



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD

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**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES
(BHRS) BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD (BHB)
February 26, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting convened at 5:35 p.m. and was called to order by Kathy Rupe, Chair. Peter Dean led the board members and the audience in the pledge of allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Kym Barber, Peter Dean, Jack Griffith, Annie Henrich, Margie Johnson, Loren Mannard, Kathy Rupe, Jack Waldorf

STAFF PRESENT

Cynthia Bocage, Keri Magee, Ruben Imperial, Sandy Martinez, Olivia Jimenez

GUESTS PRESENT

Brian MacLaren, Codie Hernandez, Jessica Parman, Eden Chen

CORRESPONDENCE

None reported.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action: Margie Johnson made a motion to approve the Behavioral Health Board minutes of January 22, 2026, and Kym Barber seconded the motion.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS (BOS) REPORT

None reported.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CONSUMER, GENERAL, FAMILY

None reported.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

Kathy Rupe reported that the committee finalized the agenda for the February 26, 2026, board meeting. The committee discussed monthly BHB program site visits for board members. Cynthia will share a list of available sites, and board members may volunteer, with two members assigned per visit. Committee will complete forms developed by the Ad Hoc Committee after each site visit. Annie Henrich shared her experience regarding a referral to Telecare and BHRS .

Administrative Fiscal Management Committee

None reported.

PRESENTATION: Incompetent To Stand Trial (IST) Update

Keri Magee, BHRS Chief Operations Officer, provided a PowerPoint presentation to the board outlining the impact of Incompetent Stand Trial (IST) cases in Stanislaus County. Due to limited state hospital capacity and requirements under California Senate Bill 184, the County incurred penalties related to IST cases totaling \$450,000 in FY 2022–23 and \$3,975,000 in FY 2023–24. These penalties were reinvested locally. In FY 2024–25, BHRS launched the Re-Integration Support Team and Collaborative Court Behavioral Health Services programs to help mitigate and reduce future IST penalties. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation was distributed to the board.

DEPARTMENT REPORT:

Keri Magee reported the following highlights:

- BHRS is finalizing the Opioid Settlement Fund (OSF) Phase I plan for presentation to the Board of Supervisors. The plan focuses on prevention, expanding treatment access, justice system diversion, and the Stanislaus Triage Access, Recovery, and Treatment (START) Center, and expanding Drug Court for Proposition 36 referrals. Phase II will focus on evaluating system capacity and treatment needs.
- BHRS completed an application for Proposition 36 implementation funding. The request includes support for coordination between behavioral health and the justice system, data collection and technology infrastructure to track cases and outcomes, and funding related to housing and transportation support for individuals involved in Prop 36.
- The Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) Integrated Plan is being drafted for submission to Department of Health Care Service (DHCS) and will later be presented to the Board of Supervisors. Stakeholder meetings are scheduled for March 6 and March 10, 2026. The Plan incorporates stakeholder and focus group feedback while aligning with statewide goals and the Behavioral Health Accountability Set.
- BHRS will be undergoing several upcoming audits: External Quality Review Organization (EQRO) live review is scheduled for April 16, 2026, the Mental Health (MH) Block Grant Review from April 21, 2026 - April 23, 2026, and the Behavioral Health Plan (BHP) DMC-ODS/SUBG virtual review is scheduled for June 8, 2026–June 12, 2026.
- BHRS completed the DHCS Annual Network Certification, which evaluated provider capacity for Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health services. The review identified a shortage of one psychiatrist; however, this position was filled in December after submission. In addition, timeliness issue for urgent services was noted due to staff misunderstanding the 48-hour requirement.
- BHRS met with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to provide an update on the Hope Forward Project in Turlock, which will include a psychiatric health facility, crisis stabilization unit, and STRTP for children and youth. Construction is expected to be completed in December, though licensing may still be pending at that time.
- Ruben Imperial, BHRS Director, has been conducting site visits across various programs, including the Mobile Crisis Response Team, CCP Full-Service Partnership, Children’s Intensive Community Support Services, and Care Multidisciplinary Teams.
- Due to a recent spike in overdose deaths, BHRS amplified its social media messaging to encourage calling 911, promote access to Narcan, and provide information on treatment support lines.

- The State has proposed making the Medi-Cal Mobile Crisis Response benefit optional beginning April 1, 2027, with lower reimbursement rates that would increase the local cost required to cover the non-federal portion of funding.
- Pam Esparza, Chief, and Alma Torres, Manager of the BHRS Supportive Services Division, have announced their retirement effective March 2026.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Jack Griffith recognized Kim Barber's dedication to NAMI. Kim Barber reported she conducted two 5-day trainings and one 2-day training, reaching over 50 participants.

Annie Henrich, a member of the Stanislaus Asian American Community Resource (SAACR), shared that SAACR will be sponsoring the 11th Annual Asian American Youth Leadership Conference on March 5, 2026, in partnership with the Modesto City School District. The conference is scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Peterson Event Center at 720 12th Street, Modesto. Additionally, Annie introduced Eden Chan, President of API Club at Enoch High School, who has expressed interest in serving on the board.

Loren Mannard invited members to attend the International Rescue Community (IRC) meeting, offices are located in Modesto and Turlock.

Kym Barber reported that NAMI Stanislaus hosted a Town Hall meeting on February 24, 2026, in Newman, with approximately 80–90 community members in attendance, including Ruben Imperial and Supervisor Channce Condit. The meeting was centered on youth voice, with students actively engaging with speakers and raising questions about transportation and access to care.

As a follow-up, students visited Sacramento to observe a House meeting. Additionally, in partnership with NAMI Stanislaus, the offices of Supervisor Channce Condit, Assembly Member Juan Alanis, and Senator Maria Alvarado-Gil recognized students for their advocacy with awards. Additionally, students will also receive graduation cords.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m. The next meeting will be March 26, 2026, 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m., at 1130 12th St. Modesto.

Respectfully Submitted by O. Jimenez, Confidential Assistant III