



County of Santa Barbara MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

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Board of Supervisors

Salud Carbajal-1st District
Janet Wolf-2nd District
Doreen Farr-3rd District
Peter Adam-4th District
Steve Lavagnino-5th District

Officers

Jan Winter – 1st District,
Chairperson

Charles Huffines -5th
District, *Vice Chairperson*

Members

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Jan Winter-1st District
Vacant - 2nd District
Alicia Journey -2nd District
Julie Solomon-3rd District
James Rohde- 3rd District
Tom Urbanske – 4th District
Vacant – 4th District
Charles Huffines-5th District
John Truman-5th District

Alternates

Wayne Mellinger - 1st District
Vacant -2nd District
Tom Franklin -3rd District
Vacant - 4th District
Ann Eldridge – 5th District

Commission Staff

Karen Campos

Advisory Board on Drug & Alcohol Problems (ABDAP)

Liaison
James M. Rohde

Latino Advisory Committee

Liaison
No Representative

Mental Health Jail Services

Liaison
Ann Eldridge

Consumer and Family Advisory

Committee Liaison
Charles Huffines

Governing Board

Steve Lavagnino-Member
5th District Supervisor

Peter Adam-Alternate
4th District Supervisor

Web site:
<http://countysfb.org/behavioral-wellness/>

September 21, 2016

Honorable Peter Adam, Chair, and Members of the Board of Supervisors:

This is to report to you an unprecedented vote by the Mental Health Commission. This vote occurred on August 31, 2016, at the public hearing regarding the 2016/17 Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Plan Update. This hearing was held pursuant to current California regulations (W&I 5848.)

A majority of Commissioners voted to table indefinitely the vote to approve the MHSA Plan Update. The vote to defer approval was due to insufficient background information provided during the past year from the Behavioral Wellness Department since the last Plan Update.

At the August 31 public hearing, Commissioners expressed several specific frustrations:

-We were being asked to rubber stamp a Plan Update after the fact: We are already two months into the Plan Update's fiscal year. The Plan has already been implemented.

-Reports on the Plan Update's development, after the March 2016 public meetings, reports that were on agendas for several Commission meetings, were repeatedly postponed by the Department, so Commissioners were not able to ask questions and provide input to the Plan Update until the Plan was already in operation!

-The "draft" plan contained insufficiently detailed information to permit the Commission to make informed decisions on its merits, particularly on the history of the effectiveness of ongoing programs, including patient outcomes.

-Outcome data, specifically required for MHSA programs, is mostly missing or not up to date, or unreliable, as defined by the Department. There is no information on the provision of services and their outcomes across the diverse groups, i.e., Latino, Black, American Indians, and White: how can we know how equitable and culturally competent these services are?

-In a few places, the information was clearly not accurate, e.g., the reporting of numbers of persons served and cost per person for the three Recovery Learning Centers and the Family Advocate programs. According to the Plan Update, this \$1,375,000 program served only a total of 104 clients at a per client cost of \$13,453! And this figure is from 2014/15, two years ago! Accurate information can be compiled from the regular monthly reports each contractor provides.

The Commission takes seriously our W&I Code 5604 mandate to review and advise our Supervisors on the delivery of local mental health budget and performance goals, advocating for improving the quality of life for individuals and families served by the department. Our mandate and our commitment are being trivialized here. We stand ready and expect to participate more fully in future Plan Updates and the overall operations of the Department.

Sincerely,



Jan Winter
Chairperson
Santa Barbara County
Mental Health Commission

cc: Mona Miyasato, Santa Barbara County Executive Office
Terri Maus-Nisich, Assistant CEO, Health & Human Services
Alice Gleghorn, Behavioral Wellness Director