

**Behavioral Health Board Minutes**  
**San Luis Obispo County**  
**May 17, 2023**  
**3:00p.m.**

**Members Present:**

Barbara Levenson  
Marshall Hamilton  
James Sofranko (for Supervisor Paulding)  
Andres Pille (CenCal)  
Eulalia Apolinar  
Melissa Cummins  
LT Robert Crout (for Sheriff Parkinson)  
Chief Robert Reyes  
Dr. Dana Hunt  
Rose Fowler Plummer  
Amber Gallagher  
Mary Bianchi  
Leslie Brown  
Hugo Balcazar

**Members Absent:**

Joseph Kurtzman  
Chris Emert  
Donna Klein

**Guests:**

Jill Bolster White  
Amanda Sherlock  
Dr. Seth Stabinsky  
Deprise Brescia  
Jon Nibbio

**Health Agency Staff Present:**

Anne Robin  
Christy Haney  
Dr. Star Graber

- 1. Barbara Levenson called the meeting to order @ 3:06 pm.**
- 2. Introductions and Announcements:**
  - Round table introductions.
- 3. Public Comments:**
  - Deprise Brescia: The Veteran's Popup Café had an event on April 22, 2023, in Paso Robles. They had about 150 attendees in the six-hour period. The Elder Warriors, Vet Center and LA VA all had tables to share information and resources. There was a music therapist that led a one-hour drum circle. Ivan Sam, who is a veteran, gave a land acknowledgment and medicine bag workshop. There were several areas of inspiration that was sparked that led to the renewal from previous projects and sprouted new areas of growth. The first project was the recreation of the Veteran's Voices Podcast, which they have already shot their first interview including two veterans. The second was Vet's Helping Vet's TV, which documented this event on their YouTube channel. The third was the finishing of the documentary Dick and Hart. Dick and Hart is a 30-minute short about

peacemakers. It will be screened at the Park Cinemas in Paso Robles for free, projected for August. Deprise proposed making a series of peacemaker documentaries, based on the principle of finding peace within. She will be submitting a proposal to the Behavioral Health Board for review.

- Mary Bianchi: One of the key partners and programs of the Center for Family Strengthening is the Child Advocacy Center. The Child Advocacy Center model promotes developing a comprehensive, coordinated, and culturally competent systems response from time of first disclosure through the investigation, prosecution, and treatment of child abuse cases by utilizing multidisciplinary teams (MDT) of professionals involved in child protective and victim advocacy services, law enforcement and prosecution, and physical and mental health. This is a key component of making sure that the child has the easiest path through the difficult system. This was started with a grant in 2019 from the Office of Emergency Services. There are family advocates that stay with the parents through this difficult process.
- Amanda Sherlock: Amanda is hoping to offer a few things to the County. Grief Recovery is a program that has been around for 40 years, and Amanda has been doing it for the last 30 years. She has been able to implement this program within the prison system. In addition, they have a program for children called Healthy Children with Loss. This program includes workshops for teachers, administrators, and parents to help children deal with death, moving, and safety. The second thing Amanda is working on is taking a class to facilitate a course called Happy for No Reason to teach people how to be happy for no reason.
- Jill Bolster White: Transitions Mental Health Association is hosting the Opening Minds art show at The Bunker in San Luis Obispo off Orcutt Street. This event runs through the end of May. THMA is displaying the art of their clients. The hours of operation are 6am-4pm.

**4. Approval on Minutes:** Minutes from April 19, 2023.

M/S/C: Mary Bianchi/ Melissa Cummins. Abstain: None

**5. Ongoing Business:**

- Vote on reappointments- M/S/C: Chief Robert Reyes/ Amber Gallagher. Abstain: None
  - Hugo Pinon Balcazar
  - Sheriff Ian Parkinson
  - Mary Bianchi
- Vote to approve the Behavioral Health Board annual report for 2022- M/S/C: Mary Bianchi/ Melissa Cummins. Abstain: None.
- Vote on Slate of Officers Nominees- M/S/C: Melissa Cummins/ Marshall Hamilton. Abstain: None.
  - Chair: Barbara Levenson
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair: Mary Bianchi
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair: Chief Robert Reyes

## **6. New Business:**

- Request representative for the Mental Health Services Act Advisory Committee (MAC) meeting: This committee helps decide how grants awarded to the county are allocated for behavioral health services and meets quarterly. Please reach out to Barbara Levenson or Christy Haney if you are interested in joining.

## **7. Membership Committee - Update:**

- Jail BHU site visit: The visit is scheduled for May 24, 2023, at 9:00am. If you are interested in attending, please send a copy of your driver's license to Christy Haney. Though the calendar event is blocked off for three hours, it does not typically take that long. You can leave at any time and will be escorted out. The only wardrobe restriction is no blue jeans.
- Mental Health Evaluation Team (MHET) site visit: Melissa Cummins will be working with Ben Jacobson to find dates in either June or July for this visit. The MHET office is located on McMillan in San Luis Obispo.
- Future site visit: Possibilities for the remainder of the year include Services Affirming Family Empowerment (SAFE), Martha's Place, and Family Care Network. Anyone who is interested in helping to facilitate these site visits, please reach out to Barbara Levenson or Christy Haney.
- Barbara Levenson attended the Quality Support Team (QST) meeting for Drug and Alcohol Services on May 11, 2023. The Narcan distribution plan was discussed for the county. Ideas included clear mounted boxes including Narcan, a mask and instructions and having a vending machine at the outpatient clinic. The Safety Opioid Coalition discussed having rescue kits at schools. Every K-12 school has had training on how to administer Narcan. People can order Narcan from [naloxonenewslo.org](http://naloxonenewslo.org). 923 were distributed and 43 reversals per month were reported. Narcan does not reverse Tranq, which is a combination of Fentanyl and Xylazine.
- California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions has their quarterly meeting scheduled for June 16 and June 17, 2023, in Santa Ana. They are offering to pay travel and lodging expenses for one Behavioral Health Board member per county in the Southern region. The meetings include reports from all Behavioral Health Board committees, how to be an effective behavioral health commission, and behavioral health continuum. If you are interested in attending, please reach out to Barbara Levenson.

## **8. Member Subject of Interest: Hugo Pinon Balcazar**

- Hugo started a nonprofit organization in Grover Beach called Council on Adolescent Mental Health to help address low-tier issues. The idea is to train teenagers who are interested in helping their fellow peers. Being that Hugo is still an adolescent, he can see the struggles of his peers. He had noticed the lack of participation of adolescents in counseling and psychotherapy programs that are being offered. CAMH concluded that students prefer to seek help from their peers. They are adopting a curriculum that has already been established. There are plans to pilot at a high school in the area that would service 1,000 students.

## 9. Administrator's Report

- Introduction of Dr. Star Graber: Dr. Star Graber has been chosen to fill the role of the Behavioral Health Director position. Each attendee had a chance to share about them and their interest in the Behavioral Health Board. Dr. Star Graber graduated from the University of Oregon with her Bachelor's in psychology, graduated from Cal Poly with her Master's in counseling and later went on to obtain a PhD in psychology. She is a licensed marriage and family therapist. She has been with the county for 36 years with experience in working with children, criminal justice, prevention and outreach, and is currently moving on from her role as the Behavioral Health Division Manager with Drug and Alcohol Services. Within the past 36 years, Dr. Star Graber has brought in close to a billion dollars in grants for the county.
- Mobile crisis expansion benefit is still being finalized at the state level. There will be a presentation in June with the Chief of Police to start the conversation of 911, dispatch, and law enforcement response to psychiatric and substance abuse disorder clinical response.
- Homeless Projects:
  - The Bridge Grant was submitted April 28, 2023. The hope is to bring more rental funds, pallet shelter funding, and outreach staff for encampments. There is a limit of \$75,000 per bed.
  - The California State Association of Counties has a new initiative called AT HOME. The Homeless Services Committee has agreed to support the value with the AT HOME initiatives. This will provide statewide guidance on how to approach the growing issue of homelessness throughout the state.
- PHF transition: Crestwood will be taking over the PHF. No clinical or licensed staff will be laid off through this process. The interim CAO, John Nilon, has approved overfilling the licensed psychiatric technician positions and we will figure out funding to help with the workload. There are still a lot of other BH Clinician vacancies at this point. Some staff have decided to leave the county and join Crestwood.

## 10. Presentation: Wraparound- Jon Nibbio (Family Care Network)

- There was a piece of legislation written about 25 years ago called SB163. As a state, we have had many youths placed away and out of the county in residential care for long periods of time. This was costly and had negative outcomes. SB163 created an alternative for those youths to take the same dollar amount and wrap all of the services in their own home, with a relative, or foster care. This model created a flexible funding stream to keep families together. There is a community component that includes reaching out to the community to see how they can be helpful. This program serves youth in probation or on child welfare.
- The model integrates mental health services into the team. Team members include agency partners, a social worker, rehabilitation specialist, and family specialist.
- Flexible funding has been used for housing for those who were homeless, helping with rent for those who lost their job so they would not become homeless, and bringing youth that were in foster care back into their homes. What is received from the county is used first and it leaves more opportunity to use the flexible funding in many ways.

- All services can be provided in Spanish. There are two Wraparound providers in the County and Family Care Network is one of them. Since they started, there were about 150 kids placed in out of county institutional care, now there are less than 10 youth.

**11. Adjourn at 4:57pm:** Chief Robert Reyes/ Marshall Hamilton