

MEETING MINUTES

September 8, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Tori St Johns; Chairperson, Dr. Janice Quinn; Vice-Chairperson, Richard Divine (Owl), Mark Miller, Eva Guenther-James, Amber Duffle, Bruce Sherr, Huynh Cuc Nguyen, Joe Butts, Jim Jones.

BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED: Carole Schaudt, Maura Fisher, Bea Gonzalez.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT: Rachel Gileno; Adult Services Administrator, Mary Carpio; Secretary to Rachel Gileno, Denise Morgan; Secretary to Candice Hildebrand, Jay Rembold; Senior Peer Support Specialist, RUHS – BH, Nate Ramirez; RUHS – BH Older Adults, Karina Alcala; RUHS – BH Adults, Matthew Sasso; LCSW RUHS Behavioral Health Services Supervisor, Dr. Andrew Williams PSY.D; RUHS BH Administrator (Owl), Deborah Johnson; RUHS – BH Director (Owl).

OTHERS PRESENT: None.

CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME AND SELF INTRODUCTIONS:

Tori St Johns called the meeting of the Riverside County Desert Behavioral Health Board to order at 12:06 PM. Self-introductions of all who were in attendance in person or by teleconference followed.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mark Miller Commented on an article he came across in the PORAC monthly magazine titled “When Knowing isn’t enough”. The article was written by Dr. Cherylynn Lee who is a police psychologist who works full-time for the Santa Barbara Sheriff’s Department as the Behavioral Health Sciences manager overseeing mental health co-response teams. The crux of the article focused on a colleague she had worked closely with for several years, who had gone missing and was later found to have committed suicide. The article emphasized that we focus on the clients we are attempting to serve while at the same time neglecting to see the same warning signs that may be present in the people we work with. The article offers several tips on how to prevent future occurrences such as this, and a copy of the article is attached to the meeting notes.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Limit 3 minutes per speaker):

None.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

Tori St Johns asked if there were any additions, corrections, or deletions to the board minutes of the July 14, 2026 meeting. There were no corrections that needed to be made. Huynh Nguyen made a motion to accept the minutes, and Amber Duffle seconded the motion, it passed by a unanimous affirmative vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

The LINC (Linkage, Navigation, and Care) Program.:

Matthew Sasso gave a PowerPoint presentation. Matthew said that LINC focuses on the transition from inpatient hospitalization to outpatient care and making sure that transition happens smoothly.

Other New Business:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

Window Walk Gallery at the River Update:

Dr Quinn said the gallery received access to several more stores that recently became vacant and she in in need of additional art to help fill the windows in those stores.

Other Old Business:

None

MONTHLY UPDATE AND REPORT:

Substance Abuse Program Update:

Tori St Johns covered this topic on behalf of Gabe Kason. She said the "Recovery Happens" event will be on Saturday, September 24, 2026 from 11:30 Am to 4:30 PM at Fairmount Park in Riverside. She said the Desert will be well represented at the event and Bea Gonzalez and herself will be the keynote speakers.

Peer Support and Resource Center:

See attached calendar of events for September 2026.

Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Program Update:

See attached calendar of events for September 2026.

CHILDRENS SERVICES MANAGER COMMENTS:

Rachel Gileno gave this update on behalf of Candace Hildebrand. Rachel said Blythe Outpatient is expanding clinical services to youth and families. The Blythe clinic recently held an open house event to invite Community Based Organizations (CBO) and community members to tour the clinic and learn about the services they provide. Rachel added there will be new groups surrounding community activities and skills beginning in September.

Indio Outpatient is expanding services to youth and families by creating a food pantry and boutique. She added youth and families can come to an appointment and leave with food and clothing.

Rachel said that TAY FLOW is gearing up for their upcoming Haunted House and November Pride month activities. She also said Youth Enhanced Care Management (ECM) will be coming to Indio next as their continued expansion.

Finally, Rachell said Department wide, Children's and TAY are working to building and expand High Fidelity Wraparound services for youth served by DPSS< Probation and Behavioral Health.

ADULT SERVICES ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:

Rachel Gileno reported the following:

Banning Clinic is currently serving 55 members in their FSP and 887 members in their non-FSP programs. She said Banning is currently recruiting for a Behavioral Health Services Supervisor (BHSS) and a Peer Support Specialist (PSS).

Windy Springs serves 145 FSP members and 28 members in the ACT/FACT program. They are recruiting for 4 CT positions, 2 Senior CT positions, 1 BHS II position, and 2 CSA positions.

Indio serves 163 FSP members and 1401 non-FSP members. Indio is recruiting for 1 BHS II position.

Blythe serves 16 FSP members and 247 non-FSP members. They are recruiting for multiple CT positions.

Rachel said the Assertive Community Treatment / Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (ACT/FAST) program implementation began on July 1. It is co-located with the Windy Springs FSP. ACT/FACT is a community based, multidisciplinary team which is designed to support individuals with complex and significant behavioral health needs, including those with histories of hospitalization, homelessness, and high utilization of crisis services. She said with the ACT portion of the program, members receive comprehensive care and services to assist with living as independently and successfully as possible. These services include improving medication management, learning daily living skills, increasing housing stability, and supporting education and

employment to improve quality of life and community functioning. The FACT portion of the program provides the same services as the above to individuals who are currently involved in the criminal justice system.

In regard so the Indio Adult FSP, Rachel said work continues to begin operation of a standalone adult FSP clinic at the Ave 45 site which previously held the substance abuse clinic, which relocated to the Workforce Development Center on Monroe Street. The hope is members receiving services at the Indio clinic will begin to receive services at the new location and the new clinic opening date is yet to be determined.

Older Adults Administrator's Comments:

Nate Ramiriez said they are currently serving over 600 members in the desert region. He added they have 133 members in their Full-Service Partnership (FSP), 104 members in Banning, 206 members in Indio, and 124 members in Desert Hot Springs. Nate added that with the hot weather that comes along with our desert climate in the summer, they have been assisting their clients, when needed, with utility assistance referrals to assure they can survive the summer heat. Nate concluded by saying they have a new Clinical Therapist that started working the Mature Adults services in Banning.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Children's Committee Report:

Tori St Johns said she hopes to be able to schedule a presentation of the RivCoONE program at one of our future board meetings.

Adults Committee Report:

Jim Jones said they received a report on the trip program, which is a transportation program for seniors.

Mature Adults Committee Report:

Tabled until the October 13, 2026 meeting.

Housing Committee Report:

Eva Guenther-James gave an update on this. For more information, refer to the attached minutes.

Legislative Report:

Mark Miller said he will attach the agenda and minutes from the last meeting to the minutes of this meeting.

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Membership Report:

Dr. Janice Quinn reported we have two positions open on the board which are supposed to be for peers or family members.

Behavioral Health Commission (BHC) Report:

Tori St Johns said she received a tour of the new Wellness Center in Mead Valley. She said it will be open and running on January 1, 2027.

Criminal Justice Committee Report:

Tabled until the October 13, 2026 meeting.

Veteran's Committee Report:

Joe Butts said he attended several veterans' events during the past month. He said he will also be making a tour of the veteran's village in Cathedral City.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Dr. Janice Quinn made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Joe Butts seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 1:10 PM.

The next formal meeting of the Riverside County Desert Board of Behavioral Health will be **Tuesday, October 13, 2026, at the Oasis Adult Conference Room at 12:00 PM.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Mark Miller, Desert Board Secretary