December 4, 2025
Behavioral Health Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON
William "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
Robin Sales – District 3
Dr. Devesh Vashishtha – District 3
Minola Clark Manson – District 4
Kathy Watkins – District 4
Amanda Berry, Member-At-Large, District 4
John Byrom – District 5
Donald Romo – District 5

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT IN PERSON
Aaron Byzak – District 5
Supervisor Lawson-Remer – #21

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE
Jessica Kramer – District 3
Stuart Gaiber – District 3
Judith Yates, 2nd Vice Chair – District 4

STAFF TO THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD
Nadia Privara Brahms, Acting Director, Behavioral Health Services (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 2:30pm in person and via Zoom.

II. CONSENT CALENDAR

BHAB approved the following consent calendar item:

1. Approval of the Meeting Minutes from the meeting of November 6, 2025.

AYES: 16 NAYS: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

DRAFT

III. NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Total of six (6) in-person comments and four (4) e-comments.

In-Person Comments:

- Peggy Walker, representing San Dieguito Alliance for Drug Free Youth, emphasized the importance of evidence-based prevention strategies and suggested continued investment in approaches that support youth and community well-being.
- Mary Jo O'Brien, a community member, recommended BHAB to be included earlier in the development of board letters to allow for input prior to submission to the Board of Supervisors.
- Dean Scaduto, representing Golden Coast Rehab, shared plans to establish a mental health clinic offering intensive outpatient services for the Medi-Cal population and mentioned the potential benefit of housing options to support transitions between inpatient and outpatient care.
- Michal Hodge, on behalf of East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility Parent Council, expressed concerns about mental health challenges among youth in detention and the availability of recovery programs, noting the importance of supportive resources for this population.
- Robert Alm referenced the Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act, which permits peace officers to detain individuals with severe mental illness or substance use disorders for up to 72 hours under certain conditions. He suggested consideration of compliance strategies and guidance for County leadership regarding its application.
- K. Marie shared personal experience related to her son's mental health challenges and highlighted the potential value of early intervention and stable housing to prevent repeated hospitalizations and homelessness.

E- Comments:

- Becky Rapp, a public health educator and legal guardian, commented on behavioral health considerations related to marijuana access and referenced research on potential impacts of high-potency THC products, particularly among youth.
- Nathaniel Jackson, a transitioning Marine, described his experience with the SkillBridge program and VetArt, noting the role of arts-based engagement in supporting veterans' mental health and community connection.
- June Dudas expressed support for County efforts regarding involuntary treatment and psychiatric advance directives and noted concerns about implementation challenges within the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) program when individuals decline participation.
- Sandra Robinson, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) member, suggested strengthening CARE Court processes and enhancing board-and-care programs to address needs among individuals experiencing homelessness and serious mental illness.

IV. ACTION ITEM: BHAB 2026 PRIORITIES

Public Comments: Total of one (1) in-person public comment was received.

- Robert Alm, BHAB member, emphasized reviewing implementation of the revised Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act, which includes provisions for involuntary treatment, as part of efforts to address homelessness in 2026. He suggested forming a subcommittee to provide recommendations.

ACTION ITEM: BHAB 2026 PRIORITIES

On motion of Dr. Rosolyn Harper, seconded by Amanda Berry, the BHAB 2026 Priorities were approved.

AYES: 8 NAYS: 5 ABSTENTIONS: 3

V. PRESENTATION: BHS HOUSING INITIATIVES

Total of one (1) in-person public comment was received:

- Mary Jo O'Brien expressed on having the conversion of existing living or independent living spaces into peer respite facilities to support transitions across levels of care, including from acute hospital settings to crisis houses, peer respite, and independent living. She also noted the potential benefit of incorporating the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP).

PRESENTATION: BHS HOUSING INITIATIVES

Dr. Brenda Sarabia, DSW, LCSW, Deputy Director, BHS and Hillary Brown, Assistant Medical Services Administrator, BHS presented on the following:

- BHS supports a continuum of housing initiatives designed to help individuals with serious mental illness or substance use disorders secure and maintain stable housing.
- The Housing Technical Assistance contractor is supporting development of a Five-Year Strategic Housing Plan. For No Place Like Home developments, BHS maintains a 20-year commitment to provide supportive services.
- Funding through Behavioral Health Bridge Housing and Community Care Expansion–Preservation (CCE-P) grant programs has enabled expansion of the Augmented Services Program and stabilization of licensed residential care homes, strengthening housing options for individuals with complex behavioral health needs.
- The Transitional Rent Program will align with BHSA Housing Interventions, scheduled to launch on July 1, 2026. After the six-month Transitional Rent benefit concludes, members may transition to BHSA Housing Interventions or other available supports for continued housing assistance.
- County Behavioral Health programs and community-based organizations will connect eligible members to Managed Care Plans (MCPs) for coverage of Transitional Rent, confirm eligibility, and facilitate transitions from Transitional Rent to BHSA Housing Interventions based on individualized housing support plans.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEM: END OF YEAR SUBCOMMITTEE SUNSETTING AND REPORT OUT

Robin Sales, Chair, BHAB led a discussion on the following:

- Formal end-of-year reporting is scheduled for March 2026. New subcommittees will sunrise in March 2026.
- **Pathways to Continuum of Care for Children, Youth, and Adults Impacted by Alcohol and other Drugs Subcommittee**
    - Julie Hayden, Chair, reported the subcommittee received a presentation from the Access Crisis Line. Members expressed interest in developing a visual roadmap outlining the continuum of care including detoxification, residential treatment, outpatient care, sober living, and crisis stabilization.
- **Re-Entry Support for Justice-Involved Youth and Adults Subcommittee**
    - Robin Sales, Chair, noted the subcommittee did not meet in November and will remain dark in December due to the holidays. The next meeting is scheduled for January 2026, and members were encouraged to attend and provide input for recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Nadia Privara, MPA, Acting Director, BHS provided the following updates – 2025 Year in Review:

- Behavioral Health Community-Based Organized Networks of Equitable Care and Treatment (BH-CONNECT) implementation is underway following formal opt-in earlier this year. The initiative focuses on improving care coordination, introducing new medical benefits, and modernizing reimbursement processes.
- The Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MCRT) School Pilot Program is expanding in partnership with the San Diego County Office of Education to provide non-law enforcement crisis intervention for students. Rollout continues across public school districts.
- A new Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) opened increasing inpatient psychiatric capacity and providing a modern therapeutic environment for individuals requiring intensive care.
- The Homekey Program continues to provide capital funding for property acquisition and rehabilitation, enabling integration of onsite behavioral health services to promote housing stability for residents.
- ELEVATE Behavioral Health Workforce Program advances efforts to address workforce shortages through recruitment, training pathways, and innovative reimbursement models in collaboration with community partners.
- New Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) requirements will enhance oversight, transparency, and accountability at the state and local levels. BHSA includes many changes that will impact contracted programs across the County.

VIII. CHAIR'S REPORT

Robin Sales, Chair, BHAB provided the following updates:

- Expressed appreciation to BHAB officers for their service on the Executive Committee during the past year.
- Acknowledged the support of the Behavioral Health Services (BHS) team, including Acting Director Nadia Privara, BHAB Coordinator Maria Molina, and administrative staff for their contributions to the effective coordination of BHAB meetings.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Julie Hayden, BHAB Member-At-Large, provided the following announcement:
  - The East County Transitional Living Center will host guided tours during *The Taste of TLC* event on December 8, 2025, from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Kat Briggs, BHS Chief, provided the following announcement:
  - Materials from the Stage Prevention Webinar held on November 13, 2025, have been posted and are available for review.
  - The final general session for BHSA Input will be held virtually on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, with two time options: 10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

X. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Robin Sales, seconded by Gaurav Mishra and Minola Clark Manson, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.