

MINUTES  
San Bernardino County  
MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING  
September 3, 2009; 12:00-2:00 pm  
BHRC - 850 E. Foothill Blvd, Auditorium  
Rialto, CA 92376

**Commissioners Present:**

Gabriel Gonzales, Christopher Massa, Tom Rivera, May Farr, Veatrice Jews, Tanya Perry, Jane Godager, Bill Swift, Michael Hill, and Talli Simmons on behalf of Supervisor Neil Derry.

**Excused Absence:**

David Ford, Susan McGee-Stehsel and Jane Mercer

**Guests:**

Allan Rawland, Director, Debi Pasco, Clerk of the Mental Health Commission; Michael Townsend, Field Representative for Supervisor Josie Gonzales; Gil Navarro, SBC School Board Member; Wayne Henkelmann, Teri Posey, SB Courts-MH Counselor Office; Marsha Mathews, Hope Anderson, Mental Health Systems, Inc.; Aaron Perez, Family Service Association; Rodolfo Pinon, Casa de San Bernardino; Linda Ballard, Renee Compton, Michael Moreno, Faith Ikeda, Pathways to Recovery; Jason Hill, Andy Gruchy, David Denkers, André Bossieux, Veronica Kelley, Mark Thomas, Richard Croyt, Faye Herrmann, Angie Nieto, Mariann Ruffolo, Michael Knight; Joni Kincer, Susanne Kulesa, Linda Porter, Bob Sudol, Cynthia White, Richard Myatt, Michael Oliver, CaSonya Thomas, Douglas Fazekas, Michael Schertell, Lynn Neuenswander, Jatin Dalal, Maria Coronado, Paula Rutten, Lorie Bernard Eklund, DBH.

**CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS AND MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING**

Due to the absence of Chairperson David Ford and Vice Chairperson Susan McGee-Stehsel, the meeting was called to order by Secretary, Tanya Perry at 12:07 p.m. Commissioner Perry welcomed everyone and self introductions followed.

The agenda for this meeting was approved and the Public Session minutes of August 6, 2009 were adopted as written.

**CULTURAL COMPETENCY EXCELLENCE AWARD**

Veronica Kelley, DBH Cultural Competency Officer, presented Angie Sanchez-Nieto with the September 2009 Cultural Competency Excellence Award. Ms. Sanchez-Nieto works as a Peer and Family Advocate II for the West Valley Community Crisis Response Team. She works primarily with the Latino community, conducting home visits and facilitating family support groups. She goes the extra mile to ensure that community members have access to services and treats everyone with respect and dignity. Congratulations, Angie!

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Gil Navarro, member, County of San Bernardino School Board, requested that the documents be available at the sign-in table: public agenda and the approved minutes of the last meeting, be available in English and Spanish. He also suggested that the "Tab" items referred to on the public agenda be available for review at the sign-in table. Mr. Navarro stated that the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) has made some progress with outreach to the Hispanic community; however much more could be done to address the disparity issue. There are 70,000 students in a five-mile radius of this building whose families may be in need of services; however no one wants to admit they have a problem with mental illness. The members of the Mental Health Commission are in favor of Mr. Navarro's suggestions.

## **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

### **First District:**

Commissioner Bill Swift thanked Cynthia Harvey, Clinic Supervisor, High Desert Community Crisis Response Team, for meeting with the members of the Clubhouse.

### **Second District:**

Commissioner May Farr stated that we should be very proud of the sixteen National Association of Counties (NACo) awards presented to the County of San Bernardino; two of which were for DBH programs: The Board of Supervisors recognized all sixteen programs at their September 15 meeting. May participated in the West End Crisis Intervention During a Community Crisis training. She also attended the NAMI California Conference in Torrance on August 21-22.

Commissioner Michael Hill agreed with the public comments expressed by Gil Navarro and would like to see more Latino presence at this meeting.

### **Third District:**

Commissioner Tom Rivera attended the August 20<sup>th</sup> Innovations Public Forum at TEAM House. He was impressed with the facility, the number of people in attendance and the valuable input provided. He thanked the members of the TEAM House for hosting the event and Bob Sudol for facilitating the process. Tom is attending the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Latino Conference in Los Angeles on September 23-25, where he will brag about San Bernardino County. Veronica Kelley, Arelis Martinez and Maribel Gutierrez will be presenting at the conference on behalf of DBH.

Commissioner Christopher Massa attended the NAMI California National Conference in Torrance on August 21-22. There was a violin presentation provided by Nathaniel Ayers, the former music student who was institutionalized for a mental breakdown during his second year at the Julliard School of Music and subsequently spent years on the streets in Skid Row. His life story was debuted in the movie The Soloist. Chris also mentioned that the Redlands Clubhouse has moved to east Redlands.

Commissioner Tanya Perry announced the release of the Big Bear Resource Manual which provides contact information for services from Crestline to Big Bear. She will share the manual at the next meeting. The Big Bear One Stop provides a location for county offices to provide access to services. Commissioner Perry invited everyone to attend the Big Bear Annual Community Fun Night at Swim Beach on September 21, 2009 from 3:30-7:00 pm. They are expecting approximately 2000 community members and 50-60 vendors.

### **Fifth District:**

Commissioner Veatrice Jews also attended the Innovations Public Forum at TEAM House and enjoyed the interchange of ideas and learning the needs of the community. Commissioner Jews participated in the Grant Writing workshop through the African American Coalition.

Commissioner Jane Godager added that the member of the Commission appreciate the gracious hospitality provided by the members of TEAM House during the Innovations Community Public Forum.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Allan Rawland stated that he appreciates Gil Navarro's involvement and input, and agreed that we need more outreach to the Hispanic, African American and Asian communities. Director Rawland congratulated Angie Sanchez-Nieto as the first recipient of the Cultural Competency Award of Excellence.

Gwen Morse, DBH Disaster and Safety Coordinator, has been closely monitoring the status of the Oak Glen/Yucaipa and Station fires. The Community Crisis Response Team (CCRT) will be involved with the Station Fire community meeting to be held in Wrightwood. CCRT is 24/7 and responds to multiple community issues.

### **MHSA**

DBH has received two developer applications for the CALFHA Housing Program; one to be located in the city of Fontana and the other in San Bernardino. Both projects will be new construction.

Commissioner Veatrice Jews has been very involved with the PEI and Innovations Technical Assistance and Capacity Building projects and meets regularly with the “grass roots” agencies in the community that provide much needed services to residents.

### **FY 2009-2010 State and County Budget**

DBH is funded by the following

- Sales tax and vehicle license fees - continues to be bleak with a 20-30% decrease
- Federal Medicaid
- Managed Care
- State General Fund
- Personal income (MHSA) – could see a 15-50% decrease by Fiscal Year (FY) 12-13. We are taking a proactive approach to gradually decrease costs for sustainment. PEI savings will be able to maintain programs for the next couple of years.

DBH has money in Prudent Reserves that we'll try to hold on to until FY 13-14.

The FY 09-10 budget has seen additional decreases in health care:

- Elimination of Prop 36 funding. We still have Offender Treatment Program and Byrne funds.
- The reduction of Managed Care. We have established a target mix of 75% Medi-Cal and 25% non Medi-Cal (we are monitoring closely). Richard Louis, Assistant Director, has the task of transforming the outpatient services and drilling down to achieve the 75% Medi-Cal mix.

CaSonya Thomas, Deputy Director, Program Support Services, stated that the Managed Care reduction is our greatest challenge that has impacted 1700 Medi-Cal beneficiaries. It has been a huge task to determine if clients meet medical necessity for ongoing services. We're offering clients a four month authorization period. Letters were sent to Medi-Cal beneficiaries providing them with options and DBH staff have been available to provide answers to client inquires or refer to other resources.

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Let's End Truancy (LET)**

Kathleen Alvarado, County of San Bernardino Deputy District Attorney, Juvenile Division, played a DVD which provided an overview of the LET Program. Truancy is often the gateway to juvenile delinquency and more serious adult crime. The District Attorney's (DA) office has made reducing truancy a priority. Deputies assigned to the LET program travel throughout the county, visit school sites, attend School Attendance Review Board (SARB) meetings, and speak to groups of parents and families in an effort to motivate students to stay in school and educate parents as to the compulsory education laws. Ms. Alvarado stated that the DA office is looking for volunteers to attend SARB groups and offer solutions for this community problem.

Michael Townsend, Field Representative for Supervisor Josie Gonzales, Fifth District, works closely with the San Bernardino Unified School District. He stated that schools have a student tutorial service that offer truant students assistance from their peers. Mr. Townsend is open to suggestions from this group regarding the truancy issue.

Gil Navarro, member, County of San Bernardino School Board, stated that DBH is a critical department for families needing assistance for truancy issues. The DBH Community Crisis Response Team works with the DA's office and Children and Family Services on truancy sweeps and work with families who have significant issues.

Director Rawland referred Ms. Alvarado to the Innovations public forums for LET assistance.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- Approve Public Comment Request to Speak Form: The members of the Commission were presented with a draft Public Comment Request to Speak form. It was moved to amend this item to include copies of this form translated into Spanish and Vietnamese. The amended item was approved by the Commission.
- 2009 Mental Health Commission Holiday Tea and Awards Ceremony: Due to the ongoing county budget crisis it was suggested that this event scheduled for December 3, 2009 be a desert only event and that the time be changed to 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. This item was approved by the Commission.

## **OUTSIDE AGENCY REPORTS**

As requested by the members of the Commission at the August 6, 2009 Mental Health Commission meeting, Aaron Perez, Family Services Association, PEI contract provider, provided the Commission and the audience with a list of sites and flier for Older Adults Community Services. This agency serves adults, 60 years and over, and provides physical and mental health counseling, case management and adult home safety. There are no financial requirements for their programs.

## **DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DAC) REPORTS**

### **District 1:**

The DAC meeting of August 19 at the Victor Valley Clubhouse included a presentation from Sergeant Derrick Pacifico, San Bernardino County (SBC) Apple Valley Sheriff Department, regarding the Police Activities League (PAL) Program which provides activities to youth; especially those kids with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). The PALS program may be eliminated due to a lack of funding in the schools. Sergeant Pacifico was referred to Debi Pasco for a future presentation to the Mental Health Commission.

### **District 2 & 4:**

Commissioner May Farr stated that the DAC meeting of August 27 included discussions on budget and DBH services concerns.

### **District 3:**

Commissioner Tanya Perry announced the next DAC meeting is scheduled for October 2 at the Doves Outreach Office in Big Bear.

## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

Director Rawland stated that the Mental Health Commission still has 3 vacancies; one in the Second District and 2 in the Fourth District. The Commission is in need of more Latino and African American representation. Commissioner Tom Rivera will email his recommendation to Debi Pasco.

Lynn Neuenswander, DBH Public Information Officer, announced that the Board of Supervisors will present DBH with Recovery and Hispanic Employees' Alliance Resolutions on September 15.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further items to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

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*Tanya Perry*  
Secretary

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*Debi Pasco*  
Clerk of the Commission