



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Sheriff
Department No.: 032
For Agenda Of: October 19, 2021
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Bill Brown, Sheriff-Coroner (805 681-4290)
Director(s)
Contact Info: Cherylynn Lee, PhD, Behavioral Sciences Manager(805 698-8934)

SUBJECT: Sheriff's and Behavioral Wellness County Co-Response 2020 Quantitative and Qualitative Data and Outcomes Review

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Risk Management:

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Hear a joint presentation from the Sheriff's Office and Behavioral Wellness regarding quantitative and qualitative data from the three mental health co-response teams for the calendar year 2020; and
- b. Determine that the above action is not a project pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), as it is the creation of a government funding mechanism or other government fiscal activity, which does not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

Summary Text:

In September 2018, the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office partnered with Behavioral Wellness to pilot the County's first law enforcement mental health co-response team (COR). The overarching mission of COR is to divert persons in mental health crisis from the criminal justice system and into treatment when safe and appropriate. The pilot demonstrated success in terms of, reducing arrests for persons with

mental illness, reducing time on scene for deputies handling mental health related calls, reducing the number of deputies on scene during mental health related calls, increasing the number of treatment admissions to Behavioral Wellness and improving community relationships with law enforcement. As the pilot program was operating, the Sheriff's Office and Behavioral Wellness sought grant funding to expand the program. Currently there are two grants (Byrne JAG and Prop 47) funding the three existing co-response teams. Both grants are through the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) and are due to expire in October 2022. As a part of the grant requirements, objective third-party evaluators were onboarded and have completed a data review for calendar year 2020. This presentation will include both qualitative and quantitative data that further demonstrate the success of the program and support COR expansion.

Background:

Mental health crisis calls are on the rise, and law enforcement is typically the first resource to arrive on scene. According to data gathered by Dispatch, the Sheriff's Office responds to an average of 5-8 mental health crisis calls per day and an average of 36-40 suicidal persons calls per month. These calls for service average nearly two to three times as long as non-mental health calls and typically require more than one deputy on scene. The reason for the increase in call time and personnel is that when deputies request a clinician from Behavioral Wellness to evaluate a person for a psychiatric detention (WIC5150) the clinician is often responding from an office far removed from the scene and may not be able to respond for an extended period if they are working on another crisis call. Additionally, persons in mental health crisis are often in need of de-escalation and that process can take additional time. Since the COR pilot program began, the teams have demonstrated that not only are they able to resolve mental health crisis calls quicker than patrol, but that when a clinician and deputy arrive to the crisis together as a team, they are able to provide added expertise and resource to the crisis that contribute to positive call outcomes including reduced use of force and increased diversion from jail.

Special Instructions:

Attachments:

Attachment A: PowerPoint Presentation

Authored by: Dr. Cherylynn Lee

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