

## **RIVERSIDE COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMISSION**

MEETING MINUTES FOR November 6, 2024 • 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

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

Chair, Richard Divine called the Behavioral Health Commission (BHC) meeting to order at 12:00 pm and led the pledge of allegiance. 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 October 2, 2024 and Greg Damewood seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

### **CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS –**

Chair, Richard Divine, expressed his frustration and expressed that he feels that the concerns and recommendations of the commission are not valued when in fact it should carry weight in the decision making of the district offices. He shared that the commission is made up of volunteers who are committed to advocating for the public within Behavioral Health. However, feels that when a district office has taken longer than six months to reappoint a long standing commissioner and instead chooses to reenact a policy leaving a said commissioner without a direct answer and only being told a decision still has not be made, then that should be cause for removal of the Supervisor considering a clear decision cannot be made in a reasonable amount of time.

### **COMMISSION MEMBER REMARKS –**

Victoria St. Johns reported the video shared prior to the BHC meeting was from the Palm Springs Pride Parade and over 8,000 people attended. She then shared the story of a youth who was touched by witnessing all the trans youth that participated and expressed they felt they could be their self. She concluded by thanking the department for all they do to make a difference in the lives of the community they serve.

Greg Damewood expressed the importance of the new commissioners becoming familiar with the WIC codes and their duties.

Quintilia Ávila shared she attended one of the trainings offered by CALBHBC and look forward to learning about the WIC codes.

Rick Gentillalli apologized to the BH department and the commission, sharing he has not been able to attend many department functions as of late due to being heavily involved in a federal criminal case in Los Angeles that requires his attendance.

## **PUBLIC REMARKS –**

Dakota Brown shared she identifies as a disabled hearing-impaired individual who is in recovery with mental health symptoms and woke up to the harsh reality of the election results. She concluded by sharing this has motivated her to work harder to ensure the equality efforts of the community she represents and reduce the stigma surrounding it.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT –**

Dr. Chang briefly reported the shift from Mental Health Service Act (MHSA) to Behavioral Health Service Act (BHSA) is shifting and presenting its challenges in regard to how it will come to pass and what changes will be made and funding concerns. He also shared, Prop 1 is ongoing and in the works along with Care Court and SB43. He concluded by thanking Janine Moore, her team, Public Health and the Hemet USD and their hard work and praised them for the Quality Leaders Award they were honored with.

## **CELEBRATE RECOVERY- Consumer Peer Services (Kristen Duffy)**

Kristen Duffy, Consumer Peer Services Program Manager, introduced Luis Banuelos, certified peer support for the Desert WRAP Around program. Mr. Banuelos shared he was raised in East Los Angeles and by the age of twelve he was already experimenting with alcohol and drugs. He shared he was raised by a hardworking family that later moved to Coachella which is when he started using other narcotics that took him down the path of severed family relationships and incarceration. Mr. Banuelos stated that during his last arrest he was given a two-year sentence and went to prison and it was during that time he reflected on all the decisions he made and how he had feelings of guilt, shame, remorse, self-pity, anger and experienced depression. He went through a divorce, his children didn't want a relationship with him because of his lifestyle and choices he made. But through prayer he forgave himself and was determined to get sober and do better to mend the relationships with his kids and family.

Upon his release he reported to his probation officer, but this time went with an open mind and positive attitude. Mr. Banuelos went to the Day Reporting Center (DRP) and met Mr. Martinez and learned he was a peer specialist. He appreciated there was someone that could relate to him who took the time to listen to him and shared his own lived experience with him. Through working with Mr. Martinez, he was able to develop his own coping tools, discharged from probation after six months instead of three years and applied for a peer position. Mr. Banuelos completed the peer employment training and worked in construction demolition and attended a county event when he was encouraged by Kristen Duffy to apply with the county in a peer position. He got hired with SAPT in 2022 and worked with a BHS at recovery homes and empowered consumers by sharing his lived experience and provided them with linkage and resources. He would utilize reflective listening, promote awareness and be the example to others that recovery is possible. Mr. Banuelos was able to reconnect with his family and with time rebuild their trust and relationships and has a good relationship with his former wife and children and feels blessed to be involved in their lives. Mr. Banuelos concluded by sharing what helps him from relapsing, knowing that the life and family he has rebuilt will be lost and he will not risk losing them!

## NEW BUSINESS-

### 1. January BHC Holiday Meeting Discussion (Action Item)

The commission was informed that the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday January 1, 2025 would be a holiday and had the option to reschedule to Thursday January 9, 2025 at 12pm or cancel the meeting for January and resuming in February.

Victoria St. Johns motioned to reschedule to Thursday January 9, 2025 and Greg Damewood seconded the motion, all were in favor with one abstention from Daryl Terrell.

The BHC liaison stressed the importance of quorum to attend the said meeting in January.

### 2. Legislative Meeting (Action Item)

The BHC liaison asked on behalf of April Smith, the Legislative Chair, if the commission would approve the Legislative Committee Meeting to move to meeting every other month beginning in February of 2025.

Greg Damewood made a motion to support this change and any change of the meeting time at the discretion of the Legislative committee. Walter Haessler seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

### 3. Crisis Intervention Training Presentation (Andrew Williams)

Andrew Williams, Mental Health Services Administrator, provided a presentation on the Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) program. He explained the program was originally developed in 1988 in Memphis when a fatal incident occurred in September of 1987. The mother of a 27-year-old son with paranoid schizophrenia called the authorities for assistance as her son presented as a threat to himself and others and when authorities arrived, he lunged at them with a weapon and was fatally shot which had the community outraged. That unfortunate incident initiated the collaboration with law enforcement, mental health professionals and NAMI. The CIT program is a community partnership that provides mental health and substance use disorder awareness and education. The program also provides effective communication and de-escalation interventions, improved community and collaborative relationships, protection for our responding officers, personnel and individuals in behavioral health crises and the community at large. Dr. Williams also shared the mission of the CIT program is to create a standard of excellence for law enforcement officers and other first responders in treating individuals with mental illness or in crisis.

CIT is led by BH clinicians and Riverside Sheriff Office (RSO) instructors. This collaborative approach in training allows instructors to bring real world experiences to the courses, offers insights grounded through their own lived experiences and the ability to highlight practical and tactical skills being conveyed in course materials. The goal of CIT is to improve officer and mental health consumer safety during calls to serve those in crisis, redirect mental health consumers from the judicial system to services and supports needed to stabilize their conditions, reduce future contacts with law enforcement within the community and/or correctional setting, build and strengthen relationships to effectively address the crisis through the identification of resources and accountability.

Dr. Williams also shared there is a 3-day, 24-hour course held at Ben Clark Training Center for the staff of the CIT training team to become POST certified (Peace Officer Standards and Training certification). The CIT curriculum overview discusses stigma, LE culture, challenges, common diagnoses, suicide prevention, W&I code section 5150 and legal process, medication compliance and treatment issues, substance use, crisis intervention and de-escalation, peer testimonies, crisis outreach and community resources, emotional health of law enforcement. He then concluded by sharing the following contact information below:

Dr. Andrew Williams, Psy.D, Administrator [andrwilliams@ruhealth.org](mailto:andrwilliams@ruhealth.org)

Dawn Hull, LMFT, Supervisor [dhull@ruhealth.org](mailto:dhull@ruhealth.org)

Lydia Session, LMFT, Trainer [ljsession@ruhealth.org](mailto:ljsession@ruhealth.org)

Robin Smith, LMFT, Trainer [rsmith@ruhealth.org](mailto:rsmith@ruhealth.org)

**CIT Main Phone:** (951) 358-4544

**Email:** CIT@ruhealth.org

## OLD BUSINESS-

### 1. **Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Update** - (David Schoelen)

David Schoelen, Mental Health Service Act Administrator, introduced Felix Gbagbo as the new Veteran Liaison and Clinical Therapist with Cultural Competency. Mr. Gbagbo shared he is still in the orientation phase but has been working with the consumers and veterans of the HHOPE program as well as the Blythe and Temecula clinics that serve veterans to meet their needs. He concluded by sharing he was in the Navy and a graduate of USC.

### 2. **Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program (SAPT) Update** – (Lupe Madrigal)

Lupe Madrigal, Substance Use and Prevention Treatment Program Coordinator, shared on behalf of April Frey and Heidi Gomez. She shared that Red Ribbon Week took place in October and there were over 30 speakers who spoke to the youth throughout Riverside County during this time. Ms. Madrigal concluded by sharing 2200 tickets were available to students who participate in FNL for the FNL day at Six Flags and 2000 students attended and were provided with a food voucher.

### 3. **Care Court Update** – (Marcus Cannon)

Marcus Cannon, Deputy Director of Forensics, provided a brief update on Care Court sharing that there are currently 92 petitions, with 52 of those being integrated referrals that became Care Court petitions and 40 of those petitions were filed directly in civil Court. Mr. Cannon also shared that he presented at the NAMI Regional Meeting in Visalia on 10/10/24 to support their partner counties in Tulare, Fresno and Madera. Mr. Cannon concluded by providing the link below where resources can be found.

**Resources Available:**

[www.Care-Act.org](http://www.Care-Act.org)

**COMMITTEE UPDATES –**

Greg Damewood shared the Western Regional Advisory Board will meet after the BHC meeting each month at 3pm and anyone is welcome to attend. He also shared the Criminal Justice committee meeting will take place November 13, 2024 at 12pm at 3625 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Riverside, CA 92501.

Richard Divine reported the Desert Regional Advisory Board met at the Coachella Valley facility and it was a beautiful facility.

Victoria St. Johns reported Lupe Madrigal attended the children’s committee and presented on Friday Night Live which 50 adults chaperoned nearly 2,000 kids to Six Flags Magic Mountain on 22 buses.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS-**

- WET Employee Appreciation Winner suggested by Cheryl Coson.
- Fiscal Update Report and Budgets suggested by Brenda Scott.
- Annual BHC training discussion suggested by Sylvia Bishop.
- Housing Presentation suggested by Launa Wilson.
- Site reviews, MIMHM, Proclamations and WIC codes suggested by Greg Damewood.
- Department AI Update suggested by Walter Haessler.

**ADJOURN** – The Behavioral Health Commission meeting adjourned at 1:39 pm.

*Sylvia Bishop*

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April Smith, BHC Secretary  
 Sylvia Bishop, Recording Secretary

**FY 2024/25 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMISSION ATTENDANCE ROSTER**

MEMBERS	JUL	SEP	OCT	NOV	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
April Smith, District 3	A	A	A	A						
Beatriz Gonzalez, District 4	P	P	P	A						
Brenda Scott, District 3	P	P	A	A						
Carole Schaudt, District 4	P	P	ML	A						
Daryl Terrell, District 5	P	P	P	P						
Debbie Rose, BOS Rep. Dist. 2	A	A	A	A						
Greg Damewood, District 5	P	P	P	P						
Harshita Arunkumar, Dist. 1	P	ML	P	P						
Launa Wilson, District 1	A	P	P	P						
Quintilia Ávila, District 2	-	-	P	P						
Richard Divine, District 2	P	P	P	P						
Rick Gentillalli, District 3	P	P	ML	P						
Victoria St. Johns, District 4	P	P	P	P						
Dr. Walter Haessler, Dist. 1	ML	P	P	P						

Present = P • Absent = A • Medical Leave = ML

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

To request copies, please contact the BHC Liaison at 951-955-7141  
 or email [SBishop@ruhealth.org](mailto:SBishop@ruhealth.org)

PRESENT		
Bill Brenneman	Sandy Murillo	Luis Banuelos
Lucy Lopez	Lawrence Blake	Robin Smith
Sylvia Bishop	David White	Lydia Session
Dr. Chang	Martha Buras	Rachel Gileno
Deborah Johnson	Carmela Soto	Lupe Madrigal
Shannon McCleerey-Hooper	Dani Damewood	Carina Gustafsson
Kelly Grotsky	Conni Ryder	Lisa Erazo
Marcus Cannon	Misty Martin	Israel Torres
Kristen Duffy	Elizabeth Elde	
Francisco Huerta	Gloria Moriarty	
Kristen Miller	Kami Winston	
Tony Ortego	Miriam Resendiz	
Maureen Dopson	Dylan Colt	
Andrew Williams	Melissa Vasquez	
Jacqueline Markussen	Will Rogers	
David Schoelen	Dakota Brown	

OTHERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY	
Jane Beamer	Nosheen Samuel
Orli Zaprir	Dolores DeMartino
Sheila Mallett-Smith	Beverly McKeddie
Cristina Zamora	Jessica Silva
Roger Lara	Janice Johnson
Leah Newell	Cheryl Coson
Luis Lamadrid	