



**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION  
FEBRUARY 12, 2019 – 3:30 P.M.**

The Mental Health Commission met in a Regular meeting on Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 3:36 p.m. in MHSA Administrative Office, 2001 North Garey Avenue, Pomona, California.

**CALL TO ORDER** Chair Watson called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m.

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

**PRESENT:** Toni L. Watson, Chair  
Cheryl Berezny  
Arny Bloom (arrived at 3:42 p.m.)  
Ethel Gardner  
Rubio R. Gonzalez  
Jeanette Heitmann  
Anne Henderson  
Joan M. Reyes  
Daniel Rodriguez  
Wray Ryback  
Twila L. Stephens  
David J. Weldon

**ABSENT:** Alfonso "Al" Villanueva  
Davetta Williams

**STAFF:** Toni Navarro, Executive Director  
Angela Igrisan, Director of Clinical Program Services  
Rimmi Hundal, Director of MHSA and Ethnic Services  
Gamaliel Polanco, Wellness Center Manager  
Dana Barford, MHSA Program Manager  
Isela Moreno, MHSA Program Supervisor, Navigators  
Elsa Matsumoto, Clinical Therapist II  
Erica Chavez, Clinical Therapist I  
Elva Neyoy, Mental Health Rehabilitation Specialist I  
Mica Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk

There was Commission consensus to pull Agenda Item No. III, Presentation, out of order to allow Commissioners to arrive at the meeting before the approval of the Minutes and of the Election of Officers.

### **III. PRESENTATION**

#### **A. “RECOVERY MOMENTS” STORY**

Executive Director Navarro announced that this new section of ‘Recovery Moments’ under the Agenda Item of Presentation, was modeled after the neighboring County of Riverside Behavioral Health, as recommended by newly appointed Director of Clinical Program Services Angela Igrisan.

Gamaliel Polanco, Wellness Center Manager, introduced Pamela (Pam) Vines, who was in attendance to share her journey to recovery.

Pam Vines, Service Learner and a Facilitator, stated that she came to Tri-City in 2014 referred by a good friend of hers because she was going through mental and emotional struggles, pointing out that she did not know what was going on with her nor what to do about it. She then shared her wonderful encounter with Tri-City staff, her diagnosis, and how being understood and not judged helped her be on the path to recovery. She also shared the various programming that she participated in as well as the programs that she currently leads that provides her with the opportunity to give back and help others with their struggles. She concluded by stating that she hopes to become someday part of the Tri-City team.

At 3:42 p.m., Commissioner Arny Bloom arrived at the meeting.

Isela Moreno, MHSA Navigators Program Supervisor, introduced Remel (Mel) Gibson and stated that he learned about the Community Navigator Program through the Wellness Center and that he was in attendance to talk about his story.

Mel Gibson, Community Navigator, shared that Tri-City helped him find a place to live by guiding him through the process and paperwork to get a Section 8 voucher; and stated that he is very thankful for the Navigators Program for welcoming him, noting that because of this program he became part of the Peer Mentor Program and Courageous Minds.

Director of Clinical Program Services Igrisan thanked those for sharing their story because it takes effort to come, and that she also was very happy to meet them, and that she looks forward to see them around at Tri-City.

Elva Neyoy, Mental Health Rehabilitation Specialist I, stated that she first worked as a part-time employee for Tri-City as a Community Support Worker for five years since 2010, before she became full-time employee; and she then introduced Angelica Garcia who was in attendance to share her story.

Angelica Garcia stated that she will be graduating this year and that it was possible because of Tri-City; she shared that it was a very tough road because she did not have support from her parents but she was able to receive it from Tri-City, noting that it was with her every step of the way, even when she often relapsed, to pick her up and to meet her needs and that she learned that it was up to her to make a change for her betterment.

Elsa Matsumoto, Clinical Therapist II at the Therapeutic Community Garden (TCG), stated that Sarina Singleton was in attendance to share her experience at TCG.

Sarina Singleton talked about her mental illness, how she started attending a TCG group therapy, indicating that she has been attending for two years and that it allows her to get out and interact with people, exercise, learn about gardening, and that she even is able to take fruit home. She stated that she appreciates the efforts of the therapists and the farmer that run TCG and that she hopes to continue working in that garden for many years to come.

Linda Quinonez stated that she is very grateful for Tri-City; talked about the way in which the loss of her husband had affected her four years ago; that her daughter's mental health issues also affected her and encouraged her to seek help; that she has discovered so much of herself, has learned coping mechanisms; thanked Tri-City because there is so much need for mental health services; and declared that she has a past but it no longer holds her hostage.

Dwight Pennington Jr. stated that when he was stumbling in his life, and needed help, he was very apprehensive about coming to Tri-City; however, he met a wonderful psychiatrist who recommended the right treatment, got him stabilized in medication, and gave him his life back; that now he has food, has place to stay, a car to drive; that he is on his own two feet and now works at the Wellness Center.

Executive Director Navarro thanked the presenters for their time, their graciousness, and for sharing their stories.

Commissioner Heitmann stated that she appreciated everyone's stories and stated that there are always many ways to serve in the community and in this Agency, noting that they were the most powerful people she has ever met.

Commissioner Reyes thanked the presenters for the courage in sharing their story.

Discussion ensued about the Service Learners and the Community Navigator Program, which is very visible in the community; and navigators will be riding with the Pomona PD and La Verne PD.

Commissioner Gardner thanked the presenters for their courage, words of wisdom, stating that she was thankful and blessed for their heartfelt testimony.

Director of MHSA & Ethics Services Hundal talked about the Peer to Peer Program noting that it is a Prevention and Early Intervention program, designed for persons who do not meet the requirements for clinical programming but need some help. MHSA Program Manager Barford talked about how the Peer to Peer program has evolved over the years based on the needs of the mentee and the experience of the mentor. Wellness Center Manager Polanco added, that through Tri-City's recovery model, individuals who gain stability are encouraged to become a Peer Mentor which can result in an opportunity to get hired by either Tri-City or another organization that Tri-City works closely with.

## **B. 2019 DATA NOTEBOOK UPDATE AND DECISION**

Executive Director Navarro talked about this year's Data Notebook noting that it is a report spearheaded by the Mental Health Commission; that there is a template from the California Behavioral Health Planning Council which started the Data Notebook, before the MHSA, as a way for the public to be informed about how county mental health departments were running their programs in their agencies.

Therefore, this year's Data Notebook will be looking at the entire system and doing mini community assessments', pointing out that it is due to the state at the end of March. She then asked the Commission if it was interested in preparing the Data Notebook, clarifying that it is not required of Tri-City because it is not a mental health plan; however, Tri-City participated on it last year and it was a great project.

Chair Watson called for the question; and Commissioner Heitmann moved, and Commissioner Rodriguez seconded, to participate in the 2019 Data Notebook and to form a subcommittee to prepare it. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: Commissioners Berezny, Bloom, Gardner, Gonzalez, Heitmann, Henderson, Reyes, Rodriguez, Ryback, Stephens, and Weldon; and Chair Watson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Villanueva and Williams.

Chair Watson volunteered to be part of the Subcommittee and posed the question if there were any other Commissioners who would like to volunteer. Commissioners Ethel Gardner, Joan Reyes, and Wray Ryback also volunteered to be part of the Subcommittee. There being no further volunteers, Commissioner Heitmann moved, and Commissioner Bloom seconded, to approve the four volunteers to form the Subcommittee to prepare the 2019 Data Notebook. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: Commissioners Berezny, Bloom, Gardner, Gonzalez, Heitmann, Henderson, Reyes, Rodriguez, Ryback, Stephens, and Weldon; and Chair Watson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Villanueva and Williams.

**C. DISCUSSION REGARDING TRAINING OFFERED BY THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF MENTAL HEALTH PEER RUN ORGANIZATIONS (CAMHPRO) ON ADVOCACY AND THE PUBLIC STAKEHOLDER PROCESS**

Executive Director Navarro stated that CAMHPRO provides annually three webinar series on the ABC's of Advocacy which talks about MHSA, and the stakeholder process. She stated that Tri-City likes to rejuvenate the stakeholder process every couple of years; that she hoped that the Commission take the training and use those skills to help Tri-City recruit individuals to be part of our Stakeholder process; and she then offered the training at Tri-City.

Discussion ensued about the series details after some of the Commissioners expressed interest in participating.

**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 13, 2018 REGULAR MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING**

There being no comment, Commissioner Henderson moved, and Commissioner Reyes seconded, to approve the MHC Minutes of the November 13, 2018 Regular Meeting. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES: Commissioners Berezny, Bloom, Gardner, Gonzalez, Henderson, Reyes, Ryback, and Weldon; and Chair Watson. NOES: None. ABSTAIN: Commissioners Heitmann, Rodriguez, and Stephens. ABSENT: Commissioners Villanueva and Williams.

**II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION WHEN A VACANCY OCCURS AND EACH ODD-NUMBERED YEAR**

JPA Administrator Clerk Olmos explained the election of officers' process; Chair Watson stepped down as Chair; and Executive Director chaired the meeting and asked if there were any nominations for the office of Chair.

Commissioner Stephens nominated Toni Watson to serve as the Chair of the Mental Health Commission; and Jeanette Heitmann expressed desire to serve as the Chair. Since the Chair office had more than one nominee, the election was carried by secret and written ballot. The motion to appoint Toni Watson as Chair to the Mental Health Commission was carried by the majority of the member vote.

Board Member Liaison Gonzalez then nominated Anne Henderson, and Commissioner Stephens nominated Jeanette Heitmann as Vice-Chair to the Mental Health Commission. Since the Vice-Chair office had more than one nominee, the election was carried out by secret and written ballot. The motion to appoint Anne Henderson as Vice-Chair to the Mental Health Commission was carried by the majority of the member vote.

Chair Watson presided over the meeting again.

#### **IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Executive Director Navarro reported that Tri-City staff has a meeting on February 20th with the three cities to discuss the details of the implementation of the Measure H funds. She then clarified that she wrote in her report, under the Housing Projects Update, that by MHSA statute, unspent CSS funds may be allocated to the MHSA Prevention and Early Intervention fund; however, it should be Workforce, Education and Training, as well as the Capital Facilities and Technological Needs fund, and/or towards the development of permanent supportive housing, noting that there are roughly \$3 million available for allocation these programs and a new stakeholder processed will be convening in July. She also stated that, at the request of the City of Pomona, Tri-City staff is putting together an 8-hour training for the staff at the Homeless Shelter that will include elements of Mental Health First Aid, non-violent crisis intervention/verbal de-escalation techniques, motivational interviewing, and trauma-informed best practices. Lastly, she reported that she will be a panelist at the Civic Community Event to discuss homelessness, along with the Pomona Police Department and Volunteers of America, and asked the Commission to refer to the flyer for the list of workshops available on a wide variety of topics.

At 4:49 p.m. Chair Watson left the meeting.

Commissioner Ryback inquired about the status of the NPLH Strategic Homelessness Plan. Executive Director Navarro reported that it will be presented to the Governing Board for its approval at its February meeting; and after approval, it will be distributed to the Mental Health Commission. She then asked the Commissioners to let JPA Administrator/Clerk Olmos know if they plan to attend the Civic Community Event so that she can RSVP on behalf of the Commissioners.

#### **COMMISSION ITEMS AND REPORTS**

Commissioner Reyes commented that there is a furniture donation program at a local thrifty store where persons can make donations on behalf of an agency and that, that agency can refer persons with a voucher to pick a donated piece of furniture; and inquired if Tri-City would be interested in participating as a voucher holder/distributor if there are donations allocated to Tri-City. Executive Director Navarro stated that it sounded like a great program and indicated that she would find out more information about it.

Commissioner Reyes also reported that she attended a Climate Change Lobby in Claremont wherein she learned that individuals suffering from a mental illness, who take psychotropic medications, are adversely affected by the heat and shared some the findings.

Executive Director Navarro stated that this information will be provided to the clinical department, noting that during extreme weather Tri-City staff make wellness checks for all Tri-City clients; that this information explains that clients are physiological more at risk for serious harm, and also will help people to understand in a different way the reason for welfare checks.

Commissioner Reyes also shared that Governor Newsom announced that he will withdraw the gas tax money from cities if they do not meet regional housing targets set by the State.

Executive Director Navarro stated that Dr. Nadine Burke Harris was recently appointed California's first-ever Surgeon General by Governor Newsom; that she is pediatrician and is an international expert on Adverse Childhood Experiences, noting that behavioral health agencies are very excited for having this advocate as the surgeon general of California.

Governing Board Liaison Gonzalez reported that Supervisor Hilda Solis stopped unannounced by the homeless shelter in Pomona and was very impressed with was done because the shelter is not completed. He also talked about the Pomona Police Department activities to help the homeless; and then he shared that a motel owner across from Parkside Family Apartments is considered in selling, demolition, or convert it to housing.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 5:03 p.m., on consensus of the Mental Health Commission its Regular Meeting of February 12, 2019 was adjourned. The next Regular Meeting of the Mental Health Commission will be held on Tuesday, March 12, 2019, in the MHSA Administrative Office, 2001 North Garey Avenue, Pomona, California.



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Micaela P. Olmos, JPA Administrator/Clerk