



**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION  
NOVEMBER 14, 2017 – 3:30 P.M.**

The Mental Health Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 at 3:37 p.m. in the Administration Building, 1717 N. Indian Hill Blvd. # B, Claremont, California.

**CALL TO ORDER** Chair Watson called the meeting to order at 3:37 p.m.

**ROLL CALL** A visual roll call was taken.

**PRESENT:** Toni L. Watson, Chair  
Donald R. Perez, Vice-Chair  
Arny Bloom  
Cheryl Berezny  
Rubio R. Gonzalez (arrived at 3:45 p.m.)  
Anne Henderson  
Twila L. Stephens  
Elmer Vidaña (arrived at 3:45 p.m.)  
Alfonso "Al" Villanueva

**ABSENT:** Davetta Williams

**STAFF:** Rimmi Hundal, Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services  
Elizabeth Owens, Director of Clinical Program Services  
Janet Lewis-Fiebiger, Program Supervisor (Clinical Wellness Advocate)  
Jeri Sprewell, Clinical Wellness Advocate  
Mica Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk

**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 10, 2017 MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING**

There being no comment, Vice-Chair Perez moved, and Commissioner Henderson seconded, to approve the Minutes of October 10, 2017. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: Commissioners Berezny, Bloom, Henderson, and Villanueva; Vice-Chair Perez; and Chair Watson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: Commissioners Stephens and Vidaña. ABSENT: Commissioners Gonzalez and Williams.

**II. PRESENTATION**

**AN OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE CLINICAL WELLNESS ADVOCATES (CWA) IN TRI-CITY'S SYSTEM OF CARE**

Janet Lewis, Program Supervisor (Clinical Wellness Advocate Program), introduced herself and stated that Clinical Wellness Advocates (CWA) are individuals, or have close family members, who have experienced life altering experiences of mental illness or/and substance abuse, and have since recovered and are now able to support others in their recovery.

She then discussed the number of staff that are part of the CWA program; the reasons for client referrals which are as a result of missing multiple appointments, lack of engagement in treatment, substance use, financial barriers, poor self-care, or poor engaging families; mentioned the places where the CWAs provide assistance to clients such as in the office community, Wellness Center, treatment facilities, homes, shelters, court rooms, parks, or street corners. She explained that the CWAs approach is informal and they initiate and develop relationships, share recovery stories, work in inspiring hope and trust, and spend time with clients. She pointed out that when using this approach, the CWA's show clients that there are several pathways to recovery; support client with one-to-one meetings and during meetings of any type; and provide extra emotional support and understanding.

Jeri Sprewell, Clinical Wellness Advocate, talked about her lived experience, her role and the support she provides through her position as CWA; and commented that when she introduces herself, she indicates that she is a peer and someone who has been where the client is today. She also explained that the CWA provides support such as assisting with coordinating medical appointments, provide transportation to appointments and sit in appointments, facilitating communication with community resources; and engaging and supporting client in maintaining communication with others.

Commissioner Villanueva commented about his lived experienced and then inquired about the percentage of Tri-City clients with mental disorders that have developed by long term substance abuse. Director of Clinical Program Services Owens indicated that approximately 46% of Tri-City clients have a dual diagnosis.

At 3:45 p.m., Governing Board Liaison Rubio R. Gonzalez and Commissioner Elmer Vidaña arrived at the meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding services provided to parolees' population; how realignment funds are used to provide services; and about current efforts of Tri-City to integrate services for mental and substance abuse disorders.

Commissioner Villanueva commented reading a book titled 'In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts' and recommended that staff read this book; he also praised CWA Sprewell for helping clients with love and compassion.

Commissioner Bloom inquired when the Clinical Wellness Advocate program had begun. Director of Clinical Program Services Owens explained that this program was a re-start from another similar program that was called 'Advocates' which was introduced approximately six years ago; however, it was not effective due to how the program was structured. Therefore, the program was reintroduced last year as a result of the need for additional support, noting that this time there was a different program foundation and that, with the assistance of key personnel, a very specific job description was developed for the Clinical Wellness Advocate position.

Discussion ensued regarding the difference between the original Advocate program and the existing Clinical Wellness Advocate program; the current challenges in meeting the needs of all client referrals with the existing personnel; the pending need of additional personnel to meet the needs of all of the referrals; and the established requirements for the Clinical Wellness Advocate position which includes having lived experience among several other requirements.

Commissioner Stephens commented on the importance of recognizing the little steps to recovery and praised staff for recognizing the 'gains' which in her opinion are successes.

The Mental Health Commission thanked staff for their presentation.

### **III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services Hundal reported that on November 3rd, Tri-City received notification from the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) that its application for the NPLH Technical Assistance funds had been approved; that key staff will meet on November 20th to discuss the next steps, which includes recruiting for a consultant who will organize and facilitate a stakeholder process to create a strategic plan to address homelessness in the Tri-City catchment area, noting that Tri-City staff will invite Tri-City's Mental Health Commission to participate in the process with the goal to address the concerns of NIMBY (Not-in-my-backyard) and create a YIMBY (Yes-in-my-backyard) philosophy throughout the three cities. She then announced that the City of Pomona will host its annual Christmas Parade on December 9th, indicating that Tri-City will participate again this year, as it has been participating for the last seven years, and invited the Commission to join Tri-City staff in the parade.

### **COMMISSION ITEMS AND REPORTS**

Chair Watson thanked those who donated holiday microwavable mugs for the baking class that she hosts for Tri-City clients at the Wellness Center. She then reported that the workgroups for the MSHA Stakeholder process are going well and commented it was exciting to hear about the activities from the various programs. Lastly, she expressed appreciation for the assistance provided by Tri-City staff to ensure that she is able to participate in the Stakeholder process.

Dana Barford, MHSA Projects Manager, thanked Chair Watson for her participation in the workgroups for the stakeholder process, indicating that Chair Watson's input is of great value; and reported that based on questions received, staff is working in restructuring the way data is presented to make it clearer.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Alisa Chatrapachi, an Occupational Therapist with USC, Vice President of the California Association of Local Behavioral Health Board and Commissions (CALBHBC), and Commissioner in Orange County Mental Health Board, stated that she was in attendance at this Commission meeting, along with the CALBHBC President, to share information that may pertain to Tri-City's Mental Health Commission; and announced that an adult residential facility stakeholder engagement will take place on December 5th in Rialto, CA hosted by the San Bernardino County Behavioral Health and invited the Commission to attend.

Theresa Comstock, President of the California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions, stated that the CALBHBC is a statewide organization made up of 59 boards and commissions, noting that it considers Tri-City at one of its members. She commented that the CALBHBC had gone through a lot of changes during the last several months; that it has now a lot of resources to offer; and that it is available to support Tri-City.

Ms. Comstock also stated that she had met earlier today with Tri-City's Commission leadership and few staff members, and indicated that she had learned that Tri-City has great programs. She then reported that the CALBHBC works on identifying issues that need to be worked on a statewide level; distributed resource information; discussed the events and issues that the CALBHBC is currently working on; and commented wanting to hear about Tri-City's issues and tools which the CALBHBC can post in its website.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 4:21 p.m., on consensus of the Mental Health Commission its meeting of November 14, 2017 was adjourned. The Mental Health Commission will meet next in a Regular Joint Meeting with the Governing Board to be held on Wednesday, December 20, 2017 at 4:45 p.m. in the MHSA Office, 2001 N. Garey Avenue in Pomona, California.



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Micaela P. Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk