May 1, 2025
Behavioral Health Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON
Bill Stewart – District 1
Janice Luna-Reynoso – District 1
Gaurav Mishra – District 1
Joel San Juan – District 1
Dr. Rosolyn Harper – District 2
Robert Alm – District 2
Julie Hayden, Member-At-Large – District 2
Serita Polinaire, 1st Vice Chair – District 2
Jessica Kramer – District 3
Robin Sales, Chair – District 3
Dr. Devesh Vashishtha – District 3
Minola Clark Manson – District 4
Kathy Watkins – District 4
Judith Yates, 2nd Vice Chair – District 4
Amanda Berry, Member-At-Large – District 4

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT IN PERSON
Donald Romo – District 5
Aaron Byzak – District 5

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE
Stuart Gaiber – District 3

STAFF TO THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD
Nadia Privara Brahms, Acting Director, Behavioral Health Services (BHS)
Dania Barroso-Conde, Program Coordinator, BHS
Maria Molina-Melendez, Behavioral Health Advisory Board Coordinator, BHS

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) was called to order by Chair Robin Sales at 2:31PM in person and via Zoom. Chair Robin Sales introduced one (1) new BHAB member: Dr. Rosolyn Harper.

II. CONSENT CALENDAR

- BHAB approved the meeting minutes from April 3, 2025.
  - AYES: 15 NAYS: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 1
- Robin Sales, Chair, has requested a consent item: Approval of BHS Procurement and Extensions Board Letter to be pulled. Item has been pulled as an action item in this agenda.

III. NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENTS

Total of zero (0) In-person comments and seven (7) E-Comments

DRAFT

E- Comments:

- Mary Jo O'Brien, Co-Chair of San Diego Peer Council, suggested Behavioral Health Services can utilize the support of certified peer support specialists.
- Steve Dilly, Director of the Veterans' Art Project (VetArt), commented that his organization provided free art classes to veterans, dependents, their families, and caregivers. He expressed the need to allocate support and early prevention funds for more organizations like VetArt. Having community-based arts can help reduce isolation, promote healthy well-being, and healing through expression.
- John Brady, a community member, expressed concerns in the misuse of crisis response units, as well as individuals being refused 911 services. He praised BHAB board member, Jessica Kramer, for being a part of a 13-member panel for a statewide disability group.
- Shelley Mattimore from Carlsbad Intensive Outpatient Program, invited BHAB members and members of the public to an opportunity to connect in Carlsbad on May 15th from 11:30am – 5:30pm to learn more about the program.
- Anonymous individual, expressed the urgent need for a behavioral health continuum of care that includes safe and permanent housing for those that suffer with serious mental illness (SMI). They expressed concerns for SMI individuals being threatened with eviction or being removed from a program suggesting converting the empty buildings in the County and surrounding areas to proper living areas with services provided.
- Angela Rowe advocated for recovery residence funding for families. She appreciates the funding for substance use disorders (SUD) providers but expressed the need for additional funding to support the needs of the community.
- Shannon Spain, on behalf of the Vista Hall Parent Care Programs, advocated to increase funding and availability for Recovery Residences.

IV. PRESENTATION ITEM: FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2025-26 CAO RECOMMENDED OPERATIONAL PLAN

Nadia Privara, Acting Director, Behavioral Health Services (BHS) presented on the Behavioral Health Services, CAO recommended Operational Plan for FY 2025-26. The following were the updates:

- Provided an overview of essential BHS services and highlighted key accomplishments from the previous year, including the launch of the SmartCare electronic health record system, progress on the ELEVATE Behavioral Health Workforce Fund, and expansion of opioid settlement-funded activities.
- The total recommended BHS budget for FY 2025-26 is $1.3 billion, reflecting a 91% increase over seven years.
- Highlighted over $100 million in new investments supporting community outreach and education, youth engagement, crisis services, housing, substance use and mental health treatment, and children and youth services.
- Outlined current efforts part of Behavioral Health Transformation, including the launch of BH-CONNECT, redesign of the Psychiatric Hospital, and planning for BHSA implementation.
- Reviewed the FY 2025–26 budget timeline, including opportunities for public engagement and hearing dates in June 2025.

V. PUBLIC HEARING: MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (MHSA) ANNUAL UPDATE FY 2025-26

Public Comments: Total of one (1) In-Person Public Comment was received.

- Jerry Hall expressed the need for dedicated funding to support inclusive community involvement in the MHSA planning process, citing Los Angeles County as a model for robust engagement.

PUBLIC HEARING: MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (MHSA) ANNUAL UPDATE FY 2025-26

Maria Molina, BHAB Coordinator shared that the MHSA Public Hearing was conducted from April 1st, 2025 through May 1st, 2025. Currently there are a total of four (4) comments for the MHSA annual update.

VI. PRESENTATION AND ACTION ITEM: MHSA ANNUAL UPDATE FY 2025-26

Erendy Fong, Chief, BHS, and Dania Barroso-Conde, Acting Chief, Communication and Engagement Team, BHS presented on the following Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Annual Update for Fiscal Year 2025-26:

- Discussed the department's ongoing efforts in Community Program Planning (CPP), which gathers stakeholder input and feedback through focus groups, interviews, community events, and online forms.
- Provided a budget overview for the FY 2025-26 MHSA Annual Update, highlighting a total allocation of $303.1 million across core components including Community Services and Supports (CSS), Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI), Innovation (INN), and Workforce Education and Training (WET).
- Discussed upcoming increases in CSS and PEI programming, such as crisis stabilization units, housing support, consumer advocacy, and youth engagement efforts.
- Shared budget updates on the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA), including the 5% reduction in overall funding, realignment of prevention funding to the State, increase in funding for housing interventions, and increased flexibility for substance use services.
- Presented the recommendation to approve the MHSA FY 2025-26 Annual Update and authorize submission to the Behavioral Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission and the Department of Health Care Services.

ACTION ITEM: MHSA ANNUAL UPDATE FY 2025-26

On the motion of Bill Stewart, seconded by Serita Polinaire, this item was approved.
AYES: 13 NAYS: 2 ABSTENTIONS: 1

VII. DISCUSSION ITEM: BHAB'S ROLE IN THE BHS DIRECTOR SELECTION PROCESS

Amanda Berry, Member-At-Large, brought forward the following discussion for feedback:

- Robin Sales met with the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA)'s Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO), Dr. Kimberly Giardina, regarding the vacant BHS Director position and discussed the qualities BHAB would like to see in the next BHS director. The BHAB Executive Committee requested input from BHAB members.
- Amanda Berry presented a draft list of qualities and asked BHAB members for their input to support in the selection of the future BHS Director.

VIII. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT OUTS

Robin Sales reported that the subcommittee for Re-Entry Support for Justice Involved Youth and Adults presented last month with a guest speaker Dante Dauz who shared professional accounts and insights into both the successes and challenges of interventions with justice-impacted youth. The subcommittee discussed best practices for supporting and engaging justice-involved youth with behavioral health needs as well as strategies to reduce youth recidivism. This subcommittee's meetings are held every 4th Monday of the month at 3:30pm.

Julie Hayden reported that the subcommittee, Pathways to Continuum of Care for Children, Youth, and Adults Impacted by Alcohol and other Drugs brainstormed what is incorporated and what are the

weaknesses in their continuum of care and continuity of care. They also discussed the education process of when someone needs help, whether it is the person experiencing it or their families.

IX. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Nadia Privara, Acting Director, BHS gave the following updates:

- May is Mental Health Matters Month (MIMHMM). There is a free community event on May 15th located in Chula Vista, CA 91911, the event will run from 6PM to 7:30PM.
- Update on Staffing updates, such as, Diane Ashton, was appointed as Interim Public Conservator of the County of San Diego.
- Enhancing Behavioral Health Accessibility Board Letter was passed in April by the Board of Supervisors that provides stability within the BHS workforce and introduces new service lines including Partial Hospitalization Programs (PHP) and Intensive Outpatient Programs (IOP).
- BHS is partnering with City of San Diego for HomeKey+ (Prop 1) to apply for a renovation to an 81-unit facility, 49% of those units will be designated for Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) eligible individuals.
- BHCIP grant was submitted, and results are still pending.

X. CHAIR'S REPORT

Robin Sales, BHAB Chair, waived her Chair's Report for consent calendar item on BHS Procurement and Extensions Board Letter.

XI. ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL OF BHS PROCUREMENT AND EXTENSIONS BOARD LETTER

Public Comment: We have a total of one (1) in-person public comment.

In-Person

Jerry Hall, former BHAB member, suggested that BHAB members request a list of BHS contracts that will be expiring this year for their review for potential renewal. He suggested that funds could be adjusted by program and that BHAB members can visit facilities such as jails and treatment centers to see what is happening at a programmatic level.

ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL OF BHS PROCUREMENT AND EXTENSIONS BOARD LETTER

On motion of Amanda Berry, seconded by Dr. Devesh Vashistha, this action item was approved.
AYES: 8 NAYS: 4 ABSTENTIONS: 4

XII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Let's Talk About: Connecting South Bay to Mental Health Resources – Upcoming Community Event
  - Date: Thursday, May 15, 2025
  - Time: 6:00pm – 7:30pm
  - Location: Metropolitan Area Advisory Committee (MAAC) Community Center (1387 Third Ave, Chula Vista, CA 91911)
  - Cost: Free
- Understanding the County of San Diego Budget
  - The 2025-27 Recommended Budget will be released May 1.

XIII. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Serita Polinaire, seconded by Robin Sales, the BHAB meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.