



**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION**

FEBRUARY 9, 2021 – 3:30 P.M.

The Mental Health Commission met in a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 3:40 p.m. via teleconference pursuant to California Governor Newsom Executive Order N-25-20 wherein he suspended certain provisions of the Brown Act to allow the continuation to hold meetings without gathering in a room in an effort to minimize the spread and mitigate the effects of COVID-19 (Corona Virus Disease of 2019).

CALL TO ORDER Chair Henderson called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m.

ROLL CALL Roll call was taken by JPA Administrator/Clerk Olmos.

PRESENT: Anne Henderson, Chair
Wray Ryback, Vice-Chair
Joan M. Reyes
Twila L. Stephens
Alfonso “Al” Villanueva
David J. Weldon

ABSENT: Carolyn Cockrell, GB Member Liaison
Ethel Gardner
Toni L. Watson
Davetta Williams

STAFF: Toni Navarro, Executive Director
Rimmi Hundal, Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services
Angela Igrisan, Chief Clinical Officer (retiring)
Elizabeth Renteria, Chief Clinical Officer (newly appointed)
Gamaliel Polanco, Wellness Center Manager
Martina Ford, Substance Abuse Counselor
Isela Moreno, MHSA Program Supervisor, Community Navigator
Mica Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk

REGULAR BUSINESS

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 12, 2021 MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

There being no comment, Commissioner Reyes, and Vice-Chair Ryback seconded, to approve the Minutes of the January 12, 2021 Regular Mental Health Commission Meeting. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: Commissioners Reyes, Stephens, Villanueva, and Weldon; Vice-Chair Ryback; and Chair Henderson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Board Member Liaison Cockrell; and Commissioners Gardner, Watson and Williams.

II. PRESENTATION

A. “RECOVERY MOMENTS” STORY

Wellness Center Manager Polanco provided a brief life story of recovery of Oscar Calderon.

Oscar Calderon stated that Tri-City had saved his life; he then shared his story of recovery from his addiction to drugs for 15 years and his experience with severe mental illness; he noted that he participated in all the resources he could take part of at Tri-City, which helped him heal his mind and even also expunge his record; that now he has a job and was able to get his life together; and that he is now a productive member of society because of Tri-City.

Executive Director Navarro expressed gladness for current situation and also thanked him for sharing his success story in the Commission meeting.

Discussion ensued between the Commission and Mr. Calderon regarding a period when he was homeless, and the Commissioners gave Mr. Calderon praises for his recovery.

Chris also shared his road to recovery from substance abuse and mental health disorder with the help of Tri-City; noting that he has been sober for over one year now and his sponsors from Tri-City had been very supportive and had been with him through his addiction and the journey to recovery; and expressed gratitude for Tri-City.

Executive Director Navarro congratulated him for his success; and pointed out that his story about staying sober through the pandemic is very inspiring and uplifting because we are learning about so many people who are struggling during the pandemic.

Discussion ensued regarding the coping mechanisms and strategies used by Chris to stay sober during the pandemic.

Substance Abuse Counselor Martina Ford introduced herself; provided an overview of her duties stating that Tri-City has a substance abuse co-occurring disorder program in the Adult Outpatient Program (AOP), which is an adjunct program to mental health; explained that if a therapist has a client who feels that they might benefit from their services, they provide a referral; and, in turn a substance abuse counselor reach out to the client and start services tailored to the client, ranging from individual counseling to assisting them to get into residential treatment, noting that the counselor stays connected with the facility in order to ensure continuity of care once they get out of treatment and continue to set them on a road to success.

Executive Director Navarro explained that Tri-City is the Mental Health Authority, and when folks come to Tri-City with mental health issues, this will be their primary diagnosis; and indicated that nearly half of Tri-City clients coming to adult services also have a substance abuse issue which is a co-occurring disorder, and Tri-City’s Adult Outpatient Program (AOP) works with them, noting that it is not only impacting their ability to maintain a stability of their mental health issue, but could also be putting them at risk for other chronic health issues which would reduce their quality of life.

Commissioner Villanueva inquired if staff was using motivational interviewing when working with clients. Substance Abuse Counselor Ford replied that they use the harm reduction approach and pointed out that the client determines which or what goals they want to accomplish first, and staff will meet them where they are at, and support and encourage them to meet those goals.

Executive Director Navarro added that motivational interviewing is the preeminent best practice for substance use disorder treatment and mental health disorder treatment; that for the past seven years motivational interviewing is the primary training that all staff get upon hire at Tri-City during their probationary period, regardless of whether or not they have had it before; that motivational interviewing underlies the harm reduction model, their philosophy of their approach of the recovery model of meeting the client where they're at, because it can help a client move from that pre-contemplation phase of change through to being ready for change.

B. COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION AND PREPARATION FOR TRI-CITY CLIENTS, COMMUNITY AND STAFF

Executive Director Navarro reported that back in December, Tri-City was invited by the Pomona Economic Opportunity Coalition, and ICON-Inland Communities Organizing Network- a network of interfaith leaders in Pomona, to join them in a collaborative application effort to receive funds from the Los Angeles County to provide training to our community to stop the spread of COVID; and stated that Tri-City had been awarded funding for the project; and that Community Navigator Supervisor Isela Moreno and Wellness Center Manager Gamaliel Polanco, are the leads this project.

Community Navigator Supervisor Moreno reported that the navigators were trained on stop the spread and, since the community navigators focus on providing referrals to different resources and collaborate with many agencies, they had already been working with a lot of families and individuals that have been affected by COVID; that of those resources included financial, rental, or utilities assistance, noting that would come up often was the request for PPE (Personal Protection Equipment); that they conducted a PPE drive in the community and at Tri-City; discussed protocols staff need to follow with clients who have tested positive for COVID or that has come with contact with somebody infected by COVID, which includes providing them with information about the isolation centers that are available and educating them about how to stop the spread to the other family members.

Wellness Center Manager Polanco reported that his staff was in charge of the education portion of the project, and making sure that the participants at the wellness center had correct information; that Western University provided the information about COVID and how to stop the spread; that staff was trained, and when Tri-City received the grant, staff pivoted to outreach and distributing PPE, continue presentations focused on stopping the spread of COVID, and on the benefits of getting vaccinated; and discuss the process of PPE distribution and inventory.

Executive Director Navarro spoke about how it has been beneficial to the community the message 'stop the spread' which started with Western University, then ICON, and now Tri-City; spoke about how relevant this work is to the work that we do, noting that folks who are diagnosed with schizophrenia are, at the same rate as the most elderly population in the United States, the most likely to die from COVID once they contract it; as well as getting the message to the people we serve, their loved ones, and family members of those who are challenged by living with severe and persistent mental illness, that the vaccine can reduce the likelihood of people suffering the most serious illness moving forward.

Chair Henderson shared information regarding a COVID vaccination location. Thereafter discussion ensued regarding about sharing "stop the spread" message and getting it as far and wide as possible.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Executive Director Navarro announced that this is Chief Clinical Officer Angela Igrisan's last Commission meeting; she then thank her for her work and leadership for the last two years; and gave her praise and accolades, and wished her good luck and the best of everything.

Chief Clinical Officer Igrisan expressed gratitude to the Commission, Tri-City, and the people of the communities of Pomona, La Verne, and Claremont; stated that we have, and continue to live through history, noting that the work they do as Commissioners is the most noble and valuable work that can be done; and said that she will carry all of Tri-City in her heart as she goes on to the next journey of her life.

The Commission thanked Chief Clinical Officer Igrisan for her service to Tri-City, stating that she will be missed.

Liz Renteria, Newly hired Chief Clinical Officer, thanked Angela Igrisan for her service to the community and for her assistance in the transitioning of this role. She then spoke about her professional background and the reasons she looked for a job for an organization that she thinks speak to some of the things that she holds dear to her heart, such as doing top notch clinical work involving stakeholders at every level, having an eye toward equity and social justice which is Tri-City; and thanked everyone at Tri-City for making her feel so welcomed.

Executive Director Navarro then reported about black history month and discussed Tri-City's African-American Family Wellness Advisory Council webinar about African-American wellness and health.

COMMISSION ITEMS AND REPORTS

Commissioner Villanueva suggested that the Commission should set up an Ad Hoc Committee to discuss the Native American community mental health needs and challenges. He also discussed his ancestry and the Mexican-American population.

Director of MHSA and Ethics Services Hundal reported that, at the request of Commissioner Joan Reyes, she and Commissioner Reyes have been sharing literature with each other on what is happening in our community today and how it is impacting our Native American community; that with Commissioner Reyes help, she has been working on creating a Council for the Native American community.

Commissioner Villanueva expressed support of the Council for the Native American community and stated that he would like to join them in their efforts.

Executive Director Navarro stated that Tri-City's role is to reach out to the underrepresented communities who are disproportionately impacted to mental health access and overall health disparities, and to be inclusive with those communities, pointing out that this is an extension of the work that Tri-City does and is in line with its mission and values as a mental health agency. She then commented that she read an article that talks about the value and contribution of Native Americans and about how, compared to the rest of our country and every state tribal nations, they are excelling and exceeding in vaccine distribution and health and wellness of their communities.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services Hundal announced that a motivational interviewing training will take place tomorrow between three and four; that the next one will take place on February 24th, between three and four.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:41 p.m., on consensus of the Mental Health Commission its Regular Meeting of February 9, 2021 was adjourned. The next Regular Meeting of the Mental Health Commission will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 3:30 p.m. via teleconference due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Micaela P. Olmos, JFA Administrator/Clerk