



MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION JULY 8, 2025 – 3:30 P.M.

The Mental Health Commission held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, July 8, 2025, at 3:30 p.m. in the MHSA Administration Building located at 2001 North Garey Avenue, Pomona, CA 91767.

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

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

MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

PRESENT: Anne Henderson, Chair
Wray Ryback, Vice-Chair
Carolyn Cockrell, GB Member Liaison
Sandra Christensen
Ethel Gardner (left the meeting at 3:42 p.m.)
Frank Guzman
Janet R. Roy (arrived at 3:41 p.m.)
Danette E. Wilkerson

ABSENT: Clarence D. Cernal
Mildred Garcia
Laura Mundy

STAFF:

PRESENT: Ontson Placide, Executive Director (arrived at 3:44 p.m.)
Elizabeth Renteria, Chief Clinical Officer
Dana Barford, Director of MHSA & Ethnic Services
Micaela P. Olmos, JPA Clerk/Administrator

REGULAR BUSINESS

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JUNE 10, 2025 REGULAR MEETING OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

Chair Henderson opened the meeting to Public Comment, and there was no public comment.

There being no discussion, Vice-Chair Ryback moved, and Commissioner Guzman seconded, to approve the Minutes from the June 10, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Mental Health Commission. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: Governing Board Liaison Cockrell, Commissioners Christensen, Gardner, Guzman, Wilkerson, Vice-Chair Ryback, and Chair

Henderson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: GB Liaison Cockrell. ABSENT: Commissioners Cernal, Garcia, Mundy, and Roy.

At 3:41 p.m., Commissioner Roy arrived at the meeting.

II. PRESENTATION – OVERVIEW OF TCMHA’s MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (MHSA) CAPITAL FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGICAL NEEDS (CFTN) PROJECT PROPOSAL

At 3:42 p.m., Commissioner Gardner left the meeting.

Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services Barford presented updates regarding property acquisition and technology enhancements, with a total proposed expenditure not to exceed \$5,790,000. She explained staff at the Claremont building had been sharing space and anticipated adding six to ten new positions over the next one to two years, which created a need for additional office space. TCMHA staff sought governing board approval to purchase a new building, with a cost not to exceed \$4 million.

At 3:44 p.m., Executive Director Placide arrived at the meeting.

IT Systems Administrator & Security Officer Cesario addressed the need for a network infrastructure refresh, noting that network switches, wireless access points, and some cablings were over ten years old. He also explained licensing differences and outdated backup appliances also required attention. He also discussed security updates, including replacing traditional locks with badge access, installing panic buttons, indoor and outdoor cameras, and paging speakers. He stated that TCMHA planned to refresh its fleet of laptops and transition its Electronic Health Record (EHR) system. Additionally, the implementation of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system was discussed.

Commissioner Wilkerson inquired about the current ERP and EHR systems. IT Systems Administrator & Security Officer Cesario confirmed that there was no current ERP and that the existing EHR system was Cerner/Oracle.

Vice-Chair Ryback asked for the new building location for TCMHA administration. Executive Director Placide stated that options were being explored over the next six months. GB Liaison Cockrell asked if the current Claremont building was leased, and Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services Barford confirmed in the affirmative, noting that current lease would expire in September.

Vice-Chair Ryback inquired if the new EHR system would include a client portal. Executive Director Placide explained that while the idea was under consideration, it was controversial due to past security breaches, noting that California does not use client portals for Medicaid mental health services, though they are more common in foster care and medical mental health contexts. Vice-Chair Ryback mentioned that Pomona Valley Hospital used Cerner. Executive Director Placide acknowledged that Cerner worked well for hospitals.

Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services Barford continued with her presentation and provided the timeline of the CFTN Project proposal, stating that on June 12th the proposal was posted for a 30-day public comment period; that after the July 8th presentation to Mental Health Commission, it would be presented to the Governing Board for approval on July 16th; and that if approved, it would move forward.

Chair Henderson opened the meeting to Public Comment, there were no public comment.

Vice-Chair Ryback asked what enhanced security entails. IT Systems Administrator & Security Officer Cesario explained that access was controlled by staff and that the EHR stored records, emphasizing that the proposed enhancements would reduce potential issues, and that automation would help create a more secure environment.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MONTHLY REPORT

Executive Director Ontson Placide reported that projects for each of the three cities—Claremont, Pomona, and La Verne—had been approved to move forward, and that the number of beds at Hope for Home (H4H) was expanded from 31 to 71, with access designated exclusively for urgent needs across the three cities. He then indicated that the St. Ambrose site in Claremont was set to offer a total of 59 beds, 28 of which were designated for permanent supportive housing, noting that TCMHA would hold ownership of 12 beds but would provide services for all; and that any of the remaining beds could also be utilized by the agency for individuals qualified for mental health services. He then explained that in Pomona, the modular housing projects were initiated, including ten units on 4th Street and six units on 8th Street, and pointed out that TCMHA partnered with LifeArc to develop these modular homes, in addition to increasing bed capacity at H4H. Lastly, he stated that the City of La Verne did not have a housing project but was utilizing MHA funds through BHSA to expand Full Service Partnership (FSP) services and crisis emergency services, noting that city had a homeless services project in the University of La Verne campus, and that TCMHA was providing services there.

Commissioner Wilkerson sought clarification whether the services were for students. Executive Director Placide replied in the affirmative, including the public. Commissioner Roy inquired about an intake center, and Executive Director Placide stated that more information would be provided.

GB Liaison Cockrell inquired about apparent discriminatory practices at H4H. Executive Director Placide responded that the City of Pomona had investigated the concerns during a stakeholder meeting, but TCMHA had not participated; and explained that oversight of H4H was under the City of Pomona and they would follow-up on these concerns. Chief Clinical Officer Renteria added that TCMHA clinical department, which was frequently on-site, had not heard any concerns about discrimination or of any major incidents, noting that customarily any concerns are discussed regarding client and staff care.

Executive Director Placide stated that his report included updates on general concerns, including ICE-related issues and service delivery, and explained that Best Practices Department was collecting data on no-shows for appointment to address community concerns, noting that clients were actively utilizing telehealth services. Chief Clinical Officer Renteria mentioned ongoing efforts to improve communication with staff, with HR reviewing protocols for both staff and clients and preparations were underway to support families in case of detainment and to manage anxiety. Further, she noted had practiced scripts to address privacy concerns and acknowledged their own anxieties, emphasizing a collaborative approach to care.

GB Liaison Cockrell asked whether verifying immigration status was part of the intake process. Chief Clinical Officer Renteria replied in the affirmative and reported that four weeks ago a freeze on Medi-Cal was implemented for undocumented individuals; and stated that people were concerned about having their status documented and assured that TCMHA was doing its best to support clients.

Vice-Chair Ryback inquired if the City of La Verne was seeking additional housing opportunities. Executive Director Placide stated that TCMHA would continue to raise the issue with the city, noting that it did not appear to be a current priority for the city. Vice-Chair Ryback expressed the Commission's encouragement for La Verne to pursue such opportunities.

Vice-Chair Ryback further inquired if TCMHA was purchasing the modular units in Pomona, Executive Director Placide clarified that while Pomona owned the land, the TCMHA owned the units. Commissioner Guzman expressed concern about the lease of the land and asked if there will be mechanisms in place to prevent high rent increases. Executive Director Placide explained that since the land was allocated for supportive housing, there would be a cap on space usage, ensuring ongoing access and control, noting that rates should not increase, and that TCMHA had contracted with the consultant group LeSar to help navigate sustainability and long-term viability.

Executive Director Placide then talked about funding, and stated that mild-to-moderate services funded by the state were most at-risk due to budget cuts, particularly in Medicaid; that moderate-to-severe services were protected as they were considered essential; that preventative services under mild-to-moderate care might be required to return to medical insurance coverage. He concluded that while changes were possible, the current priority was to protect moderate-to-severe services.

COMMISSION ITEMS AND REPORTS

Commissioner Wilkerson inquired about the launch of the Mobile Crisis Care Unit (MCCU). Chief Clinical Officer Liz Renteria reported that the event went well; those in attendance included Chair Henderson, Vice-Chair Ryback, and Commissioner Guzman, along with approximately 185 community members and 40 community partners; that the event was described as uplifting and necessary with valuable information shared, and pointed out that managing crises is a community responsibility.

Chair Henderson expressed appreciation for the interactive stamp card used to encourage visits to all booths during the MCCU event.

Commissioner Wilkerson shared that they represented the Tri-City Mental Health Commission at the American Mental Health Conference.

Vice Chair Ryback praised the MCCU launch and noted that they had shared helpful information about the Mobile Crisis Team with Pomona Valley Hospital, who expressed gratitude.

Chief Clinical Officer Renteria reported that the MCCU schedule had been finalized to provide 24/7 care and that coordination with LA County was ongoing, noting that the team was learning and adapting throughout the process.

GB Liaison Cockrell inquired if the MCCU Team were going to coordinate efforts with the police departments. Chief Clinical Officer Renteria stated that Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with police departments were going to be prepared to address gaps in services and work in an efficient manner without duplicating services. Executive Director Placide added that staffing remained a challenge; however, efforts were underway to offer more competitive salaries and benefits.

Commissioner Guzman shared that he had attended an educational forum, a hiring fair, and the MCCU launch, stating that all three events were remarkable. Executive Director Placide reported that the hiring event was highly successful, with over 100 attendees and several applications were submitted.

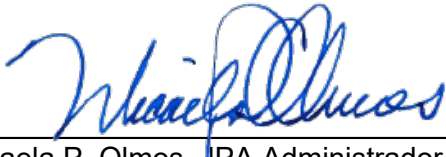
GB Liaison Cockrell asked about training and orientation for grantees. Chief Clinical Officer Renteria noted that the fiscal year had ended on a positive note.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:24 p.m., on consensus of the Mental Health Commission its meeting of July 8, 2025, was adjourned. The Mental Health Commission is dark during the month of August; the next Regular Meeting of the Mental Health Commission will be held on Tuesday, September 9, 2025 at 3:30 p.m., in the MHSA Administrative Office, 2001 North Garey Avenue, Pomona, California.



Micaela P. Olmos, JPA Administrador/Clerk