



Minutes

Present: Bruce Metcalf, Chair; Zachery Ramos, Vice Chair; Sally Ragonut, Secretary; Ted Werner; Keng Ger Cha; Kimiko Vang; Mary Ellis; Iris Mojica de Tatum

Absent Linda Deol; BOS Representative Lloyd Pareira.

Others Present: Philip Adam, Dr. John Yarbrough, Lanetta Smyth, Iris Gunther- Battles, Dr. Allen Turner, Storia Azary, Lupe Garcia and Cristina Reyes (Recorders)

Call to Order / Roll Call

Chair Bruce Metcalf, called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Audible roll call was taken by Recorder, Cristina Reyes.

Mission Statement: The Mission Statement was read by Ted Werner.

Approval of Minutes (BOARD ACTION)

Discussion/Conclusion:

Bruce called for any comments or edits to the February 07, 2023 meeting minutes. No edits were brought forward. Bruce called for a motion to accept the minutes without edit.

Recommendation/Action:

M/S/C Ragonut, Ramos, Werner) to approve the February 07, 2023 minutes as written. Bruce called for a roll call vote on the minutes. The names of all present Board members were called and asked for their individual approvals. Minutes were approved by quorum.

Pareira – Absent
Deol – Absent
Metcalf – Aye

Mojica de Tatum – Aye
Cha – Aye
Ramos, Z. – Aye

Ellis – Aye
Ragonut – Abstain
Werner – Aye

Opportunity for public input. At this time any person may comment on any item which is not on the agenda.

Discussion/Conclusion: No public input or comment.

Recommendation/Action: Not applicable.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES

Behavioral Health Advisory Board Meeting

301 E. 13th Street

Merced, CA 95341

April 04, 2023

Training/Presentation – Adult System of Care (ASOC) Housing Services – Lanetta Smyth and Iris Gunter-Battles

Discussion/Conclusion: ASOC Division Director Lanetta Smyth and BHRS Program Coordinator Iris Gunter-Battles provided an overview of the Housing Services that are available through BHRS. BHRS ASOC Housing services provides five permanent housing projects, outreach and advocacy for clients with landlords. The program helps clients to gain independence and help them reach their housing goals. This program provides clients with linkages and referrals to community services and resources. The Housing Team also assists clients with navigating difficult application and recertification processes. The Housing Team currently consists of eight staff members: One BHRS Program Coordinator, three Full-Time Mental Health Workers, one Extra-Help Mental Health Worker, three Peer Support Specialists and One Housing Specialist. Other departments and teams assist the Housing Team. Iris stated that navigating the population of individuals with mental health disorders through public assistance programs can be delicate and difficult. Their teams need to educate themselves on the multiple requirements for all the public assistance programs. They often work with individuals that feel like they are not receiving enough or any help. The ASOC Housing Program is not immediate housing or free. They do not have unlimited housing units or the ability to house everyone that is in need of housing. The program does not provide housing or Section 8 vouchers. BHRS Housing Program has the following Permanent Supportive Housing: Gateway Terrace, Project Hope, Project Home Start, Shelter Plus Care, and The Retreat. The following programs are available: PATH for outreach and case management; Housing Supportive Services Program (HSSP) and Housing Specialists. Each program has specific criteria that clients needs to meet. The PATH program provides services such as outreach, case management, screenings, linkages to community resources and services, referrals and assistance with applications. Referrals from the PATH program links individuals to primary health services, job training, educational services and relevant housing services. PATH outreach workers link persons to these services and other needed services not directly provided by the PATH Program. The Housing Support Services Program provides similar services, but also includes tenant engagement meetings, housing retention skills, independent livings skills, crisis intervention and de-escalation, personal service coordination and services related to advocacy. HSSP referral services can assist with connecting individuals with housing, employment, emergency food, money management, transportation, health, recovery and peer support services. The assigned Housing Specialist can assist in providing referrals and linkages. Merced County currently faces a lack of available and affordable housing units. There is also a lack of landlords accepting voucher or other assistance programs for homeless and houseless individuals. On of the major obstacle that the program faces is the lack of funding for application fees, security deposits, ongoing rental payments and utility assistance. The Housing Team works with a multiple County, City and community organizations. The partnership is called the Merced County Continuum of Care. Merced County has multiple projects and programs in development.

Training/Presentation – God’s Love Outreach Ministries

Discussion/Conclusion: Dr. Allen Turner and Storia Azamy provided an overview of the programs and services that are available through their organization. God’s Love Outreach Ministries or G.L.O.M., is a non-profit organization that has been in business since 2005. Their first service contract was through the Alameda County Sheriff’s office. This was their first reentry program. With the success of their first program, they opened up a facility for females. G.L.O.M. has contracts with the following counties: Alameda, Solano, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced and Sacramento County. The Bright facility is a long term facility. Glom Flora Treatment Center is open at 9am. This center provides case management and other services such as group therapy. They also take clients to parks, movies and stores to socialize and provide modality. The Pin facility in Lodi is their oldest facility. G.L.O.M. has recently hired case managers to help with Social Security, DMV assistance and general assistance applications. They also take clients to their appointments at court, psychiatrist and medical appointments. G.L.O.M. staff can also



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assist clients by helping them get placement for housing. They have clinicians that can provide crisis services. They can help the clients with their in-house crisis intervention team rather than hospitalizing them. Currently, they have 46 clients that are homeless that are receiving services from their organization. The organization currently has 14 residential facilities and 4 treatment centers. The organization is planning to work on adding additional homes and treatment facilities in order to offer more services in other counties. There is currently one treatment in Merced County and 4 residential facilities. The Korbel, Cavaliere Derby and Lurs homes have a 10 bed capacity. The majority of their facilities include group session rooms, computer labs, libraries and activity rooms. G.L.O.M. staff and facilities are Medi-Cal certified and can bill for services provided. Dr. Confirmed that G.L.O.M. provides services for both males and females. G.L.O.M. approach is a humanistic approach. Board members stated that it is great that Merced County BHRS is able to work with different departments that can help provide much needed mental health services and resources.

Recommendation/Action: Information only.

Director's Report

Discussion/Conclusion:

Director Kimiko Vang reported that the Credible Electronic Health Record system went live on April 01, 2023. MHSA staff has held focus groups and they are working on the MHSA 3 Year plan. Sharon Jones will be presenting this information at the meeting to be held in June. Director Vang informed the meeting attendees that Lupe Garcia has joined BHRS as her new Secretary. Moving forward, Lupe Garcia will be assisting the Behavioral Health Advisory Board. BHRS currently has 71 vacancies. We have worked on filling key positions for the department. Julianne Sims has accepted the position of Assistant Director of Clinical Services and will be starting on April 10, 2023. Adrian Angel will be the new Compliance Manager for BHRS. We have filled Program Manager and Division Director Positions. With the change to Controlled substance medications, Dr. Yarbrough will have to meet with clients one time before they can receive controlled medications. Medical staff are working on updating their procedures to include the new regulations. The Medical team is looking forward to the new Psychiatrist that will be starting at BHRS in June. This provider is interested in working full-time at BHRS.

Recommendation/Action: Information only.

Chair's Report

Discussion/Conclusion:

Bruce reported on the Behavioral Health Advisory Board Retreat was held before the meeting today. The retreat covered different trainings and presentations. The board is actively working on recruitment for board member vacancies.

Recommendation/Action: Information only.

