



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's Office
Department No.: 032
For Agenda Of: 01/09/2018
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Sheriff Bill Brown, Ext. 4290
Director(s)
Contact Info: Commander Rob Plastino, Ext. 6161

SUBJECT: Creation of the Stepping Up Initiative Governing Board

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: No

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Authorize the Chair to execute the attached resolution creating the Stepping Up Initiative Governing Board and designating the composition of the governing body to carry out a six-step planning process to reduce the number of adults with mental illness from cycling through the county jails, as detailed in Resolution 16-298 which was adopted and authorized by the Board of Supervisors on December 13, 2016; and
- b) Determine that the approval of the recommended action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b) (5), since the recommended action is a government administrative activity which does not involve commitment to any specific project which may result in potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

Summary Text:

The County of Santa Barbara is a participant in the national endeavor to reduce the number of people with mental illness in jails. This initiative, called Stepping Up, implements a six-step planning process that brings together various county departments to identify and intercept qualified individuals for treatment rather than incarceration.

In October 2016, the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office held the first meeting of the Stepping Up Initiative with various individuals present, including community and NGO advocates, as well as some county departments and representatives of the Board of Supervisors. Over the past year, the implementation of milestones within the Stepping Up plan has indicated a need for more executive involvement from many County departments. As such, the Stepping Up Initiative Governing Board would consist of: A member of the Board of Supervisors, the County Executive Officer, the Sheriff (chair), the District Attorney, the Director of Behavioral Wellness, the Chief Probation Officer, and the Public Defender.

Background:

Each year, there are an estimated 2 million people with serious mental illnesses admitted to jails across the nation. This is the equivalent to the populations of Vermont and New Hampshire combined. Almost three-quarters of these adults also have drug and alcohol use problems. Once incarcerated, individuals with mental illnesses tend to stay longer in jail and upon release are at a higher risk of returning to incarceration than those without these illnesses.

Sheriff Bill Brown, a Commissioner on the State of California's Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission, saw the humanitarian implications of recognizing mental illness early in the judicial process. Through his work with the State, he was familiar with the Stepping Up Initiative and endeavored to bring it to Santa Barbara County. On December 13, 2016, the Board of Supervisors approved a resolution to adopt the six-step plan of Stepping Up:

1. Convene or draw on a diverse team of leaders and decision makers from multiple agencies committed to safely reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in jails;
2. Collect and review prevalence numbers and assess individuals' needs to better identify adults entering jails with mental illnesses and their recidivism risk, and use that baseline information to guide decision making at the system, program, and case levels;
3. Examine treatment and service capacity to determine which programs and services are available in the county for people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders, and identify state and local policy and funding barriers to minimizing contact with the justice system and providing treatment and supports in the community;
4. Develop a plan with measurable outcomes that draws on the jail assessment and prevalence data and the examination of available treatment and service capacity, while considering identified barriers;
5. Implement research-based approaches that advance the plan; and
6. Create a process to track progress using data and information systems, and to report on successes.

Sheriff Brown worked to build collaborations and partnerships with other county leaders, each of whom are key components to the Stepping Up initiative. Meetings were held throughout 2017, working toward the goal of implementing each step of the plan. Attendees in these meetings included Department Heads,

County CEO, Board of Supervisor, representatives from non-governmental organizations and community interest groups.

The governing board will meet as often as necessary to discuss the Stepping Up Initiative, including but not limited to, changes in procedure and policy, implementation of department level practices, data collection and sharing, and the effectiveness of the program. This Stepping Up Initiative Governing Board will report to the full Board of Supervisors, which retains authority to set general policy on fiscal and personnel matters within the County.

Special Instructions:

Please send a Minute Order to the Sheriff's Office, attention Hope Vasquez.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Resolution Designating a Stepping Up Initiative Governing Board

Attachment B: Resolution 16-1003

Authored by:

Rob Plastino, Commander, Sheriff's Office (extension 6161)

CC:

County Executive Office

County Counsel