through a summarized financial report on the recently closed fiscal report. An entry of note is the purchase of some vehicles, including a van which provides mobile services. Sharon addressed the variety of funding



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sources and how the funds are spent. She also said that the State allowed BHRS to double the cost of services last year because of the reduction in consumer traffic due to COVID and we were able to bring in sixteen million dollars for the year. The report shows that we are in very good shape. Lloyd asked about the nineteen million in Other Charges. Sharon explained that is hospital contracts, board and cares, transportation of clients to other counties, and other items. Total revenue is sixty-six million and total expenses are sixty-six point nine million. Looking at this, we are seven hundred and thirty-four thousand dollars in the deficit. But, June is not reflected here and we are still waiting on funds owed from the State. The net change is expected to be positive to the amount of over six million dollars. Bruce suggested that the Other Charges category be broken down a little for more clarity. Sally noted that the BHB was told that the MHSA dollars were going to decrease by twenty-five percent this year. Sharon shared that they are changing that and a lot of money is coming for a variety of areas, but we are not expecting a reduction in these particular funds. Sharon also explained that MHSA funds come in and we put them into an interest earning Trust Fund. We only pull those funds into our budget as needed. If we do not have expenditures against those funds, they stay in the Trust Fund. Sally asked if we have to repay the unused funds back to MHSA. Sharon replied that we do have to repay them, but have three years to use the funds. We also received an extension to that time. Right now, we are not looking at any reversion of funds. We also have funds set aside for the North County site. Sally asked if a location has been found for a new Livingston facility. Sharon said that we are still looking and things are moving forward. Also, a Livingston board and care, where many of our clients reside, is closing at the end of this month. We are working to relocate them at this time. Lloyd shared that data shows that the majority of clients of the Livingston facility are actually from the Atwater/Winton area. Iris asked if the CSS funds can be used for one-time purchases. Sharon replied that those funds are not subject to reversion at this time and we did actually use some for several one-time purchases. Iris asked if funds coming from the State for the schools are going to the schools themselves or to Behavioral Health. Sharon said that it is actually both, and we are looking at collaborative partnerships with the schools and the judicial system in an effort to increase our services to them. There are many programs in the works to utilize these funds. We are doing a lot of reaching out to youth, both in and out of the schools.

**Recommendation/Action:** Information only

### Chair's Report

- A. Training Plan for FY 21/22
- B. Next Phase for BH Through the Eyes of the Client
- C. Committee Approvals
- D. Annual Report Approval (BOARD ACTION)

**Discussion/Conclusion:** A. Bruce shared that multiple items have been scheduled for Board training through the end of this year. Amy read the scheduled items for the group; September is on SUD Services, October is a presentation from NAMI, and Equity is in December. B. Bruce shared that the next phase of the Behavioral Health Through the Eyes of the Client project has been assigned to take place and Chris stated that the Los Banos facility has been designated, with survey boxes having already been placed there to stay for the next three months. Sally asked if we have heard about the progress of the annual Data Notebook. Amy shared that she is inquiring with Sharon Jones on that item and will follow-up with the Board's Executive Committee. C. Bruce stated he would like to close committees and asked members if any of them would like to join a committee for the fiscal year. Sally shared that she is stepping away from one of her responsibilities and Micki Archuleta has agreed to take her place as the Liaison to the MHSA Ongoing Planning Council meetings. Lloyd volunteered to join Vicki on the Substance Use Disorder committee and Sally shared that Maria Azevedo is the BHRS contact for the recurring SUD meeting. D. Bruce asked if Sally had any further comment on the Annual Report before the Board voted. She had no comment and expressed her thanks to Amy for her work on the product. Bruce called for a motion on approval of the Annual Report.



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**Recommendation/Action:** M/S/C (Ellis/Mojica de Tatum) to approve the Annual Report and forward on to the Board of Supervisors for their approval. Bruce called for a roll call vote. The names of all present Board members were called and asked for their individual approvals. The report was approved with a quorum.

Pareira – Not present for Voting

Ramos, V. – Aye

Metcalf – Aye

Mojica de Tatum – Aye

Cha – Aye

Ramos, Z. – Absent

Archuleta – Absent

Ellis – Aye

Ragonut – Aye

Humble – Aye

### Committee Reports

**A. Substance Use Disorder (SUD)**

**B. Executive/By-Laws/Planning**

**C. Membership Committee**

1. **Approval of Linda Deol to be recommended to the Board of Supervisors for a position on the Behavioral Health Advisory Board**

**D. Board Development (New Membership Orientation and Onboarding)**

**E. Liaison to the Quality Improvement Committee (QIC)**

**F. Liaison to the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Ongoing Planning Council**

**G. Other Board Member Reports**

**Discussion/Conclusion:** **A.** No report. **B.** No report. **C.** Mary reported that the Membership Committee is recommending the BHB approve today that the application of Linda Deol (District 1) be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for final approval to be on the BHB. **D.** No report. **E.** No report. **F.** No report. **G.** No other reports.

**Recommendation/Action:** M/S/C (Ellis/Cha) to approve Linda Deol's application be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for approval to the BH Board. Bruce called for a roll call vote on this recommendation. The names of all present Board members were called and asked for their individual approvals. The recommendation was approved with a quorum.

Pareira – Not present for Voting

Ramos, V. – Not able to Vote

Metcalf – Aye

Mojica de Tatum – Aye

Cha – Aye

Ramos, Z. – Absent

Archuleta – Absent

Ellis – Aye

Ragonut – Aye

Humble – Aye

### Ad-Hoc Committee Reports

**A. Annual Report**

**B. Nominating Committee**

**Discussion/Conclusion:** **A.** Sally stated that the report is done and was brought forward for this Board's approval today, in order to send to BOS. **B.** No report.

**Recommendation/Action:** Information only

### Announcements

**Discussion/Conclusion:** Sharon Mendonca reminded the Board of the National Night Out event taking place in Los Banos tonight, 8/3/21, ending at 8:00pm. Sharon also expressed her appreciation for Kim Carter's time and dedication to the BHB. Bruce agreed and expressed appreciation for the time and dedication of Paula Mason, both who recently left the Board. Bruce shared that the Board is



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pleased to see two new applicants to the Board, Linda Deol and Pangcha Vang, and looks forward to them potentially joining the Board.

**Recommendation/Action:** Information only

**Future Agenda Items / Possible Action Items**

**Discussion/Conclusion:** Bruce asked if there were any requests for future agenda items. None were presented.

**Recommendation/Action:** Information only

**Adjournment:** Bruce adjourned the meeting at 5:28 pm.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amy Houghtaling  
Recording Secretary

Approved by: Signed as Approved on 09/07/2021  
**Zachery Ramos, Secretary**  
Merced County Behavioral Health Board

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_