



**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION  
MARCH 10, 2020 – 3:30 P.M.**

The Mental Health Commission met in a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at 3:39 p.m. in MHSA Administrative Office, 2001 North Garey Avenue, Pomona, California.

**CALL TO ORDER** Vice-Chair Henderson called the meeting to order at 3:39 p.m.

**ROLL CALL** A visual roll call was taken.

**PRESENT:** Toni L. Watson, Chair (arrived at 3:49 p.m.)  
Anne Henderson, Vice-Chair  
Ethel Gardner  
Rubio R. Gonzalez (arrived at 3:55 p.m.)  
Joan M. Reyes  
Wray Ryback  
Twila L. Stephens  
David J. Weldon

**ABSENT:** Jeanette Heitmann  
Daniel Rodriguez  
Alfonso "Al" Villanueva  
Davetta Williams

**STAFF:** Toni Navarro, Executive Director  
Rimmi Hundal, Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services  
Nancy Gill, Chief Operations Officer  
Mary Monzon, Housing Manager  
Gamaliel Polanco, Wellness Center Manager  
Dana Barford, MHSA Projects Manager  
Isela Moreno, Community Navigator Program Supervisor  
Khaneal Mason, Mental Health Specialist  
Sonya Reina, Community Navigator  
Mica Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk

Due to a lack of a quorum, there was consensus to take Agenda Item No. I, Approval of Minutes, and Agenda Item No. II, Recommendation of Approval of CFTN Project Proposal, out of order and proceed with Agenda Item No. III, Presentation.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**

**III. PRESENTATION**

- A. COMMENDATION CERTIFICATE FROM HILDA L. SOLIS, LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUPERVISOR, 1ST DISTRICT

Director of MHSA & Ethnic Services Hundal stated that for Black History Month Tri-City's Mental Health Commission, in partnership with the Claremont Library, had hosted the event "Myth Busters & Minority Mental Health Mindfulness" which was well received by the community; and that as a result, Supervisor Hilda Solis awarded a Certificate of Commendation to the Mental Health Commission in recognition for their services to the affairs of the community.

Commissioner Ryback asked that the Governing Board be notified as this award. Staff indicated they will inform the Governing Board.

**B. "RECOVERY MOMENTS" STORY**

Khaneal Mason, Mental Health Specialist, introduced one of his clients and stated that he is honored to see the rewards of her client's hard work.

Marilyn Menendez talked about how she arrived to Tri-City, literally without shoes; discussed her mental illness; shared about her relationship with her father who is incarcerated; and talked about how compassion and the fact that staff did not judge her allowed her to recover and get back on her feet; stated that she is very grateful for the Wellness Center Manager and Tri-City staff; and indicated that she will be moving out of state and will take everything that she has learned with her.

Isela Moreno, Community Navigator Program Supervisor, introduced Sonya Reina, who started as working for Tri-City as a part-time Wellness Advocate and now she is a full time employee as a Community Navigator, stating that she will talk about her story of recovery.

Sonya Reina, shared her family history and discussed her mental illness; talked about coming to Tri-City and how her therapist gave her the confidence to work; that Tri-City, through the Wellness Center gave her the opportunity to work after being unemployed for 10 years and on be on the road to recovery, pointing out that recovery is possible but you have to work for it.

At 3:49 p.m., Chair Toni L. Watson arrived at the meeting.

Executive Director Navarro stated that the Sonya Reina embodies what Tri-City is all about which is help people in their recovery and feeling that they have purpose and meaning, and help people find themselves again and get back to a thriving life; and thanked staff for their hard work.

Chair Watson called to proceed with Agenda Item No. I, Approval of the Minutes.

**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 11, 2020 MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**

There being no comment, Commissioner Reyes moved, and Commissioner Gardner seconded, to approve the Mental Health Commission Minutes of its February 11, 2020 Regular Meeting. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: Commissioners Gardner, Reyes, Ryback, Weldon; Vice-Chair Henderson; and Chair Watson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: Commissioner Stephens. ABSENT: Commissioners Heitmann, Rodriguez, Villanueva, and Williams; and Governing Board Member Liaison Gonzalez.

At 4:55 p.m., Governing Board Member Liaison Rubio Gonzalez arrived at the meeting.

## **II. APPROVAL TO RECOMMEND TO TRI-CITY'S GOVERNING BOARD TO APPROVE THE CAPITAL FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGICAL NEEDS (CFTN) PROJECT PROPOSAL**

Director of MHSA & Ethnic Services Hundal reported that the CFTN Plan was posted on January 31, 2020 for public comment; that this Plan is part of MHSA and this pot of money focuses on technology and facilities needs to be able to provide quality services and building improvements to house staff; that the MHSA building has not had many renovations and it is time to add some office space and to upgrade its electrical system; that \$509,208.00 will be designated to these repairs; that under PEI, TCG need \$461,760.00 to construct an outdoor structure to provide adequate accommodations for weather and to improve ADA requirements including building raised planting beds; pointed out that there is enough funding allocated under the CFTN Plan for the projects; and that Staff was recommending that the Mental Health Commission recommend to Tri-City's Governing Board to approve the expenditure of the Capital Facilities and Technological Needs funds in the amount of \$970,968.00.

Chief Operations Office Gill stated that with the electrical upgrade, it will allow for the purchase of an emergency generator to serve the site; and that for the TCG project, also a sink will be installed.

Commissioner Ryback asked how many new offices will be added. Staff indicated that three offices and a small storage room.

There being no further discussion, Vice Chair Henderson moved, and Commissioner Reyes seconded, to recommend to Tri-City's Governing Board to approve the expenditure of Capital Facilities and Technological Needs funds in the amount of \$970,968.00 as indicated in the CFTN Project Proposal. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: Commissioners Gardner, Gonzalez, Reyes, Ryback, Stephens, Weldon; Vice-Chair Henderson; and Chair Watson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Heitmann, Rodriguez, Villanueva, and Williams.

## **CONTINUED ITEM NO III. PRESENTATION**

### **C. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (MHSA) HOUSING UPDATE**

Housing Manager Monzon reported that she had received the housing updates from various agencies for year 2020, including the county of Los Angeles, noting that the numbers made her gasp and she wanted to share what Tri-City is working against and discuss what staff is doing to combat it. She then provided the results from the 2019 Homeless Count (from year 2018 to 2019) for the three cities and pointed out that in Claremont the number of homeless persons decreased by one person from 27 to 26, and discussed how its homeless population were helped; that in the City of La Verne the homeless count increased from 7 to 21, and also discussed how they were assisted; that in the City of Pomona there was a significant decrease in the homeless count from 785 to 698 (22% - 16%) and also discussed how they were assisted. She then provided a snapshot from the average amount that SSI awarded to senior citizens or those living with a disability, and stated that in year 2018 it awarded \$910 monthly, and in two years this amount increased 3.6% to \$943 monthly; she also stated that the current minimum wage is \$13 hourly and expected to increase \$1 annually up to \$15 in the next couple of years; however, even with this increase of 15% -18% from years 2017 to 2020, this is not sufficient to get caught up with the annual increases of housing rent prices.

She stated that HUD (Housing and Urban Development Department) does an annual assessment of what is considered the fair market rent for apartments; noted that the cost of an apartment with efficiencies only went from \$1,067 to \$1,279 from year 2018 to 2020, an 19.87% increase; discussed the increases from one-bedroom up to a four-bedroom apartments which ranged from 15%-18%, and pointed out that someone living in a fixed income from SSI (Supplementary Security Income) cannot afford any apartment. She also stated that she researched in different websites for the average apartment rents in the three cities and discussed the results which demonstrated that there is a limited number of available apartments for rent which also are not affordable for those living on SSI or minimum wage. She stated that through CES (Coordinated Entry System) staff makes sure that anyone that is identified as homeless is entered into the system so that they are on the list to receive services; then provided an update on clients waiting to receive assistance; discussed the partnerships being established with landlords; and also reported that housing staff will be attending a training through LAHSA (Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority) for problem solving to figure out alternative solutions to better serve our homeless population.

Discussion ensued how staff can assist a large family find housing.

Governing Board Member Liaison shared that the City of Pomona is working on a rental stabilization ordinance which will follow the state affordable housing guidelines; and that the Chavez Foundation has expressed interested in building affordable housing in two empty lots that they own.

Executive Director Navarro stated that staff had been in talks with the California Institute for Behavioral Health Solutions, the technical training assistance for county behavioral health, and they have individual placement services employment curriculum that helps train staff to become employment specialists and key in on the treatment team on helping people identify ways to increase skills sets and/or find meaningful academic/educational opportunities or volunteer opportunities and social engagement that helps them maintain stability.

Commissioner Ryback inquired how accurate are the homeless count numbers. Housing Manager Monzon replied that they have a system of counting and are pretty confident with the data results.

Discussion ensued regarding what the homeless count numbers looked several years ago; about how the Continuum of Care and Section 8 Vouchers work, noting that there are only 33 vouchers available for the 141 homeless clients; about HUD's definition of homelessness; and about university students living in cars in parking lots and how services are being provided to them.

The Mental Health Commission thanked Housing Manager Monzon for her presentation.

#### **IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Executive Director Navarro announced that Jamie Ritchey, Community Capacity Organizer, was in attendance to talk about Green Ribbon Week.

Community Capacity Organizer Ritchey stated that the next rotation of art is approaching and during Green Ribbon Week staff will host two workshops which will kick off a call for art; that the Gallery in the building is from community artists from the three cities.

She then talked about a collaborative art piece from approximately 12 artists and explained that the goal is when people can come together with one objective, and create a piece collectively, then you have a representation of expression through art that everyone contributed to and there is no predetermined outcome; that the next rotation of art it will be made up of collective pieces titled “My Beautiful Mess” and then she invited the Commission to complete a collaborative art piece; provided brief description of the project and indicated that the art supplies will be provided by Tri-City and that she will have them ready for the Commission at its next meeting. She also distributed green ribbons to wear and flyers that listed all participating vendors during Green Ribbon Week.

The Commission thanked Community Capacity Organizer Ritchey for her presentation.

Executive Director Navarro stated that the first annual CBHDA lobby day at the State Capitol might be cancelled due to the State of Emergency caused by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Commissioner Ryback inquired if the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) had issued guidelines for the outbreak. Executive Director Navarro stated that staff has been kept abreast of LA County Public Health guidelines and notifications; that all notices are distributed to staff; that staff is aware of the list of symptoms; and staff has been advised if they have any symptoms, to stay away until feeling better or doctor authorizes them to return to work.

Chief Operations Office Gill discussed about the preventive measures established to help staff and clients be safe and to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Discussion ensued about various measures that can prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### **COMMISSION ITEMS AND REPORTS**

Commissioner Reyes reported that she, Commissioners Gardner and Ryback met to discuss the Commission May outreach and they are looking to have it on May 12th or 19th; that Commissioner Gardner will contact the dA Center to find out if the event can be hosted there; and talked about the deaf community pointing out that it is one of the communities more underserved.

Staff shared that Tri-City has a language line; that just hired an MHS A employee that signs; and during public hearing, there is a hired translator that does sign language.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dana Barford, MHS A Projects Manager, reminded everyone about the public hearing in April; that she is looking forward to the Commission approve the 3-year Plan and recommend to be presented to the Governing Board for its approval.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 4:58 p.m., on consensus of the Mental Health Commission its Regular Meeting of March 10, 2020 was adjourned. The next Regular Meeting of the Mental Health Commission will be held on Tuesday, April 14, 2020, in the MHS A Administrative Office, 2001 North Garey Avenue, Pomona, California.

  
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Micaela P. Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk