

RIVERSIDE COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES FOR February 4, 2026 • 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS –

Madam Chair Brenda Scott called the Behavioral Health Commission (BHC) meeting to order at 12:00 pm. Commissioner attendance was taken by roll call and followed by introductions.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING –

Victoria St. Johns made a motion to approve minutes as written from January 7, 2026 and Launa Wilson seconded the motion, there was one abstention from Beatriz Gonzalez, but the motion carried.

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS – Madam Chair Brenda Scott, announced she attended the CALBHB/C conference and shared there will be one held in Riverside in June at the Marriott and encouraged all commissioners to attend and once she receives the email registration will share it. She also encouraged all commissioners to attend their respective Regional Advisory Board meetings and standing committees. Madam Chair regretted announcing the sudden passings of Sandy Neja and Jay Jester with the NAMI Coachella Valley board and Desert Board.

COMMISSION MEMBER REMARKS – None

PUBLIC REMARKS – None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Dr. Matthew Chang

Dr. Chang announced the promotion of both Melissa Noone as Deputy Director and Kelly Grotsky as the new Adult Services Deputy Director, replacing Bill Brenneman's position who recently retired. He concluded by thanking the team for their work with all the upcoming community projects.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY- Family Advocate (Will Wynn)

Willard Wynn, Family Advocate Program Manager, introduced Ashley Housley Senior Family Advocate who then introduced Doris Diaz. Ms. Diaz began by sharing she had a daughter who was addicted to substances and she and her husband needed support. Their daughter was struggling to live on her own and with hesitation they allowed her to move into their motor home in the backyard. Her daughter needed medical attention due to the withdrawals she was having and was sent to the hospital. Upon her release she was referred to outpatient treatment. Ms. Diaz and her husband were also referred to the Family Advocate program and were informed by their family advocate that they were enabling their daughter's addiction without realizing it. Ms. Diaz and her husband then decided not to allow their daughter to reside with them any further, which led her into a residential rehab facility and psychiatric care. Ms. Diaz and her husband continue to attend family support groups that help them learn how to manage their own self-care while dealing with stressful situations and still providing support. Ms. Diaz was happy to share her daughter is currently working two jobs and is coming up on three years of her sobriety. Ms. Diaz gave praise to the department for the support and guidance they provided as well as the emotional support provided by her Church where she too offers support to others.

NEW BUSINESS-

1. Harmony Haven Presentation (Janine Moore)

Janine Moore, Deputy Director of Children's, provided a presentation on Harmony Haven, please see power point link below.

<https://www.ruhealth.org/media/7561>

2. Employee Appreciation Winners (Cheryl Coson)

Cheryl Coson, Senior Clinical Therapist with Workforce Education and Training announced Noemi Chagoya Castro, Office Assistant II with the CARES Line as the Summer quarter's employee recognition winner and proceeded to share her video. Ms. Chagoya Castro was given praise by her program manager Elizabeth Del Rio for her quick response and going the extra mile to ensure quality care and services were provided to the community the department serves. Ms. Del Rio then presented Ms. Chagoya Castro with a plaque for this recognition of achievement.

Cheryl Coson, then announced Grace Flores, Clinical Therapist II with Detention as the Spring quarter's employee recognition winner and proceeded to share her video. Ms. Flores was given accolades by her supervisor Geovana Varela and coworker Raymundo Claudio for her advocacy of services for a consumer that ultimately saved his life. Ms. Flores was then presented with a plaque for this recognition.

Please find the links of these videos below:

Summer Winner Noemi Chagoya Castro <https://youtu.be/fW5ghk9iP0Q>

Spring Winner Grace Flores https://youtu.be/Kw_NNdXNPE

OLD BUSINESS-

1. Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Update - (Diana Gutierrez)

Diana Gutierrez, MH Services Administrator, announced the integrated plan was posted on the website on 1/24/26 and the Public Hearings are scheduled for 2/18/26 in the Western Region, 2/26/26 in the Desert and 3/12/26 in Mid County, (flyers to be sent out). Mrs. Gutierrez confirmed Commissioners Greg Damewood, April Smith, and Daryl Terrell will be assisting with the Western PH, Commissioners Victoria St. Johns and Beatriz Gonzalez will be assisting with the Desert PH and Commissioners Brenda Scott, Quintilia Ávila and Rick Gentillalli will be assisting with the Mid County PH. She concluded by sharing an ad hoc committee will be scheduled for 3/18/26 and invited the commissioners who volunteered to attend.

2. Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program (SAPT) Update – (April Frey)

Rhyan Miller, Deputy Director Integrated Programs, provided an update on the Mobile Crisis Response calendar and shared there has been a percentage increase including with the crisis call center. Mr. Miller also shared a brief update on Prop 36 funding sharing the RFI released on 1/6/26 and touched on the Behavioral Health Accountability Set (BHAS) measurement year for 2026. He then introduced Lupe Madrigal, and she announced there are currently 93 active Friday Night Live chapters, they hosted a blanket drive partnered with the Desert recreational center and TAY aged peers are now working with FNL.

3. Care Court Update – (Marcus Cannon)

Marcus Cannon, Deputy Director of Forensics, provided a brief update on CARE Court. Please see power Point presentation below.

<https://www.ruhealth.org/media/7566>

COMMITTEE UPDATE –

Brenda Scot announced Mid County meets tomorrow 2/5/26 at 3pm.

Greg Damewood announced Western Region Advisory board will be meeting today at 3pm via a hybrid meeting. In person location set to be at the Blaine Street Clinic.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS-

Greg Damewood requested overview of RUHS Foundation.
MHRC update suggested by Brenda Scott.

ADJOURN – The Behavioral Health Commission meeting adjourned at 1:47 pm.

Sylvia Bishop

Sylvia Bishop, Recording Secretary

Minutes and agendas of meetings are available online at
<http://www.ruhealth.org/behavioral-health/advisory-committees>

To request copies, please contact the BHC Liaison at 951-955-7141
or email SBishop@ruhealth.org

FY 2025/26 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMISSION ATTENDANCE ROSTER

MEMBERS	JUL	SEP	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
April Smith, District	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Beatriz Gonzalez, District 4	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Brenda Scott, District 3	P	P	P	A	P	P				
Carole Schaudt, District 4	P	P	A	A	A	A				
Daryl Terrell, District 5	P	P	P	P	A	P				
Elysse Rico, BOS Rep. Dist. 2	P	P	P	P	P	A				
Greg Damewood, District 5	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Harshitaa Arunkumar, Dist. 1	P	A	A	A	A	A				
Launa Wilson, District 1	A	P	P	P	P	P				
Quintilia Ávila, District 2	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Rick Gentillalli, District 5	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Sheila Mallet-Smith, Dist. 3	P	A	P	P	P	P				
Victoria St. Johns, District 4	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Dr. Walter Haessler, Dist. 3	P	P	P	P	P	P				

Present = P • Absent = A

PRESENT			
Deborah Johnson	Willard Wynn	Geovana Varela	Heena Hemani
Dr. Chang	Miranda DeSheilds	Tunisia Nelson	Miriam Resendiz
Sylvia Bishop	Anniemarie Morales	Maria Moreno	Grace Flores
Lucy Lopez	Tyrone Peterson	Kristin Yellam	Mary Apprill
Israel Torres	Martha Burns	Cynthia Piercy	Sandy Awad
Willard Wynn	Melissa Vasquez	Melissa Dalke	Robert Youssef
Janine Moore	Jane Beamer	Rachel Romero	George Gaeta
Cheryl Coson	Girlyanne Lacson	Amelia Diaz	Leah Newell
Diana Gutierrez	Noemi Chagoya Castro	Maria Arnold	Claudia Vizcaino
Rhyan Miller	Gloria Fernandez	Selenne Barajas	Andrea Putnam
Marcus Cannon	Shannon McCleerey-Hooper	Amy McCann	Steven Willis
Ashley Housley	Joan Twohey-Jacobs	Dolores DeMartino	Rubit Romero
Kelly Grotsky	Kristen Duffy	Dani Damewood	Grace Flores
Dr. Benitez	Melissa Noone	Silvia Silva	Mary Walsh
Brandon Jacobs	Beverly McKeddie	Steve McNally	Doris Diaz
Francisco Huerta	Carina Gustafsson	Rita Massie	Orli Zaprir
Lupe Madrigal	Elizabeth Del Rio	Alvaro Segura	Mary Carpio
Nisha Elliot	Raymundo Claudio	Heather Petridis	
Rachel Gileno	Laurence Gonzaga	Misty Martin	