



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD

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BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES (BHRS) BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD (BHB) February 27, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting convened at 5:01 p.m. and was called to order by Keryn Whitlow, Vice Chair. Peter Dean led the board members and the audience in the pledge of allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Kym Barber, Larry Bolton, Christopher Costin, Peter Dean, Olivia Esquiviz-Gonzalez, Jack Griffith, Annie Henrich, Margie Johnson, Loren Mannard, Keryn Whitlow

STAFF PRESENT

Cynthia Bocage, Kevin Panyanouvong, Keri Magee, Pam Esparza, Alma Torres, Sandra Martinez, Kong Vang, Olivia Jimenez

GUESTS PRESENT

Brian MacLaren, Jelaine Esguerra, Pathana Luangath, Paul Cumming

CORRESPONDENCE

None reported.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action: Peter Dean made a motion to approve the Behavioral Health Board minutes of January 23, 2025, Margie Johnson seconded the motion.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (BOS) REPORT

None reported.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CONSUMER, GENERAL, FAMILY

None reported.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

Keryn Whitlow reported the committee finalized the agenda for the February 27, 2025, Board meeting.

Administrative Fiscal Management Committee

None reported.

Hospitalization Committee

None reported.

Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Committee

Margie Johnson reported the committee received a presentation from Nirvana. Nirvana average approximately 600-800 patients per year.

PRESENTATION: Behavioral Health Wellness Center (BHWC)

Pam Esparza, Chief Supportive Services Division, provided a PowerPoint presentation on Behavioral Health Wellness Center (BHWC), located at 800 Scenic Dr., Modesto. BHWC is a community-based program that offers free peer support and resources to individuals 18 years of age or older. The center provides culturally appropriate services that promote engagement, socialization, recovery, self-sufficiency and self-advocacy. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation was distributed to the board members.

DEPARTMENT REPORT

Kevin Panyanouvong, BHRS Associate Director, reported the following highlights:

- The Department continues to work on Service Delivery for Justice Involved population. Working to streamline the process to have one Collaborative Court that provides services to individuals.
- California's Proposition 36 went into effective in December 2024. Misdemeanors may be charged as treatment mandated felonies. Individuals who complete the courts requirement, may be eligible to have their charges either dismissed or reduced.
- Incompetent to Stand Trial (IST) - BHRS is finalizing an expenditure plan to drawback \$450,000 paid in fines and is working closely with law enforcement and partner agencies to mitigate the growth of the next penalty of \$4.3 million dollars.
- Funding analysis for Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) will be presented to the Behavioral Health Board in April or May timeframe.
- Debra Buckles, Chief, Office of the Public Guardian, has retired. On February 25, 2025, the Board of Supervisors appointed Pamela Esparza as the Stanislaus County Interim Public Guardian, effective March 1, 2025.
- Kevin Panyanouvong announced his retirement, effective March 21, 2025, and expressed his gratitude to the board members for their ongoing support of our community. Similarly, Tony Vartan, Behavioral Health Director will also retire on the same date. Ruben Imperial will step into the role of Acting Behavioral Health Director.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Annie Henrich shared that the Stanislaus Asian American Community Resource (SAACR) will be sponsoring the 10th Annual Asian American Youth Leadership Conference on Thursday, March 20, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Stanislaus County Ag Center- Harvest Hall, located at 3800 Cornucopia Way, Modesto. Members were invited to attend.

Aegis staff person shared, Aegis has received approval for a 33-month grant that will cover six months of treatment for individuals with high co-pay, underinsured or those who are not eligible for Medi-Cal. Sublocade Biliotrox will be available for maintenance therapy.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m. The next meeting will be March 27, 2025, 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., at the Stanislaus Veterans Center, 3500 Coffee Rd. Ste.15, Modesto.

Respectfully Submitted by O. Jimenez, Confidential Assistant III