Monterey County Behavioral Health Commission
Final Meeting Minutes
Mark Lopez, Chairperson
Cathy Gutierrez, Chairperson Elect

Thursday, April 30, 2020   5:30 PM   Teleconference via Zoom
                              No Physical Location Provided

1. **5:30 P.M. - CALL TO ORDER**
   The meeting was called to order by Chair M. Lopez at 5:31 P.M.
   All attendees appeared via teleconference.

2. **INTRODUCTIONS**

   **COMMISSIONERS**
   **Present:** Heather Deming; Linda Fosler; Rosa Gonzalez-Rivas; Cathy Gutierrez; Jesse
   Herrera; Supv. Christopher Lopez; Mark Lopez; Margie Sokotowski
   **Absent:** Anthony Ivanich; Maribel Ferreira; Alma McHoney; Cortland Young; Hailey
   Dicken-Young

   **Staff Present:** Amie Miller, Behavioral Health Bureau Chief; Jon Drake, Behavioral
   Health Assistant Bureau Chief; Alica Hendricks, Management Analyst, Behavioral
   Health; Dana Edgull, Behavioral Health Services Manager, Marina Pantchenko, Deputy
   County Counsel; Stacy Saetta, Deputy County Counsel; Wesley Schweikhard,
   Management Analyst, Behavioral Health; Jill Walker, Training Manager, Behavioral
   Health; Andria Sumpter, Secretary, Behavioral Health

   **Announcement of the Interpreter:** Diego Celis, Spanish Interpreter present and
   announced Spanish interpreter services.

3. **CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA**
   None.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
   Pamela Weston, Cal Voices State Access Ambassador submitted public comment via
   email. Her statement was read out load and entered into the record.

   Lynda Kauffman, Governing Board Member of the California Association of Local
   Boards & Commissions and a provider for Monterey County, noted two items worthy of
   tracking: 1) AB-2589 “No Place Like Home” Proposition 2, important for Board & Care
   providers to receive funding from this source  2) A letter from several organizations
   concerning a budget recommendation to increase the Board & Care rate was sent out on
   April 16th.

   Rita Acosta, a community member shared, that in response to COVID-19, more
   assistance is needed within the community, especially among the most vulnerable
   populations. She also expressed concern over the procedures for the temporary housing
   that is to be set up in areas such as Sherwood Park.
5. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

It was moved by Supv. C. Lopez, seconded by Commissioner Gonzalez-Rivas to approve the February 27, 2020 meeting minutes, with correction remove the word “and” in Pamela Weston’s title under the Public Comments section on page 1. The motion passed unanimously by the following vote:

**AYES:** Rivas-Gonzalez; Sokotowski; Chair M. Lopez; Gutierrez; Herrera; Deming; Fosler; Supv. C. Lopez  
**NOES:** None  
**ABSENT:** Ivanich; Ferreira; McHoney; Young

6. **INFORMATION:** Receive an update on FY2021-FY2023 MHSA Three Year Program & Expenditure Plan

Jon Drake, presented referring to handout provided:

Power Point (PP): *FY2021 to 2023/24 Mental Health Services Act Three-Year Plan*

**Introduction**

**Public Comment:**

Pamela Weston asked of Behavioral Health staff how will risk assessment and Innovative Pilot programs relating to “no one being left unsheltered will be directed. Also inquired if there will be community support services to meet community members where they are at, in addition to having a stakeholder meeting with the Behavioral Health staff in the form of a community planning process to address the COVID-19 that currently exists and the county-wide disparities. She also stated that there has not yet been a focus on district specific residents.

Joel Hernandez with the Center for Community Advocacy (CCA) shared that CCA is eager to continue its work with Behavioral Health staff with programs falling under this plan.

Rita Acosta stated that community-based services are needed.

7. **INFORMATION:** Receive a Report from the Behavioral Health Director: Update on Behavioral Health COVID-19 Efforts

- Monterey County Behavioral Health (MCBH) staff have been able to quickly transition to meet client needs remotely and increase productivity quickly after an initial dip at the start of the COVID-19 event.
- MCBH’s contractors and providers are struggling, notably the substance use contractors due to low enrollment in residential and inability for outreach treatment.
- Through this event, crisis admissions have been down, except for the week of $0 bail release in the jail system.
- The state continues to be progressive and supportive of the radical changes brought recommended by Behavioral Health; modifying business rules to keep MCBH moving.
- The fiscal outlook has not yet been determined, but it is not a positive. The concern is for MHSA and the primary funding source, realignments. MCBH expects to make prudent cuts, with the anticipation that as things progress needs will rise exponentially.
- The Forward Together Initiative was created by MCBH as a prevention activity to engage the community before mental health disorders are developed. It provides free, daily
sessions for the community for various groups, offering light touch treatment. All sessions are held via telephone or teleconferencing.

- MCBH will be strategic in alignment with priority goals while working to continue to reduce disparities while having to reduce services.

8. **INFORMATION:** Receive a Report from a Member of the Board of Supervisors
   
   Supervisor Lopez shared the following announcements:
   - Thanked everyone for all of the hard work being done to help the community through the COVID-19 event and ensure a successful recovery.
   - There are two (2) new Optum testing sites coming to Monterey County by early next week
     - Will offer diagnostic testing
     - Not equipped for antibody testing
   - Alternative Housing Sites
     - For community members residing in congregate housing and test positive for COVID-19
     - Locations: Monterey Fairgrounds, Monterey; San Lorenzo Park, King City

9. **INFORMATION:** Receive the Commissioner’s Reports/Updates
   - Comm. Gonzalez-Rivas just finished a Family to Family Spanish class (NAMI) and had remarkably positive response from attendees. She was able to successfully work with families to orientate them to electronic/teleconference platforms. Attended a meeting with Spanish facilitators from other counties to help unite resources for community members.
   - Comm. Sokotowski thanked MCBH staff for their work in bringing everyone together on this platform.
   - Comm. M. Lopez thanked MCBH staff for their work in getting this meeting together.
   - Comm. Gutierrez has been working with the Unit Supervisor for the Soledad and King City MCBH offices. South County clients are doing well, MCBH staff has been proactive in contacting clients to meet their needs. There was an initial reduction of clients coming in for services, which has reversed in the past two (2) weeks as they are coming into the clinics.
   - Comm. Herrera shared that CSUMB College of Health & Human Services will be hosting free Zoom classes in English and Spanish for parents of CSUMB students to discuss how to provide support to their children. The overall message could be beneficial to all parents of students. CSUMB has asked for assistance in reaching out to Spanish speaking families. Encouraged everyone to thank all essential workers they encounter when possible.
   - Comm. Deming shared the word RESILIENCE! Thanked everyone for their resiliency during this time. It will provide the kind of need that our county will employ through this time.
   - Comm. Fosler attended two conferences this week: National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and the Council on Justice and Behavioral Health. Law enforcement’s message from these meetings was concern for the individuals released during the $0 bond release; the increase in death by suicide in Los Angeles during COVID-19. Also have experienced increase in incredible supportive staff response during this time.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.