



MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION JULY 11, 2023 – 3:30 P.M.

The Joint Governing Board and Mental Health Commission held on Tuesday, July 11, 2023 at 3:35 p.m. in the MHSA Office located at 2001 North Garey Avenue, Pomona, California.

CALL TO ORDER Chair Henderson called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m.

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

MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

PRESENT: Anne Henderson, Chair
Wray Ryback, Vice-Chair
Carolyn Cockrell, GB Member Liaison
Joan M. Reyes
Twila L. Stephens

ABSENT: Clarence D. Cernal
Isabella A. Chavez
Nichole Perry
Toni L. Watson

STAFF

PRESENT: Rimmi Hundal, Executive Director
Dana Barford, Director of MHSA & Ethnic Services
Debbie Johnson, Program Manager- Child & Family Services
Erin Sapinoso, Program Analyst II
Andrea Espinosa, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Coordinator
Mica Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk

REGULAR BUSINESS

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – GOVERNING BOARD AND MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION JOINT MEETING OF JUNE 13, 2023

Commissioner Reyes moved, and Commissioner Stephens seconded, to approve the Mental Health Commission Minutes of their Regular Meeting of June 13, 2023. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: GB Liaison Cockrell, Commissioners Reyes, and Stephens; Vice-Chair Ryback; and Chair Henderson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Commissioner Cernal, Commissioner Chavez, Commissioner Perry, and Commissioner Watson.

II. PRESENTATION - OVERVIEW OF BLACK, INDIGENOUS, AND PEOPLE OF COLOR (BIPOC) MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator Espinoza presented an overview of Black indigenous People of Color Mental Health Month, formerly known as National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. She began with a land acknowledgement, stating that Tri-City Mental Health Authority (TCMHA) acknowledges the original caretakers of the land, the Tongva peoples and all of their ancestors, elders, and descendants past, present and emerging. She continued to present about BIPOC month, also known as Bebe Moore-Campbell National Minority Mental Health month; that the month was created to raise awareness on the mental health challenges that diverse communities and people of color experience; that Bebe-Moore Campbell was the pioneer in this acknowledgement, noting that she was a journalist, a teacher, and a mental health advocate who shed light on the mental health needs of black communities and underrepresented communities; and that the name of the month is interchangeable. She stated that TCMHA has formed Wellness Collaboratives to meet the needs of the diverse communities; to build bridges with community partners, with community leaders, and members of the three cities; to better serve the communities and focusing on educating the community and training residents about mental health, such as Mental Health First Aid; and to go to the community and start the conversation where they feel safe. She then explained the activities and events that advocates for the Wellness Collaboratives have conducted, including going into the community and partnering with organizations, hosted conversations at specific sites and discussed a variety of different topics and issues; that they are able to host resource tables at events to make themselves present and introduce themselves to community leaders and to develop partnerships with TCMHA. She also introduced the new Diversity and Inclusion webpage available on the TCMHA website, indicating that Wellness Collaboratives information, cultural competence plans, and any upcoming events and trainings will be added to the webpage which will be another way to keep the community informed.

Commissioner Reyes inquired about the attendance of community events. Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator Espinoza stated that they have seen a huge increase in attendance, noting that it is attributed to the safety that community members feel at their specific community centers and cultural places.

Commissioner Ryback inquired who can attend the Mental Health First Aid Training and the fee to attend. Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator Espinoza indicated that it is open to community members; that it is an in-person training; that there is no cost for the training; and that the only requirement is for community members to register; and that they take place throughout the year.

Executive Director Hundal added that if Commissioners would like to schedule Mental Health Aid trainings, TCMHA can organize it free of charge; and explained that it is an all-day training since it is very comprehensive.

III. REVIEW OF MHC GOALS DURING FISCAL YEAR 2022-23

JPA Administrator/Clerk Olmos stated that in 2019, the Mental Health Commission established a practice to align the MHC goals and objectives to what is mandated by the Welfare Institutions Code, which dictates the responsibilities and duties of the Mental Health Commission; and the discussion will be to determine whether or not the goals were met.

Discussion ensued regarding Commissioners attendance and whether or not this goal was met; it was determined that the MHC had a quorum 90% of its meetings.

Commissioner Ryback stated that the second goal was to impact disparities with mental health access of culturally diverse groups as well as participate in the advisory council programs; and inquired if Commissioners had participated in any of the advisory council meetings. JPA Administrator/ Clerk Olmos added that it could also include participation in any programs or events for culturally diverse groups in the community.

Discussion ensued regarding which events Commissioners had or had not attended; about the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator taking the lead on the cultural advisory councils, which detailed information is found in TCMHA's website, but in the future staff could also email the Commissioners about upcoming events; about Commissioners notifying TCMHA staff about events they hear about in their communities; and about a good way to integrate and bring information back will be accomplished by the Commissioners attending the various cultural advisory councils.

Commissioner Reyes inquired if there exists a report listing all the community events which could be distributed to the Commissioners. Executive Director Hundal responded that most of the events staff promotes are TCMHA events; that staff relies on Stakeholders and Commissioners to share information about outside community events; that she will share with the MHC the list of events, noting that TCMHA's website will have up-to-date information; and stated that in addition to the various advisory councils available through TCMHA, there are other cultural groups such as youth, adult, working parents, single moms, etc.

Discussion ensued regarding the various forms of communication to promote events; that TCMHA staff sends out email blasts and reports to the City Managers from the three cities; that they attend meetings and distribute promotional materials as well; and it was determined that Goal #2 was partially satisfied.

Chair Henderson stated the next goal was to prepare the 2022 Data Notebook. Commissioner Ryback confirmed that the goal has been satisfied; and inquired if there will be one for 2023. Executive Director Hundal responded that one had not been released; however, the MHC will be notified when it is available.

IV. MHC ESTABLISH ITS PRIORITY TOPICS AND/OR GOALS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-24

Commissioner Reyes inquired if there are any criteria or guidelines for the goals to be set. JPA Administrator/Clerk Olmos stated that the government sets those guidelines according to the Commission duties. Based on their duties, the Commission must represent the communities they live in, they must prepare a report to the State, which in this case the data notebook was used as a report; that even if a data notebook was not prepared, a report would still be expected that displays everything that was accomplished by the Commission throughout the year. Executive Director Hundal added that the Commission is an advisory body to the Governing Board; that the Commission is the eyes and ears in the community for TCMHA; that the goals should be based off what the Commissioners want to communicate to the Governing Board regarding mental health issues. JPA Clerk Olmos added that she will email the list of Commission requirements from the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC); and that the goals of the Mental Health Commission should be created based on the WIC requirements.

Commissioner Reyes inquired about who to contact regarding homeless persons who do have access to restrooms and if TCMHA can assist. Executive Director Hundal responded that the cities or law enforcement should be contacted; that TCMHA's focus is and always has been mental health and can assist people who have been diagnosed or want to learn more about mental health. JPA Administrator/Clerk Olmos added that TCMHA does not have jurisdiction of public property, but cities do.

Discussion ensued regarding which goals the MHC should establish for FY 2023-24; that goals #1 and #2 and #3 should continue; that a new goal should be to increase community participation in the Commission meetings since it had decreased since the COVID pandemic; about staff goals to develop a strategy for community engagement and to make community members aware of all meetings, wellness collaboratives and other TCMHA events.

JPA Clerk Olmos repeated the goals presented so far, which are: 1) to have 100% quorum for all scheduled meeting throughout the year; 2) participate in community events, programs, and advisory councils; 3) prepare a the 2023 data notebook; and 4) to increase community participation in the MHC meetings.

Discussion ensued regarding keeping or removing goal #3, the data notebook; that by preparing the data notebook the MHC will stay relevant at the State level; that if there is no data notebook then a State report must still be prepared nonetheless; and that the Commissioners can discuss strategies to increase community participation at the next MHC meeting.

There being no further discussion, the four goals were approved. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: GB Liaison Cockrell; Commissioners Reyes and Stephens; Vice-Chair Ryback; and Chair Henderson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Cernal, Chavez, Perry and Watson.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MONTHLY REPORT

Executive Director Hundal reported that she was joined by Chief Clinical Officer Renteria to meet with the LA County CEO's Office, LA County Department of Mental Health, the City of Claremont and City of La Verne to discuss CARE Court; that they discussed how referrals are going to be made; that the details are not certain yet; that the referrals will be made through LA County or through the court; that they will be meeting again in September. She also stated that the Strategic Plan is underway; that the Board members will be hearing from the consultant to get their feedback for Tri-City's Strategic Plan. She then shared that the first cohort counties presented during the meeting of the County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California and talked about staffing for CARE Court, which is a concern due to the staffing shortage in the mental health industry; that they discussed recruitment strategies and incentives; and indicated that she will continue to report back as she hears more information from LA County regarding CARE Court. She then announced that the TCMHA Cesar Chavez project broke ground on July 28th; that this project is 90 units, and 9 of these units will be designated to TCMHA clients; that TCMHA was able to implement this project through No Place Like Home funding; that the plaza will be called the Chris Hartmeyer Plaza; that several TCMHA staff attended the groundbreaking, along with MHC Chair Henderson, Governing Board Chair Leano, and City of Pomona representatives. She also reported that that Cal AIM's implementation started on July 1st; that the Best Practices department has taken the lead on the implementation and is training staff to learn the new billing system; that it is a new way of providing services which is now fee-for-service.

Commissioner Reyes inquired about what is CalAIM. Executive Director Hundal explained that CalAIM stands for “California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal”; that it is for Medi-Cal beneficiaries only; that staff will bill for specific services around the client; that staff training has been occurring for over a year, but it still takes time since staff had to learn at the same time a new electronic health record system and the new way of delivering and billing services; and added that recruitment for mental health workers has been difficult, but now there are incentive programs, such a student loan repayment program which allows TCMHA to pay for employee student loans.

Executive Director Hundal continued her report and provided information about the BIPOC/National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, including statistics for mental illness, noting that they emphasize the importance of connecting with the community, specifically with underrepresented communities.

Vice-Chair Ryback inquired about the student loan repayment program. Director of MHSA & Ethnic Services Barford reported that staff has been very grateful; that the feedback has been very positive; that management is trying to establish a system and create a smoother process; that TCMHA is accepting applications for the second round, noting that typical loan repayment program is for clinicians only but TCMHA opened it to all the employees, regardless of major.

Governing Board Liaison Cockrell inquired about AmeriCorps and if that is something that would be helpful for employees to use. Executive Director Hundal responded that everything at the state level has become an emergency for mental health workers; that she has not looked into AmeriCorps but she will look into it, noting that she is open to any ideas that would help employees with student loans; and discussed strategies at the state level to assist with employee recruitment and retention as it has been difficult to compete with the private sector in general.

Discussion ensued regarding strategies to promote jobs in the public sector.

COMMISSION ITEMS AND REPORTS

Chair Henderson shared that Brittany Nguyen gave a great presentation on Suicide Prevention at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church; that it was very interactive; that there was a lot of great information; that everything from TCMHA has been excellent; and that the MHC should keep reminding the community about the resources TCMHA offers.

Commissioner Reyes inquired about the possibility of changing the meeting time of the Mental Health Commission in the interest of increasing community participation. JPA Administrator/Clerk Olmos responded in the affirmative, stating that the new time will have to be approved by the Governing Board; and that she can add it to the Governing Board agenda if the MHC so desires.

Chair Henderson inquired about the attendance at Stakeholder meetings. Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services Barford explained that Stakeholder meetings used to be held in the community whereas now they are held in the Tri-City MHSA building; that they used to serve food and heavily promote those events; that those events were before the pandemic; and that staff are considering all the various factors when discussing new community engagement strategies.

Commissioner Stephens commented that staff should share their ideas at the next Governing Board meeting regarding community engagement strategies. Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services responded in the affirmative mentioning that it would be good for the Commission to ask

those in the community what would interest them to attend a meeting; that it is also important to acknowledge that it is a different time; and that right now the focus is sustainability for many organizations.

Governing Board Liaison Cockrell agreed that there is some drop-off due to the different mode that all organizations being focused on sustainability. Executive Director Hundal added that it is not just with TCMHA but with most Counties as well.

Commissioner Stephens reported that the Housing Division is currently looking at all the services they provide to see whether any of those services are considered billable. She also gave an update regarding Via Esperanza apartments, stating that 19 units out of 57 are currently occupied; that four of those are occupied by TCMHA MHSA clients; that there are four more MHSA applicants waiting for a decision and two more in process; that she is the RSC for that property for TCMHA; that the MHSA units are furnished and include major appliances and discussed the welcome items that tenants also receive from TCMHA. She added that community agencies are really slow to receive their funds for the upcoming fiscal year; that it has been difficult to find housing money, first month's rent, and security deposits; and asked if anyone is aware of other organizations that would be willing to help, to let her know. Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services Barford suggested that she talk with the Navigators Supervisor regarding the grant funds they have received.

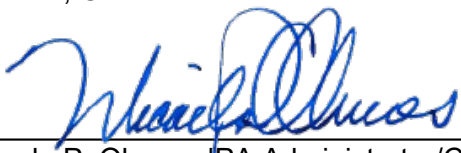
Commissioner Reyes shared an encounter she had with a community member who used to be involved in gangs and now owns his own company; that he has written a book and he is now successful. She suggested him as a speaker for the TCMHA TAY group since he may be someone who can inspire or encourage them.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services Barford announced that Sara Rogriguez is the new MHSA Project Manage, noting that MHSA Project Manager Rodriguez previously worked on the Therapeutic Community Garden and will now be taking the lead on stakeholder meetings and other projects.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:47 p.m., on consensus of the Mental Health Commission its meeting of July 11, 2023 was adjourned. The next Regular Meeting of the Mental Health Commission will be held on Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at 3:30 p.m., in the MHSA Administrative Office, 2001 North Garey Avenue, Pomona, California.



Micaela P. Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk