



# Merced County Mental Health Board Meeting

April 1, 2014

3:30 – 5:00 pm

1137 B Street, Merced, CA

<b>Present:</b>	Cora Gonzales, Chair; Richard Hawthorne, Vice-Chair; Iris Mojica de Tatum, Secretary; Sally Ragonut; Jan Morita; Keng Cha; Vince Ramos; David Baker
<b>Absent:</b>	Kim Carter; Supervisor Walsh; Mary Ellis; James Fuller; Mary Hofmann; Audrey Spangler; Chuck McClure
<b>Others Present:</b>	Scott De Moss; Curt Willems; Chris Kraushar, PRA; Sharon Jones; Sharon Robinson; Cara Rupp and Aaron Eubanks, Wellness Center; Danielle Hibbitts, MH Clinician; Carol Hulsizer, Recorder

## MINUTES

### I. Call to Order / Flag Salute / Roll Call

Cora Gonzales, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m. The flag salute was done. Roll call was taken.

### II. Mission Statement

Jan Morita read the Mission Statement.

Cora shared the following statement – Treat your friends as you would your pictures and place them in the best light.

### III. Approval of Minutes from March 4, 2014 (BOARD ACTION)

**Action/Recommendation:** The minutes could not be approved because there was not a quorum.

### IV. Approval of Agenda for April 1, 2014 (BOARD ACTION)

**Action/Recommendation:** The minutes could not be approved because there was not a quorum.

### V. Opportunity for public input. At this time any person may comment on any item which is not on the agenda.

**Discussion/Conclusion:** Vince acknowledged Cora and Sally who held up very well when they attended the Fresno Mental Health Board meeting. There was a lot of work and he wanted to give kudos to both. Vince continued that he attended safeTALK on suicide. SafeTALK taught them how to identify and help these people. He passed around a booklet for everyone to look over; he also shared a resource list of places to call. Sharon J. continued that safeTALK is a program by Living Works out of Canada and it is to develop a community of alert suicide helpers. There will be one training a month this year.

Sally commented that she was watching Channel 30 news last night and they were talking about a young lady who had committed suicide and the parents were having a hard time getting services for her. During the presentation there were people in the background with a sign that stated "Suicide Saves Lives" because her organs had been donated to others. Sally was upset and found this terrible. She hopes someone contacts Channel 30 about this.

Cora stated that the Board received a thank you card from Hub Walsh for the card the Board sent him over the recent passing of his father. Cora also passed around a card at today's meeting for Mary Ellis who recently lost her daughter.

**Recommendation/Action:** Information only

### VI. Wellness Center Presentation – Cara Rupp and Aaron Eubanks

**Discussion/Conclusion:** Cara began that she is a clinician at the Merced Wellness Center. Aaron introduced himself as the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor at the Wellness Center. Danielle Hibbitts was also present and she is a clinician at the Adult Clinic. Cara continued that the Wellness Center is located right next door to Marie Green, the inpatient unit. There are MHSA elements that are incorporated into the Wellness Center. The Wellness Center is designed for a focus on wellness, recovery and resiliency. The Center incorporates cultural, linguistic, competency, consumer and family driven services as well as community collaboration. The Wellness Center program came to be through a series of stakeholder processes. These stakeholder processes

**VI. Wellness Center Presentation – Cara Rupp and Aaron Eubanks – con't.**

continue with an active Consumer Advisory Committee which meets every Monday at 11:00 a.m. at the Wellness Center. The committee consists of participating members of the Center and they have a voted Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer.

Aaron stated that the mission is defined by members of the Wellness Center. The Wellness Center is here to provide a community of support so that every member can have their own voice, in their own form and choose their own goals.

Cara continued that the vision combines prevention and services with a full range of integrated services to treat the person with the goal of self-sufficiency for those who may have otherwise faced homelessness or dependence on the State for years. The identified target population is adults with persistent and severe mental illness who are experiencing a functional impairment in their lives, not able to get employed, don't have good social support network, are not able to access medical care for themselves, are not participating in activities of daily living. The County of Merced area that it services is Merced city, the north side – Atwater, Livingston and Delhi, as well as the east side – Planada, Le Grand and Plainsburg. The majority of people who come to the Wellness Center are from Merced, there is a large population coming from Delhi from the two Board & Care Homes in Delhi. They also have clients that come in from the Board & Care in Chowchilla. There is transportation for the two Board & Care Homes in Delhi that come in on Monday, Thursday and Friday. There is also transportation for the Chowchilla Board & Care on Wednesday. There are outreach programs for the Southeast Asian community. There is a Consumer Assistant Worker who speaks Hmong and runs the two Southeast Asian groups on Monday and Wednesday. They work closely with the PATH program which is a program for outreach to the homeless, mentally ill. They also coordinate with the Homeless Shelter – there is a bed there that they access for clients who are in need of emergency housing. The Pathways to Employment Program does cleaning at the Shelter. They are following the SAMHSA Eight Dimensions of Wellness; all the groups, classes and activities are patterned off this – emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical, social and spiritual – creating the entire person. When events/programs/groups are planned, they look at what dimensions is this activity hitting on and are they making sure that they are hitting on the whole person in all aspects.

Aaron talked about employment. This year (FY 13/14) they have employed eight people. The Pathways to Employment Program is given to everyone in the mental health system that goes to the Wellness Center. This program gives everyone a chance to earn a real paycheck. Turning Point has been good to the Wellness Center in helping to place individuals. Most of the positions in the past were in landscaping, but this year they have made some of the positions into office assistance positions. They currently have clients working at Turning Point doing office work. One individual actually became like a Peer Mentor position and Turning Point is actually thinking of hiring her full time. They recently placed someone at Ace Air, they do A/C and heating. They have placed some in in-house supportive jobs – people want to be care providers. They have placed someone in the County Mental Health Dept. as a CAW. They work with the Dept. of Rehabilitation with the Employment Cooperative. About a year ago Merced was ranked number one in the State in employment cooperatives with case dollars per successful case closure. Merced's rate per case closure was about \$800 and the rest of the Employment Cooperatives in Calif. were about \$5,000 to \$8,000 per placement. Merced is saving the State money and with the Employment Cooperative they have met their goals every single year in getting people employed. The Employment Cooperative helps people who want to work – they help with interview clothes, transportation checks (\$60.00 - for bus pass, gas), develop career goals-objectives-resume, do assessments with the client. Then they write them a State plan and if they want to become an office assistant, they go out to a store and buy them interview clothes. Then they will do job development, find jobs that match their career goals. Once they have a career goal, they will buy them a whole new set of work clothes. They also do job retention which means once they have a job, they follow-up for three months making sure they are successful on the job. Once they are successful on the job, there is another agency that follows up for another year to make sure they are still successful on the job.

Cara continued with the art program which has expanded and grown over the last two years. The members want to increase the program – currently it is primarily funded through a volunteer and donations by a local artist that come to the Wellness Center once a week. They have done the tile work which was displayed at the State Oversight and Accountability Office in Sacramento. They made butterflies and helped raise money for domestic violence. They were part of making ceramic hearts which went in to the hospital and collected funds for the heart association. Seeing this art program grow has been awesome because it is community integration.

There was a question regarding who can access the Wellness Center and have the guidelines been revised. Cara replied that as of now everyone still goes through Access and is assessed. Awhile back the door had been closed quite significantly and those coming in had to meet some strict criteria with regards to a diagnosis as well as documented functional impairment. She thinks it is loosening up a little now where people can just be open to the Wellness Center, they don't have to meet the strict criteria. Sharon J. stated that they still have to be referred, go through Access and be talked with.

There was another question regarding the hiring of six new Peer Mentors and were they added to this program. Sharon J. stated that It

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was approved with the last update but they have not yet been hired.

Cara was asked about the numbers that attend in relationship to when the Center first opened. Cara replied that last year, about this time, they had about 550 different contacts and this year they have had about 700. It has grown significantly, but then it has leveled off in some ways. They have grown every year but for the last few years it has remained about 800 a year. This is just individuals coming in through the door. Currently they are trying to figure out how many come consistently and who come several times a week as opposed to some who come in every three months and get their needs met. The numbers don't always tell the story.

Cara was asked about the cultural diversity. Cara replied that the largest population is still Caucasian. The population they would like to grow is Hispanic; they are still having a difficult time outreaching to and getting them to attend the Wellness Center. They have two Spanish speaking individuals at the Wellness Center that provide services. The Southeast Asian population has grown and remained about the same; the Wednesday group has about 25-30 attending and the Monday group only has about 5 to 10.

Cara was asked about counseling for the homeless. Cara stated that the PATH grant worker is in charge of outreach to the homeless mentally ill. She goes out to the homeless shelter, parks, etc., and is in charge of identifying them. She connects them back to Mental Health and the Wellness Center.

*Recommendation/Action:* Information only

**VII. Chair’s Report**

- a. Fresno Mental Health Board Report
- b. Strategic Planning Session – April 17<sup>th</sup> – 1:30-3:30
- c. Annual Report Committee

*Discussion/Conclusion:* a. A copy of the document on the conference that was held in Fresno on March 8<sup>th</sup> was passed out to Board members. Invited to this regional meeting were Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Stanislaus, Merced, Mariposa, Kern and Madera counties; Mariposa and Kern were not able to attend. The facilitator was Jackie Ryle and she was fabulous. She presented the whole conference on a very positive note. They were able to hear the stories from each county on what they do well. It gave them a chance to network, see what other counties are doing and bring back ideas so we can move forward and improve the Mental Health Board. Everyone was impressed with Merced’s Annual Report; nobody had pictures attached to their annual report, much less color pictures. Merced seemed to have a full board that was active and also had a Board of Supervisor representative that was usually present. Merced has a very structured agenda and they liked the minutes. Cora has received several requests for copies of the annual report, copies of the checklist, etc. Cora was very proud of our county. Some of the other counties are doing a combination of alcohol and mental health boards, some have joint county programs, Statewide collaboratives, university collaboratives, education, cooperation with the Sheriff and District Attorney, and hold annual retreats. They have come up with a sub-committee that will meet and plan when the next regional meeting will take place. b. A strategic planning session has been planned for April 17<sup>th</sup> from 1:30-3:30. Because all Board members are invited to attend, the meeting will take place in County Administration, Room 310. c. The Annual Report is coming up and Cora asked for volunteers to work on this. Sally, Jan and Richard volunteered. An email will be sent out as to when the first meeting will take place.

*Recommendation/Action:* As noted above

**VIII. Supervisor’s Report**

*Discussion/Conclusion:* Supervisor Walsh was not present today.

*Recommendation/Action:* None

**IX. Director’s Report**

- a. Recruitment Update
- b. Medi-Cal Audit
- c. Hospital Remodel Project
- d. Prop 63 Funding

*Discussion/Conclusion:* a. Scott reported that the second panel of interviews will take place tomorrow. Depending on how these interviews go, there could be another set of interviews close to the beginning of May. Cora is on the interview panel tomorrow. b. The Department has received a draft copy of the findings. There are 31 elements that we will have to write plans of correction for. The recoupment was not as bad as the Dept. thought it might be; it came out to \$18,000. For the period they reviewed, there was an initial

**IX. Director’s Report – con’t.**

62% disallowed and the new percent is 50%. This was shared at the Full Staff meeting on Friday. The Department has a lot of work to do. The Executive Team is working very hard to help QI and the Program Managers bring more consistency in supervision to put back into place a number of the quality improvement items that have been lost over the years as key staff was lost. The Dept. not only lost the knowledge that went with the departed staff, but the programs they supported went away also. These programs cannot be run without people and the Dept. is trying to hire people. One key area that staff wants is training and the Dept. is working with CiMH on this. One element not included with CiMH is the help staff need from the transition from what they know and what they think they know how to do and getting it into the electronic record because it is new to them. This will be worked on because we cannot create a barrier with our information system. There should not be any changes to this draft document and there is a 60-day window for this period. At the end of the 60 days, the Dept. will get the final report. Curt commented that he recently attended a conference and the State talked about how they are getting more pressure from the Federal government to punish counties for not being in compliance and looking at extrapolation. The amount that we have to repay is not bad; it could have been much more. The services that are being denied were services that did not have a high dollar amount attached and this says the Department is doing good work with our psychiatrists, nursing staff, and clinical staff. It is other kinds of documentation or different things in the charts that are not getting in place and are costing us smaller amounts. c. Scott reported that in January the Department went to the BOS with a space problem asking for authority to work with a consultant – Williams & Paddon – to look at the space from the old hospital, what it could look like if we remodeled it for the Department and the cost. This is called a feasibility study. It will take several months to get through the initial process. One of Scott’s biggest concerns is the cost; this will probably be the biggest hurdle. At this time it looks like Administration, adult Mental Health and adult AOD would move into the old hospital. 13<sup>th</sup> Street would become children’s services for both Mental Health and AOD. It would also be good if the Department could get out of leased space; they currently spend about \$320,000/year on leases and this would be a savings. A large portion of these dollars is in AOD which is a very tightly funded program and this would help build more capacity to build AOD services. d. Scott reported that it has become evident that the Department needs to do a better job of addressing the concerns of the MHSA Ongoing Planning Council and this Board. There have been internal discussions on creating more user friendly representation of what is going on with the Prop. 63 funding. Another quarter closed at the end of March and new reports will be coming to this Board in April. Scott has been working with both Sharon Robinson and Sharon Jones on the MHSA programs and he hopes to have some “fruit” in April; this is something that he has heard is needed since becoming the Acting Director and he wants to be responsive to both the Ongoing Planning Council and Mental Health Board.

**Recommendation/Action:** Information only

**X. Committee Reports / Updates**

- a. **Quality Improvement Committee (QIC)** (Sally / Mary E.)
- b. **Executive / Bylaws / Planning Committee** (Cora)
- c. **Membership Committee** (Kim)
- d. **Patients’ Rights Advocate** (Chris)
- e. **Wellness Center Update** (Chuck)
- f. **CA Association of Local Mental Health Board/Chair (CALMHB/C) Update** (David / Keng)
- g. **National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)** (Jan)
- h. **Children’s System of Care (CSOC)** (Cora)
- i. **MHSA Ongoing Planning Council** (Sharon J. / Iris)
- j. **Cultural Competency Committee** (Mary H. / David)
- k. **Community Partner’s Meeting** (Vince / Mary E.)
- l. **Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD)** (Richard)
- m. **Nominating Committee**

**Discussion/Conclusion:** a. Sally had typed up the minutes and passed them out; she briefly went over the report. b. The Executive Committee met and that information has been reported on in this meeting. c. Kim was not present. d. Chris had an uneventful March. e. Chuck was not present today. f. David reported that the CALMHB/C is still working on a Statewide website that will include the minutes from some of the county meetings and also updates on mental health related legislative issues. Some of the CALMHB/C members are preparing to provide some suicide prevention trainings along with CiMH. There is a conference on April 17-19 in conjunction with the Calif. Mental Health Planning Council. David thinks he will be attending. g. Jan reported that they held their second Community Dialogue in Livingston. The next one is in Planada on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. They learned a great deal from the Livingston gathering and will have new ideas for Planada. Mary passed out a flyer for the Planada event and more details will be coming out soon. They were able to get a copy of the movie, *Call Me Crazy*. It will be shown on May 28<sup>th</sup> but they do not have a location yet. It

**X. Committee Reports / Updates – con't.**

will be a movie night – free popcorn, soda and candy. They are about ready to end their education classes – Family to Family and Peer to Peer on April 10th. Almost immediately they will be starting the NAMI Connection which is a recovery support group for consumers. h. Cora reported the next meeting is on April 14th. i. Sharon J. reported they are in the middle of a community planning process working towards developing a draft for the 3-year program plan from FY 14/15 to FY 16/17. They are also having focus groups and key informant interviews. The Outcomes Event will be May 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>. They are in the process of revamping it a little different this year – instead of looking at Powerpoints, each program will have to do a Story Board and that will have to cover three items – impact, reach and cost. She will be sending out more information soon on this. There will also be three panels to ask questions. j. Sharon J. reported that they meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month from 3:00-5:00. There is a health equity leadership initiative going through CIMH. Programs meet there to talk about any issues with access to services and cultural competence type issues. The State is getting ready to develop some guidelines and give them to the local level. k. Vince reported on the last Community Partner's meeting. Curt talked about HSA's Planning Playbook that he attended. It is for brainstorming how to create opportunities for better services within our community. One thing they would like to do is create a better community image in order to draw new people in. Vince continued that Los Banos has hired a new clinician. l. Richard reported there is nothing new with the blending of the two boards. The Youth 2 Youth Conference on March 22<sup>nd</sup> went very well. There were about 260 students participating. m. Cora has asked James Fuller, Sally Ragonut and David Baker to be the Nominating Committee. They have two months to come up with names for the voting of new officers starting in July.

*Recommendation/Action:* Information only

**XI. Announcements**

*Discussion / Conclusion:* Cora announced that at the May meeting she would like to review Rosenberg's Rules of Order. Cora also wanted to visit another site for May. After some discussion it was decided that they would like to try and meet at Salvador Lodge in Delhi. Sharon Jones suggested the Livingston Chamber of Commerce as a place to meet. Cora is also going to look into a Code of Conduct and this may be something that has to be developed. Cora requested that Carol work on name tags with lanyards for the Board. Scott changed the location of the April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting – the Strategic Planning Session – from his office to Room 310 in County Admin. Cora thanked everyone for their hard work and dedication.

*Recommendation/Action:* As noted above

**XII. Adjournment**

*Discussion / Conclusion:* The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m. The next meeting is May 6, 2014.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Carol Hulsizer  
Recording Secretary

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Iris Mojica de Tatum, Secretary  
Merced County Mental Health Board

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_