



**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION
JULY 13, 2021 – 3:30 P.M.**

The Mental Health Commission met in a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, July 13, 2021 at 3:34 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 3:34 p.m.

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

PRESENT: Anne Henderson, Chair
Wray Ryback, Vice-Chair
Carolyn Cockrell, GB Member Liaison
Joan M. Reyes
Alfonso "Al" Villanueva
David J. Weldon

ABSENT: Twila L. Stephens
Toni L. Watson
Davetta Williams

STAFF: Toni Navarro, Executive Director
Ken Riomales, Chief Information Officer
Mica Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk

REGULAR BUSINESS

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 8, 2021 MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

There being no comment, Vice-Chair Ryback moved, and Commissioner Reyes seconded, to approve the Minutes of the June 19, 2021 Mental Health Commission Regular Meeting. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: Board Member Liaison Cockrell; Commissioners Reyes, Villanueva, and Weldon; Vice-Chair Ryback; and Chair Henderson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Stephens, Watson, and Williams.

II. PRESENTATION

A. "RECOVERY MOMENTS" STORY

None was presented.

B. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (I.T.) PROJECTS UPDATE

Executive Director Navarro recognized and thanked Jessica Wong for all her hard work and preliminary groundwork done and moving us towards Cerner software implementation, noting that she was Tri-City's interim Chief Information Officer for approximately 15 months before Ken Riomales joined Tri-City.

Chief Information Officer Riomales provided an overview of Tri-City's current major initiatives, including Cerner and UniteUs, respectively. He provided information about Wellington, our current Electronic Health Record (EHR) system, noting that with the recent inception of different regulatory laws, and specifically with the Cures Act, that call for the whole person care.

Executive Director Navarro explained that Tri-City's uses an EHR system for the most part to document, bill for treatment services, and get reimbursed from Medi-Cal and Medicare for our formal treatment services.

Chief Information Officer Riomales stated that we need to transition to a newer EHR system at this particular time to increase efficiency and because of regulatory requirements from the Cures Act Final Rules in 2020, which aim to increase interoperability (the ability to exchange information amongst healthcare providers), make it easier for patients to access their health records, and give patients more ability to oversee their care with access to their particular records. He pointed out that for Tri-City, it means that we are not only going to be able to share information, but we will be able to retrieve information to better care for our clients, which will improve the overall patient care experience and, at the same time, allow us to adhere and be compliant to the Cares Act requirements, noting that noncompliance will be subject to penalties and fines of up to a million dollars. He also indicated that in addition to regulatory requirements, Tri-City is also growing and with that, we need to be able to explore efficiencies to make sure that we will be able to handle the increase load of documentation and billing through our EHR system, noting that there are a lot of moving parts and that our ability to provide care to our clients is predicated on our ability to coordinate with one another in order to go ahead and provide that excellent service; thus, the new EHR system provides that reliability and will allow staff to properly document and communicate with one another so that Tri-City clients have the best care that we can provide for them.

Vice Chair Ryback inquired if our clients in the past were able to access their records and how would they access them; and if there will be a patient portal with the new EHR system where clients can access their records electronically. Executive Director Navarro replied that all clients have access to their records, they simply place a request, thereafter, clients are given copies of their record within 10 days. However, with the new interoperability, it will have a patient portal so that clients can have immediate access to medical records and will not have to wait.

Discussion ensued regarding which staff has access to medical records, about the safeguards and accountability measures in place for electronic health records to make sure that only people who are needing to see the information about clients have access; and the ways in which Tri-City can assist clients who do not have their cognitive ability to read or ask for their medical records because of the severity of their symptoms.

Executive Director Navarro indicated that staff will be utilizing client input from various different programs to design and name the client portal; that there will be an awareness campaign, signs, and literature to understand how to access the portal, noting that staff will be available in each of the waiting rooms to assist people in accessing their records onsite as needed.

Chief Information Officer Riomales then reported that the EHR implementation and planning of the Cerner system for Tri-City will take several months; thus, staff is anticipating the implementation in the second quarter of 2022. He then talked about Tri-City's second initiative that relates to outreach called UniteUs, which is a referral management system that caters to the social care and helps to close the gaps that exist within the spectrum of overall health, noting that Tri-City will do a three-year pilot program to help us communicate with our social partners, with the first year working with Access to Care and the Navigators programs since these two groups work very closely with our clients who need community assistance; and that in the second year will work with other community programs, such as the Wellness Center or other clinical programs.

Executive Director Navarro stated that Tri-City's Access to Care team utilizes the navigators who have been in place for the past 11 years which helps us to do referrals to these social determinants of care and care needs that our clients have; however, it is very time consuming following up on referrals; therefore, the UniteUs platform will help Tri-City create a community provider network for referrals, noting that it is also HIPAA compliant and with a two-way communication and operability, it will improve efficiency by tracking referrals with up-to-date information.

Commissioner Villanueva expressed support for building a strong, collaborative support system among other mental health providers and social services provider; thus, creating a culture of inclusion, not exclusion.

Chief Information Officer Riomales indicated that we are looking for increased efficiencies and we also want to better serve our clients and serve the needs that they have; that work will begin in the next couple of weeks; and that UniteUs will be deployed within Tri-City before the year ends.

Vice-Chair Ryback inquired if the UniteUs platform informs the patient about their referrals or if patients will have a way of interacting with that platform. Chief Information Officer Riomales replied in the affirmative, noting that the client is a key component and we will determine how this will take place during implementation.

Commissioner Reyes inquired about those persons who come to Tri-City wanting services and do not live within the three cities catchment area. Executive Director Navarro replied that Tri-City Navigators never turn anyone away and help people find referrals and resources wherever they are by providing them with a full list of referrals from the area they are at, stating that we have a very robust system.

Chair Henderson reported that community partners are very excited about the UniteUs referral system.

The Commission thanked Chief Information Officer Riomales for his presentation.

III. REVIEW OF MHC GOALS DURING FISCAL YEAR 2020-21

Discussion ensued regarding Commission's goals for its Members during Fiscal Year 2020-21: 1) to have 100% quorum at all of the regularly scheduled meetings of the Mental Health Commission; 2) to impact disparities in mental health access of culturally diverse groups; and 3) 2020 Data Notebook on the issue of "Telehealth." It was noted that goal number one was not reached; that as a result of the pandemic goal number two was not achieved; and goal 3 was accomplished.

Commissioner Reyes inquired if Tri-City was involved with David and Margaret's programming, stating that foster kids are two times more likely than veterans to experience PTSD in adulthood as a result of a traumatic experience which would be foster care or the events leading up to foster. Executive Director Navarro stated that Tri-City owns eight units of permanent supportive housing onsite at David and Margaret's Cedar Springs apartment complex; that David and Margaret accesses Tri-City programs at our Wellness Center, noting that many of David and Margaret's programs are for youth in foster placement or who are wards of the court and Tri-City meets with them on a monthly basis at the Cedar Springs apartment complex; that Tri-City as the mental health authority, and not the mental health plan, provides outpatient services and does not receive 2011 realignment funding which is for specialized foster care and the clinical treatment of foster youth who are in out of home placement, indicating that those are seen by David and Margaret, the Roy Haynes, and others who have those contracts with the LA Department of Mental Health for foster youth who are in out of home placement; however, that they access many of Tri-City's Wellness Center programs, Therapeutic Community Garden, some of peer mentor programs because those are open for the whole community.

IV. MHC ESTABLISH ITS PRIORITY TOPICS AND/OR GOALS FOR FY 2021-22

Vice-Chair Ryback recommended that the Commission continue until the next year the goal to have 100% quorum at all of the regularly scheduled meetings.

Chair Henderson recommended to also carry the second goal to impact disparities in mental health access and culturally diverse groups.

Commissioner Reyes inquired about the advocacy groups, wanting to know about the Native American community. Executive Director stated that staff is working in building the infrastructure of staff support around the advisory councils; that advisory councils will prepare quarterly reports to the Commission during its monthly meetings to get feedback and to partner with them on events that will address the issues around equity, justice, inclusion, and reducing disparities.

Vice-Chair Ryback inquired if there will be another data notebook for 2021. Executive Director Navarro replied in the affirmative, indicating that it might be a continuation of tele-health since behavioral health services right now are a big focus of the current administration and statewide. Vice-Chair Ryback recommended preparing the Data Notebook for this year's goal.

Chair Henderson concurred with Vice-Chair Ryback's recommendation, and inquired if there were additional goals that a Commissioner would like to add for this fiscal year.

Commissioner Reyes commented that with the various advocacy groups that were formed, there will be enough to do if all Commissioners are involved with the different cultural and ethnic groups which are underserved and unserved.

There being no further discussion, Vice-Chair Ryback moved, and Commissioner Villanueva seconded, to establish the following goals for Fiscal Year 2021-22: 1) to have 100% quorum at all of the regularly scheduled meetings of the Mental Health Commission; 2) to impact disparities in mental health access of culturally diverse groups, as well as participating in the advisory council programs; and 3) the 2021 Data Notebook. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: Board Member Liaison Cockrell; Commissioners Reyes, Villanueva, and Weldon; Vice-Chair Ryback; and Chair Henderson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Stephens, Watson, and Williams.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Executive Director Navarro thanked Vice-Chair Wray Ryback and Commissioners Joan Reyes and David Weldon for renewing their membership to the Tri-City Mental Health Commission, stating that all of them have been such an important part of the development of this agency and in really important ways and commented that a group of advisory council staff had expressed appreciation and respect for the Commission that has been established which walks the walk. She then asked for an update on the recruitment of new Commissioner.

JPA Administrator/Clerk Olmos reported that four applications were received; however, one withdraw the application; and noted, that because those are students, scheduling their interview with the Governing Board has not been coordinated as fast as anticipated; however, it is expected that we will have new Commissioners selected in September.

Discussion ensued about Commission memberships.

Executive Director Navarro thanked Chair Henderson and Vice-Chair Ryback for coming to Tri-City's all staff meeting on June 23rd, and stated that staff appreciated and enjoyed very much their comments, noting that staff felt really appreciated and recognized to have members from the Commission and the Governing Board, as well as some community leaders. She then presented Tri-City's plan to have staff return to the office which will be one day per week, beginning August 1st, anticipating adding a day sometime in the fall, and hoping to be back to our next normal operations in January; however, it was unclear due to the Delta variant raging here in LA county. She then discussed the COVID-19 protocols in place; vaccine updates; the hazard pay of \$3 extra an hour in place since March 2020; the options and needs being considered for telecommuting that will not affect productivity, staff morale, and efficiency; expressed gratitude and respect for the facilities team, intensive outreach and engagement team, program support staff who answered the phones, housing team, and community navigators team which have been in the office and the field the entire time as if there was no pandemic happening out there. She then announced that it is July minority mental health awareness month and provided a link to a webinar that Tri-City is hosting next Thursday, July 22nd at 1:00 PM, titled BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) mental health impact of trauma; that Tri-City has been invited by the executive director of Gente Organizada to talk about partnering around juvenile justice and prevention and early intervention, diversion type programming, and Elizabeth Renteria is working in an Ad Hoc Committee to come up with a concept paper, and Rimmi Hundal and her team are working closely with the youth organizations to develop a TAY specific mental health service act stakeholder process which will be integrated with the larger MHSA stakeholder process; and provided an update regarding Brand Purpose, stating we are at the beginning of the last phase, which is identifying some key concepts to bring those out to our entire organization and governance for voting and input before we choose one to take to the public.

COMMISSION ITEMS AND REPORTS

Commissioner Villanueva commented that he does outreach work with the homeless at the Claremont Library, where they have an interim director who told him that she was interested in getting training on how to handle the people that use the Claremont Library as sanctuary. Executive Director indicated that she will ask staff to reach out.

Vice-Chair Ryback inquired if Tri-City is interacting or partnering with the Fairplex in connection with the unaccompanied minors that are there. Executive Director Navarro stated that Tri-City reached out to the Fairplex when this first was organized; unfortunately, because it is a federally funded program, they can only take a licensed clinical social workers and licensed psychologists as the mental health professionals and Tri-City had only two staff members that met this criteria; nevertheless we were working with them on finalizing a contract and we have been awaiting for their response on some final edits to the contract.

Commissioner Reyes read a newspaper article regarding treating parent and child in one visit; that Governing Newsom allocated funds to this new behavioral health benefit over the four years; that the state will spend the next year drafting guidelines and new billing codes for services that could be covered.

Executive Director Navarro indicated that she had received the same article and had shared it with the leadership team, noting that it is wonderful that behavioral health is expanding its reach and working in the integrated care.

Executive Director Navarro recommended the Commission to visit Tri-City's website to see the current positions open, asking them to please post these available positions in their networks, and to also share in their social media accounts or professional organizations.

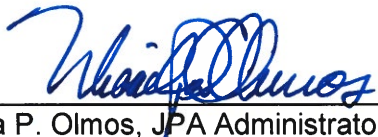
Vice-Chair Ryback inquired if Tri-City had received any referrals from Pomona Valley Hospital on its community benefits survey. Executive Director Navarro replied in the affirmative.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:43 p.m., on consensus of the Mental Health Commission its Regular Meeting of July 13, 2021 was adjourned. The next Regular Meeting of the Mental Health Commission will be held on Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 3:30 p.m. via teleconference due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission is Dark during the month of August.



Micaela P. Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk