

**OFFICE OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION**

July 28, 2022 – Minutes

Kathleen Austria, Chair

**APPROVED: September 22, 2022**

**Move–Commissioner Sanabria, second–Commissioner Schallert**

**DISCUSSION**

1. **Call to Order / Roll Call / Acknowledgement: Thanking ASL Interpreters, Spanish interpreters, CART captioner, technology and multimedia team, and staff support**

Commissioner Root (P), Commissioner Padilla-Frausto (P), Commissioner Friedman (P), Commissioner Stevens (P), Commissioner Barbour (P), Commissioner Austria (P), Commissioner Dalgleish (P), Commissioner Banko (P), Commissioner Okonji (AE), Commissioner Molina (P), Commissioner Acebo (P), Commissioner Sanabria (P), Commissioner Cooperberg (P), Commissioner Weissman (P), Commissioner Schallert (P), Lil Sofiani (P) – **QUORUM PRESENT**

**Administrative Matters**

2. **Approval of April 28, May 26, & June 23, 2022, MHC Minutes -**

**Motion to approve April 28 minutes. Move to approve by Commissioner Molina, seconded by Commissioner Sanabria. Motion duly carried by roll call vote:**

**Ayes (12)** Commissioner Root, Commissioner Padilla-Frausto, Commissioner Barbour, Commissioner Stevens, Commissioner Austria, Commissioner Banko, Commissioner Dalgleish, Commissioner Molina, Commissioner Acebo, Commissioner Sanabria, Commissioner Cooperberg, Commissioner Schallert

**Abstain (2)** Commissioner Friedman, Commissioner Weissman

**Motion to approve May 26 minutes. Commissioner Molina moved to approve motion, Commissioner Schallert seconded. Motion duly carried by roll call vote:**

**Ayes (14)** Commissioner Root, Commissioner Padilla-Frausto, Commissioner Friedman, Commissioner Barbour, Commissioner Stevens, Commissioner Austria, Commissioner Banko, Commissioner Dalgleish, Commissioner Molina, Commissioner Acebo, Commissioner Sanabria, Commissioner Cooperberg, Commissioner Weissman, Commissioner Schallert

**Motion to approve June 23 minutes. Commissioner Schallert moved to approve motion; Commissioner Root seconded. Motion duly carried by roll call vote:**

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**Ayes (14)** Commissioner Padilla-Frausto, Commissioner Friedman, Commissioner Root, Commissioner Barbour, Commissioner Stevens, Commissioner Austria, Commissioner Banko, Commissioner Dalgleish, Commissioner Acebo, Commissioner Molina, Commissioner Sanabria, Commissioner Cooperberg, Commissioner Cooperberg, Commissioner Schallert, Commissioner Weissman

**Commission Inquiry** – After a review of the minutes from the April 28, 2022 meeting, the changes suggested did not reflect in the minutes. Commissioner Acebo suggested to make a motion to reconsider and allow Commission to review the most recent draft and discuss at next meeting. Commissioner Stevens seconded.

**3. FY 2022-23 MHC Election for Member-at-Large position - Ben Root elected Member-at-Large. Motion to close nomination moved by Commissioner Stevens and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Schallert.**

**Final election results for FY 2022-23 Executive Committee**

Chair - Kathleen Austria

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair - Kevin Acebo

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair - Martel Okonji

Past Chair - Stacy Dalgleish

Member-at-Large – Susan Friedman and Bennett Root

### Presentations

**4. DMH Administration Update - Connie D. Draxler, Acting Chief Deputy Director**

Ms. Draxler provided updates on the following topics:

**Hollywood 2.0** - Working with Hollywood Forward a virtual community event on was held on July 11, 2022, over 150 stakeholders attended. The purpose of the event was to gain participants for three workgroups:

- Program Design
- Housing
- Supported Employment

Working on a staffing pattern for the HOME, Homeless Outreach Mobil Engagement, and FSP teams are primary new services and new teams for the Hollywood area.

**Restorative Care Village** - Crisis and residential beds increased at county hospital campuses:

- 16 beds at MLK BH campus
- 64 beds at LAC USC
- 80 beds at Olive View
- 80 beds at Rancho Los Amigos

**Hiring**

- Hired a Human Resources Director
- Seeking CEO approval to hire MHPA Program Manager IV. The MHPA position will centralize MHPA activities.

**Commission Q&A**

- Commissioner Stevens inquired will resources provided to Hollywood 2.0 come from Innovations Project.
- Commissioner Schallert inquired about FSP staff pay due to the vacancy crisis. **Response:** Field bonuses approved, and additional bonuses will be available.

**5. DMH Financial Update - Kim Nall, Financial Manager**

Ms. Nall presented a power point providing updates on 3 budget documents: **see link for supporting documents**

- Countywide Calendar of Budget Items
- FY 2022-23 Adopted Budget
- FY 2021-22 MHPA Unspent Dollars

Ms. Nall announced she will be regularly presenting overviews at full MHC meetings on the new process to handle unmet needs, engage stakeholders, and discuss the supplemental budget.

- September – discuss how we will break down the budget in percentages and outpatient and inpatient by service area and district.
- November – discuss the adopted budget which would include supplemental changes, and FY2021-22 MHPA and sales tax fund balances
- December – discuss the FY2023-24 recommended budgets and unmet needs.

**Commission Q&A**

- Commissioner Stevens inquired about unmet needs in the communities and collecting information in service areas. **Response:** a new process will be implemented soon.

DMH budget is broken down in 4 major categories: See for the supporting documentation budget data

- Outpatient

- Treatment beds
- Public Guardian
- Administration

**Commission Q&A**

Commissioners inquired about unmet needs in communities in the supervisorial districts and service areas. How the unmet needs are being collected and what was the outcome of the unmet needs. Commissioner Cooperberg gave an example of SA1 with 56 FSP slots and SA8 with approximately 400 FSP slots speaking on the inequity between the services and in programs. How much are those services being funded and how many people receive services. Commissioners continued to discuss AB109 issues, inequities in geographic and funding, salary increases and bonuses, and the status of the therapeutic transportation.

**6. Legislative Analysis - Cynthia Wheaton, DMH Legislative Analyst**

Ms. Wheaton gave updates on AB 552, AB 1859, and SB 1338 legislative bills. See supporting documentation

- AB 552 will establish the integrated school-based behavioral health partnership program. The bill is moving through the legislative process and will be heard in the Senate on August 1.
- Ms. Wheaton spoke about substantive amendments in the Care Court bill that will clean up technical issues.
- Ms. Wheaton spoke about the Care Act with amendments that may include counties to receive funding for housing. Bill schedule to be heard on August 3.

**7. Announcement: Launch of National 988 Suicide Crisis Lifeline - Imee Perius, DMH PIO - see supported documentation link**

Imee Perius gave an update on the new 988 Call Center. The call center is available 24/7, confidential and free emergency line to everyone with mental health related issues including stress, suicide thoughts, and substance use.

Ms. Perius also shared a promotional video for 988 Call Center assisted by Alternative Crisis Response efforts.

Ms. Perius stated in the coming months a more extensive marketing campaign for 988 will be funded by a portion of the state crisis care mobile grant and provide an update. Ms. Perius stated our subject matter experts have been sharing the word through television interviews, local and national media to spread the word.

**Commissioners Q&A**

Commissioners inquired how does social media and various website messages get to families at home struggling with issues; what language groups are covered with the contract with Didi Hirsch, how many calls did 988 receive in the first week? Commission would like to learn more about the marketing plan and how efforts will promote 988 as an alternative.

**8. Community Report Backs to MHC - SALT, UsCC, CCC Co-Chairs**

**Paul Stansbury, Co-Chair, SALT 8**

**Summarize the issues your Service Area/Cultural Community is currently addressing:** The SALT 8 did not meet in July. The Peer Mentoring Group and the Ex. Committee did meet. Plans for future agendas particularly schools and mental health initiatives were made for August and September. Also, recruiting for members is progressing well. SALT 8 has had good attendance at meetings but recruiting for members willing to officially represent different groups has been an issue. In the last few months SALT 8 has been able to identify and approve membership for persons from several different groups. Other immediate issues where concerns were about the implementation of the 988 crisis line and need for information about the CARE Court proposal of the Governor to ensure infrastructure is in place to support both the 988 implementation and the proposed CARE Court.

**Key struggles this month:** As indicated in identify issues the struggles are getting information about 988 implementation and proposed CARE Court.

**Key successes this month:** SALT 8 has been able to approve several new members to represent the Asian, African American, Peers and LGTBQ communities.

**What priority community issue(s) from your SALT or UsCC should the MH Commission be aware of:** With the coming of the 988-crisis line and the possible CARE Court the concerns about having the infrastructure of housing, and treatment available with the likelihood of increased demand. The lack of mental health professionals and workers makes the problem more of a concern. The priority issues are the mental health needs of homeless not being addressed, COVID grief and loss, need for more psychiatry and therapy services, access to care issues, re-integration of justice involved, school mental health issues, crises response including the 988 implementation, and staff shortages. Progress has been made in recruiting persons willing to become official members but more still needs to be done.

**Penny Mehra, Co-Chair, SALT Service Area 5**

I first want to say that we would like to thank Stacy Dagleish for her time as the Chair on the Mental Health Commission, and she has a big presence in our Service Area and is always collecting information and getting feedback and we thank her for her, it will be ongoing participation, but she needs to know the community supports her.

We've been very active with several presentations at our SALT. We had, in June, a Summer Celebration that was at a local Veteran's Park in Culver City, and it was amazing. One thing was that people could meet – it was outside – face-to-face for the first time in many, many, many months. We had a presentation on the API Community in May, and in July we talked about preparedness and going back to school, and in August we will have the person from this project and will be talking to us about the [indistinct] programs. We're interested in hearing about the 988 rollout.

**Romalis Taylor, Co-Chair of the Black & African Heritage UsCC**

I'm giving an updated report on what we are doing. We're working with DMH and staff, with Destiny Walker and Angel Baker, to update our report of the Capacity Building Projects over the past years, as well as updating our Life Link resource book for our communities. Also, we had gotten a report from the Black & African Mental Health Taskforce from Nakeya Fields, and we also had a presentation by Dr. Jorge Partida on the Promotores

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program and the status of what's going on for the Black and African portion of that project and we're figure to get a further detailed report and presentation next meeting.

We also have an update with regards to our projects. This year, all our projects are out and up to date, and we are working on the SOWs for the projects that have been identified and approved by the committee for next year. We're working with Angel Baker to identify our youth promoters. Also, we're working on a project to identify speakers for our calendar year so that we can move forward with presentations and, hopefully, we will be able to share that at our next meeting, as to when that is and what those projects are, as well. Are there any questions?

### **Pastor Nah, SALT 4 Report**

I was able to hear the presentation related to 988 launching from the SALT 4 meeting. So, in the meeting we talked about if there should be any type of improvement in terms of using the 988 number, then the stakeholder needs to report. So, there were two things which were mentioned. The first suggestion is that when you provide 988 flyers with the stakeholders or community, please prepare a different language version of the flyer related to 988. The reason is because in LAUSD, there are many different populations and there are about 100 different languages, various languages for different populations. So basically, you know, when there is an initial stage of developing any mental illness, it frequently occurs in the age of TAY youth. But then these immigrated parents or the parents who do not speak English, they can't respond to this type of crisis for their children since they do not speak English. So mostly, the people who request for the service, they are not the customer themselves but are the family members or the parents. That's why they don't speak English. And secondly, there must be a 911 checklist, which is provided by LAPD, for example. So, when people or consumers call 988, there's got to be a checklist for them to use so that they can use this phone line effectively. Thank you.

### **Leticia Muniz, SALT 2 Co-Chair**

I wanted to let you know what's going on in our area. Providers have identified not having any inpatient and outpatient for youth, and I'll go on to tell you that I also wanted to say that NAMI's having their Annual Conference August 25-26 at the Marriott Hotel in Newport Beach. Also, Sheila Kuehl had a (audio distortion) last month. It was very successful. They had over 200 in attendance and (audio distortion) There were a lot of volunteers, and it was very well organized.

And we're going for Co-Chairs, there's only one Co-Chair and we did the nominations via elections. We'll be dark in August, so we'll know who is taking the seat in September. We also have a presenter coming in that was invited from Social Security to present on the ticket to work program, pending Human Trafficking by the FBI or DMH. Also, Olive View is moving and as of 8/1, they'll open. Services will remain the same. And let's see, I think that's it for now. Thank you very much.

### **Public Comment**

#### **9. Public Comment: Agenda & Non-Agenda Items**

**Amparo Ostojic - (addressing MHC on 7/28/22 Agenda item number 5 DMH Financial update via email).**

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As a former mental health promoter and someone who works closely with Mental Health Promoters. I want to encourage Mental Health Commission to consider raising the current pay rate of Mental health promoters to living wages. Mental health promoters who work for DMH currently make \$16.66 per hour. Mental health promoters often tell me they have a hard time making ends meet. We need to increase the pay rate so that promoters can make this job their focus instead of struggling to find side jobs to make ends meet. Prevention Early Intervention (PEI) MSHA funds are used to fund this program, and that means community input is required, stakeholders are not aware of any community input on how DMH came up with the \$16.66 pay rate. The program has room to hire about an additional 150 mental health promoters, the program is working very hard on recruitment, however, I would venture to say that if the pay rate was higher, more people would apply, and more promoters would stay in their position.

The MH Promoter Program spent 43.8% (\$347,00) of its's approved budget of \$800,000 annual budget last fiscal year (2021-2022). That means over half of the funds were left unused because there are not enough promoters working. Highly trained and dedicated Mental Health Promoters often leave the program to higher wages and/or full-time positions.

A livable wage in Los Angeles County for one person with no children is \$21.89 according to MIT.edu and \$30.73 for a person with two children. The minimum wage in LA county is \$16.00, paying 66 cents more than minimum wage is not enough. We need a living wage for the invaluable work mental health promoters do, they make a great positive impact on reducing mental health stigma in LA County and they deserve livable wages.

**Bianca Gallegos**, I am soliciting and asking for an increase for those of us working for the Department of Mental Health. A dignified salary that would be \$26 an hour. Those are my worries and my issues regarding the state law. The state received funds from FEMA and SAMHSA in 2021 because of COVID and the state used those funds to initiate House Hope in February and March of 2021. So, when we're talking about peers, that is a component of that program and life experience is required for this position.

So, it's supposed to be obligatory, according to the Federal Government, to be \$23 and some-cents per hour and all Cal Hope contractors must pay their peers at least that amount. It doesn't matter where they will be, but those who are peers in California independent of where they are, without matter of the state of the certification of those peers, without having that into account. None of the peers working in the program as of now are certified.

**Wendy Cabil**, a DMH client in Antelope Valley, a member of the Cultural Competency Committee, the Black & African Heritage Underserved Cultural Community, a law graduate and a peer mentor and community advocate. And briefly, I will be sharing a list of concerns and issues that I'd like to bring to your attention that need to be addressed and I'll submit that in an email.

And I like what I've been hearing today with these additional reports, a time overdue, but thankfully we're here in the moment to move forward. And I wanted to piggyback on what Bianca Gallegos, my peer, has already shared in Spanish, that when you're talking about looking for ways to spend the money and that the emphasis is on hiring, well, let's include the increase of wage for United Mental Health Promoters from \$16 and 66

cents to a livable wage of around \$20 or more. There's a letter that Bianca has already written and submitted to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors this past Tuesday and I'll be happy to share that letter, as well.

Good start for 988. Here's an area of improvement. Inquire input before releasing a video, since I notice representation lacking in the following matter: A) Recipients didn't reflect the BIPOC community, which stands for the Black, Indigenous, People of Color. I did notice a Black provider wearing cornrows and that was good, especially since the CROWN Act was passed to eliminate discrimination of ethnic hairstyles that are unique to Africa. The call center didn't reflect a visual representation, although there were indications of different languages that were spoken. But a visual representation of the BIPOC community of people answering the call would also be helpful. On that note, we are moving forward.

**Osbee Sangster, Black Los Angeles County Client Coalition Inc.** Public comment addressing that economic equality is key to building resilience. Disadvantaged groups are the most affected and least able to recover. What strategies can be adapted to break this vicious cycle of homelessness? Housing underpins the urgency of action. Tackling change is a defining challenge for the present day, the next decade, and beyond. It will take extensive planning and far-reaching change, but it also presents a new opportunity to create the future we want to see. As we transform our communities and our society to achieve the goal of net zero homelessness with recovery and reconstruction. The feedback loop, Black Los Angeles County Coalition advocacy effort. We are extremely concerned with the condition of chronic homelessness and urge inclusion to reestablish the Los Angeles County Mental Health Services Act housing trust fund and the interest in addressing immediate needs – economically and cost effective. Rapid housing solutions for the greater Los Angeles County. Priority investment, a housing trust fund. We must do better to achieve short and long-term goals and to provide supportive services in operation of expenses related to immediate instant housing units, such as buildings, structures, location sites and housing renovation. More to be continued. Thank you.

## Updates

### **10. Board of Supervisors Update - Yolanda Vera, Second District Representative**

There hasn't really been too much Board activity in the last month directly relating to DMH and I would say for the most part, the Board's actions as it relates to DMH, it's been mentioned in a list of other departments who have been asked to address issues. Of most recent significance, there was a Solis and Mitchell motion to deal with the opioid overdoses and a direction to come back with a plan with our Department of Public Health's substance abuse prevention control program to deal with that, and I can happily share the copy of that motion with the Commissioners.

Upcoming, we also have something that's not really a direct role for Mental Health but certainly has repercussions. There are two motions, one by Supervisor Mitchell's office and another by Solis' office and we'll be co-sponsoring each of those motions to address the sexually transmitted disease epidemic that is hitting our communities and to try to develop some approaches with our private partners, as well as our Federal and State agencies, to try to stem the outbreak that we have. In particular, with congenital syphilis, as well as other outbreaks affecting principally women between 19 and 26. The Board has been spending a lot of focused attention on COVID-19 and the Monkeypox outbreak. There were some actions that were taken related to trying to get more vaccines. We don't, unfortunately, have control over the vaccine supply, but we do have control in terms of how



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we distribute and allocate, so we're trying to be sure that the information is out there for the community so that it can be distributed. On COVID-19, I know that we're all kind of waiting to see what our public health officer will do with regards to the mandatory masking or not, depending on what the trends are, and it will be determined on the level of trends, and we'll make that decision tomorrow.

Other than that, I would say that the Board is looking at Rescue Act spending. There was a report at the last Board meeting on an update on how we're doing on Rescue Act spending with the first round of funds and soon there should be some Board action with regards to the second round of Rescue Act funds. Some of those funds are going to support Mental Health projects and new projects that the Department was hoping to do. The Board is going to be dark for August the 16th and August 23. It will be having a meeting next Tuesday, August 2, the Tuesday after that, August 9, and then at the very end of the month on August 30. And that is the report. Thank you, Commissioners.

### 11. Commissioner Updates-

- a) FY 2022-23 Strategic Goals and Review of FY 2021-22 Accomplishments - **Move to September 22, 2022**
- b) Mental Health Commission Annual Retreat  
Annual Retreat will be held at the Cathedral in October. Staff will poll Commissioners for available dates October 14 or October 28.
- c) Incubation Academy - Stacy Dalglish – **Move to next month agenda**
- d) Brown Act Training - September 22, 2022
- e) Bylaws Discussion and Possible Vote - **Bylaws discussion and vote postponed for September 22, 2022**
- f) DMH Workforce and Vacancy Ad Hoc - Ad hoc members: Commissioners Acebo, Barbour, Dalglish and we welcome Commissioners interested in joining the group.
  - Starting from very simple points of view and what is the main point of view.
  - May possibly be a multi-year issue and problem like any other industry.
  - Begun a review of state and federal dollars specific to workforce training and behavioral health.
  - Include conversations with community groups and stakeholders

### 12. Stakeholder Engagement - Darlesh Horn

- a) Planning a two-day stakeholder event on September 23 and 30 to kickoff re-expanding the stakeholder engagement process. Event will be held at DMH Headquarters on the Terrace. Commissioners will receive invites
- b) Be more inclusive and enhance the stakeholder process because we have a new 3-year plan scheduled to go before the board on June 23, 2023

### Adjournment

Motion to adjourn moved by Commissioner Acebo, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Cooperberg. Meeting adjourned 2:02 pm