



Behavioral Health Commission

Unapproved Minutes

Wednesday, May 7, 2025 | 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM



Hybrid Meeting – College of San Mateo, 1700 Hillsdale Blvd, Bldg 10,
Room 468, San Mateo; Recovery Connection Center, 650 Main Street,
Redwood City; and Online

BHC Members:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jean Perry – Chair (online) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leticia Bido – Vice Chair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yoko Ng – Vice Chair <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bill Silverfarb – BOS Rep (online) <input type="checkbox"/> Colin Chu (YC) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dan Keohane	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Frieda Edgette <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kristin Kurczak <input type="checkbox"/> P.D. Kristina Bell <input type="checkbox"/> Laura Gomez <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Lim <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paul Nichols <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Rice	<input type="checkbox"/> Rubi Garcia <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sid Palani <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sophia Escobar (YC) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Victoria Yu
SMC BHRS Staff:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Jei Africa <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chantae Rochester	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kristie Lui <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doris Estremera (online)	
Others Present (in-person)	John Butler, Sara McDowell, Cynthia Castro, William Elting, Lisa Mena, Joaquin Moreno, Pearl, Kristyn, Violet, Jana Spalding, Claudia Saggese, Timothy Lawson, David Dominguez, Frank Porto, Charo Martinez, Lilian Tashiro, Violet Schueller		
Others Present (online)	Pat Willard, Adriana Furuzawa, Billie Jean, Brenda, Doris Estremera, Jairo, John McMahon, Jonathon, Natalia Rojas, StarVista, Susan Cortopassi, Sydney Hoff, Yolanda Ramirez, Jonathon Staggars, John McMahon, Ariya Kaushek, Coretta Alexander, Milo, Amalia		

Meeting called to order at 3:40 by Vice Co-chair Yoko Ng.

ITEM	DISCUSSION/ACTION
Roll Call/ Introductions	Roll call was completed.
Oath of Office	Frieda Edgette, David Rice and Paul Nichols take the Oath of Office.
Approval of Agenda	The meeting agenda was unanimously approved. ► M/S/C Nichols/ Keohane
Approval of Minutes	The meeting minutes were unanimously approved. ► M/S/C Keohane/ Palani
Correspondence, Announcements & Public Comment	Pat Willard – In the Director’s Newsletter, there is a discussion about the findings from the CWCRT pilot program. I wanted to point out that impact stated a reduction in calls for mental health services. However most cities do not code in the same fashion e.g. welfare check, 5150, etc. So with that purpose, the findings do not rationalize why the data is the way it is.
Presentation: May is Mental Health Month Presented by Sylvia Tang, BHRS Office of Diversity & Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health Month is a national observance throughout the month of May. In our county we focus on three areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A proclamation to give our community space to provide their voice and advocate for mental and substance use services Partnering with different organizations to host events Communication campaign to reach a broader audience Although it is mental health month, we focus on substance use as well. The theme for this year is Mental Health on a Continuum. A continuum can refer to either a spectrum or a continuum of care e.g. inpatient, outpatient, residential, etc. For the proclamation, Dr. Jei Africa helped us open up the stage, and then we had four speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terrell Fortune from the Alcohol and Other Drugs residential team, Renee Harris, recipient of commission’s Hall of Fame award

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cynthia Castro, a Health Ambassador ○ Charo Martinez, Health Ambassador Program Coordinator for BHRS' Office of Diversity & Equity • Some fun swag we have this year include octopus plushies, water bottles, bucket hats, stickers, meditation journals, a continuum guide. We get a good mix of physical and digital materials for promotion. • We invite you to attend an event, help spread the word, and/or attend a training. • Find our events and resources at SMCHealth.org/MHM.
Presentation Public Comments, Questions & Responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leti Bido – I just want to express my gratitude to Sylvia Tang for more and more collaboration every year. There's a lot that is being done, and we are very grateful for your leadership throughout the years. • Jean Perry – Word is definitely getting out there because one of the volunteer organizations in Millbrae requested more info on mental health so we have Be Sensitive, Be Brave coming to the organization.
Presentation: New SUD Providers Presented by Clara Boyden, Deputy Director of Behavioral Health & Recovery Services' Alcohol & Other Drugs and Natalia Rojas, Behavioral Health & Recovery Services Analyst	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the things BHRS' Alcohol and Other Drugs services does it make sure that people convicted of a DUI take the DUI education program. • We monitor those programs and make sure they comply with statewide standards. • We're here today to talk about two new providers that we have identified and want to get support from the commission. • San Mateo ranks 8th lowest in DUI rates. • Data shows 391 people per 100,000 drivers, and the state average is 683. • Types of DUI programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wet and Reckless: 12-hour education program ○ First Offender Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3-month program: 32 hours ▪ 6-month program: 45 hours ▪ 9-month program: 62 hours ○ Multiple offender program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 12-month: 71 hours ▪ 18-month: 77 hours • Each program has varying fees, and each are paid by the client. • In order to obtain a state license to provide these DUI services, the Board of Supervisors must recommend each agency for DUI licensure, and therefore BHRS AOD is recommending to the Board of Supervisors to expand the number of DUI providers in San Mateo County offering the above DUI programs. And we seek the support of the Behavioral Health Commission and the AOD community for these new agency services. <p>Vote to support the DUI Providers was unanimously approved. ► M/S/C Nichols/ Keohane</p>
Presentation Public Comments, Questions & Responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sid Palani: Seems like this is to solve an access problem. It looks like virtual services are available. What is the reason that those in more rural regions are unable to take the classes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A: There are currently no multiple offender classes in SMC. The thing about MOP courses is that they need to be taken in the same county that you received the offense. Both Free at Last and Sitike are at capacity for First Offender Programs. • Do clients bare the cost fully? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A: Yes, but it's up to the discretion of the collaborative courts to do financial assessments. • John Butler: Do the clients in these programs have opportunities for support with their recovery? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A: Yes; they do not only look at criminal charges, but they also look at opportunities for support
Standing Committee Reports	Committee for Children & Youth Service Reported by Frieda Edgette

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are wrapping up this year's cohort. It has been an honor to be a scaffold for this year's leader. • We are in the final stretch of youth services survey. We have partnered with BHRS in its design, and going through final reviews of privacy, policy control, etc. • We have developed focus group questions and have provided feedback on resource. • We are now actively looking for school-based partners, particularly middle school. In conversation with County Office of Education to find the right fit. • The San Mateo County Behavioral Health Commission's Youth Committee is now accepting applications for our 2025-2026 Youth Action Board (YAB) Cohort. The YAB is a notable opportunity for young people (ages 14-24) to shape both policy and awareness campaigns that uplift youth voice at decision-making tables and support youth mental and behavioral health thriving. • Learn more and apply here: https://forms.gle/bdDWZ57XqW5A2sDeA Deadline to apply is May 31, 2025. • The term runs August 2025 through June 2026. <p>Next meeting is Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. Virtual: Zoom or dial 669-444-9171 Meeting ID: 990 0971 9684</p> <p>Committee for Adult Services Reported by Yoko Ng</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invited Nicoletta Kelleher to share of different programs from the County. • Learned about Health Ambassador Program to recognize the important role that community plays in reaching others in the community. Also learned about 988 supported by StarVista. • Next meeting will do a site tour of Voices of Recovery, and it is open to all commissioners <p>Next meeting is Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 10:30 a.m. In-person at Voices of Recovery, 650 Main Street, Redwood City</p> <p>Committee for Older Adult Services Reported by Jean Perry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Got a visit from Scott Gruendl and Talisha Racy to talk about barriers. • They have done an assessment of Serenity House to see what it takes to be up to the standards for wheelchair, walker users. • Construction will take 4 weeks and then it will be ready. • Invited to attend a meeting on 5/13 on older adults, but I'm unable to go. If any fellow commissioners can go, please let me know. <p>Next meeting is Wednesday, May 14, 2025 at 1 p.m. In-person at 2000 Alameda de Las Pulgas, Suite 200, San Mateo, CA 94403 Virtual: Zoom or dial 669-900-6833 Meeting ID: 944 8158 6160</p> <p>Committee for Alcohol and Other Drug Services Report given by Paul Nichols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will hear about Prop 36 - drug and theft crime penalty initiative. It will be a virtual presentation. <p>Next meeting is Wednesday, May 14, 2025, at 4 p.m. Virtual: Teams</p> <p>Mental Health Services Act Steering Committee Report given by Jean Perry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the process of having a robust taskforce meet every 2 months. All are welcome to join. • Prop. 1 – BHSA Transition Taskforce April 3, June 5, August 7, October 2, 2025 (hybrid meetings) 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM • Join us and help inform priorities as we transition our county behavioral health system to meet Proposition 1 requirements. Flyer and materials on
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	<p>the MHSa website, https://www.smchealth.org/MHSA, under the Announcements tab.</p> <p>Next meeting is Thursday, June 6, 2025, 3 p.m., In-person at Redwood Shores Library (399 Marine Parkway, Redwood City) and Virtual: Zoom or dial 669-900-6833 Meeting ID: 892 2421 4146</p>
Director's Report presented by Dr. Jei Africa	<p>See attached slides.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We've finally launched our Mobile Crisis media campaign which was a very heavy lift. • All departments have submitted budgets to the county. • We are waiting for Governor's May Revise to see if some commitments and priorities stated earlier this year will continue. • We find out more by end of this week whether we will need to make more pivots. • A lot of things happening in the justice-involved areas of our work. • We are figuring out what was the evidence-based model to adapt what we for those in justice system. • Executive team is doing alignment work. We don't want to do time limited work. We want work to not feel reactive to changes.
Public Comments on Director's Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: When can we expect to hear more of the new priorities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A: Within the next month. Ernst & Young has been working on a report. • Q: Curious to hear results of MH pilot. In comparison to other cities in our county, what needs to be done for improvement? Is it funding? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A: We got the Justice Advocacy grant to expand the cities, but those are all time limited. At least for the cities that have piloted, it looks like they have put it in their city budget. • Q: How are they related? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A: StarVista is providing parts of the clinician through the CWCRT. Many cities now have hired the clinicians in their cities. We're doing a lot of coordination with law enforcement to encourage folks to use 988 if it's not a medical emergency. • Q: Is there a vision where 911 plays a triage role? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A: The challenge is that the 911 dispatchers operate in a different state guideline. The steering committee talks about all this. We're just trying very hard to coordinate within different rules, funding, and systems.
Liaison, Task Force and Ad Hoc Committees	<p>Suicide Prevention Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No report given. <p>Legislative Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No report given. <p>New Member Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No report given. <p>QIC Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No report given. <p>Site Visits Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No report given. <p>Cal BHB/C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No report given.

Old Business	No old business items discussed.
Tony Hoffman Awards	<p>Congratulations to the 7 recipients of this year's Tony Hoffman Awards!</p> <p>Waynette Brock – Receiving on behalf of 1 New Heartbeat Presented by Jean Perry Under the leadership of Waynette Brock, One New Heartbeat brings peer-led support to individuals experiencing behavioral health challenges and to their families, and to those providing peer support services. The names of some of the services provided by One New Heartbeat illustrate the span of comprehensive, evidence-based, trauma-informed services provided: WRAP (wellness and recovery action plan) support group, training facilitators for Alternatives to Suicide groups and MHFA, Journaling Out Loud, Evidence-Based Parenting Program, Strengthening the Peer Workforce, Family Interventions. Waynette's compassionate treatment of her fellow human beings and investment in all our wellness is remarkable. One New Heartbeat is an asset we celebrate today in San Mateo County.</p> <p>Lisa Mena – Receiving on behalf of Kingdom Love Presented by Sid Palani Kingdom Love, under direction of Lisa Mena, orchestrates the delivery of Be Sensitive Be Brave and Mental Health First Aid trainings to our San Mateo County community. There are so many components that contribute to community members receiving trainings tailored to them, and leaving the trainings uplifted and empowered, recharged with resilience, able to support those around them. It is fabulous to have expert facilitators for the trainings. It is even more exciting that community members with lived experience are being trained and are co-leading the trainings. These trainings are customized by language and location where they are held, recognizing the many factors that contribute to learners feeling safe and supported. I have hosted trainings in different community groups with whom I am associated. It is amazing to see stigma decrease, to see conversations start to happen, to see people find new ways to support each other in wellness. Kingdom Love Rocks!</p> <p>Sara McDowell & Mary Bier – Receiving on Behalf of Mayors Mental Health Initiative Presented by Laura Gomez In response to the growing local need of mental health resources, the San Mateo County Mayors Mental Health Initiative was launched in January 2022 by Redwood City Mayor Giselle Hale and San Carlos Mayor Sara McDowell. Mayor of South San Francisco Eddie Flores and former Mayor and current Council Member of Pacifica Mary Bier also joined the Steering Committee and have provided valuable leadership and expertise related to the behavioral health field.</p> <p>In April 2022, the Mayors Mental Health Initiative collaborated with San Mateo County Executive Office and Behavioral Health Services Office of Diversity and Equity to secure \$200,000 of funding to provide Mental Health First Aid and Be Sensitive Be Brave trainings free to the community. Local city elected officials and staff not only supported the hosting of these trainings but also participated in these trainings to expand the supportive network for mental health. And in August 2022, the Mayors Mental Health Initiative collaborated with the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative to invest \$250,000 for mental health services provided by three non-profits - Star Vista, Daly City Youth Health Center and the Una Vida program through One Life Counseling.</p> <p>Youth Action Board Presented by Frieda Edgette The San Mateo County Behavioral Health Commission's Youth Action Board 2024-2025 Cohort (YAB) exemplifies extraordinary leadership in transforming mental health services for young people. This diverse group of 12 young leaders, ranging from high school sophomores to college students, has demonstrated remarkable commitment to improving mental health awareness and access across the continuum of care. Their accomplishments include organizing the Uplifting Youth</p>

Voice Summit in partnership with the San Mateo County of Education, allcove San Mateo and Youth Leadership Institute, creating a safe space for adolescents to discuss mental health concerns and service gaps as part of United for Youth Wellbeing Vision 2030. Significantly, they are pioneering the Pathways Prototype's development, an innovative system designed to connect youth and families with mental health services through any entry point, emphasizing empathy and cultural competency throughout the process. The YAB is also developed a youth-centered survey and focus group design to gather perspectives for a county youth crisis stabilization center and provided crucial youth expertise to the Mobile Crisis Response Team media campaign. These young leaders are dismantling mental health stigma by centering youth voices in policy discussions and service design. Their work embodies the spirit of the Tony Hoffman Award through advocacy, innovative program creation, and compassionate support for vulnerable populations.

Cynthia Castro

Presented by Leticia Bido

Cynthia is a long-time resident of Redwood City, an active member of the Latino/a/x Collaborative, and a devoted mother who has lovingly supported her child through significant behavioral health challenges since early childhood. In 2016, she became a Health Ambassador for San Mateo County BHRS, a role that beautifully reflects her passion for helping others. Cynthia has been a tireless advocate for community wellness, consistently demonstrating her deep commitment to improving the health and well-being of San Mateo County residents. Through her involvement in the Health Ambassador Program, she has played a vital role in bringing BHRS resources to the community and expanding outreach efforts with warmth and compassion. Cynthia's courage in sharing her lived experience—both as someone who has faced behavioral health challenges and as a mother walking alongside her child—has made a profound impact. Whether at community meetings, events, HAP presentations, or the Reconozca las Señales workshop, her voice has helped break down stigma, open hearts, and inspire others to seek help and healing.

Deputy Sheriff Joaquin Moreno

Presented by Yoko Ng

Deputy Sheriff Joaquin Moreno is a bilingual and bicultural School Resource Officer who plays a vital role in community engagement through the Sheriff's Activities League and the Community Alliance to Revitalize Our Neighborhoods (CARON). His presence reflects a deep commitment to building trust and fostering positive relationships within the San Mateo County community. Deputy Moreno is especially recognized for his compassionate work with the behavioral health community. Through educational programs like the Parent Project and the CARON Academy, he facilitates impactful workshops for underserved communities, using a trauma-informed lens that emphasizes respect, empathy, and cultural sensitivity. His strong awareness of how culture and trauma effects individuals, particularly those experiencing behavioral health challenges—has been a calming and empowering force during times of heightened anxiety and uncertainty. In every interaction, whether in workshops or law enforcement responses, Deputy Moreno approaches community members with care, prioritizing safety, building trust, and creating a sense of hope. His ability to connect with others continues to inspire and uplift those he serves.

William Elting

Presented by Dan Keohane

William has consistently been a dedicated volunteer with BHRS in multiple projects, including years of advocating for better crisis response services. Last Fall, William spearheaded the creation of a document in support of expansion of peer support services and its proclamation by the Board of Supervisors. For this project he collaborated with OCFA and the Advocacy Council. William has kept the momentum going by continuing to advocate gathering the support of a growing list of signatories. William is an active member of The San Mateo County Behavioral Health Youth Committee and participated in various Youth Mental Wellness

	Pathways Workshop throughout the county to create clear, culturally sensitive, and compassionate access to mental health care for youth and families. The pilot aimed to gather lived experiences, share navigation insights, and collect early input for a simple, empowering “pathways” tool to guide users through the system with clarity and support. William has always been very committed to supporting the vision of BHRS and is a fantastic collaborator.
Adjournment	This meeting was adjourned at 5:54PM by Chair Jean Perry.

Next BHC Meeting:	Wed, June 4, 2025, from 3:30-5:30 p.m. College of San Mateo - College Center, Building 10, Room 468 Millbrae Library, Recovery Connection Center, and Online Information will be posted on www.smchealth.org/BHC .
Next Executive Committee Meeting:	Wed, June 4, 2025, at 5:30p.m. College of San Mateo - College Center, Building 10, Room 468 Millbrae Library, and Online
Note:	PLEASE BE SURE TO CONTACT KRISTIE LUI AT KFLUI@SMCGOV.ORG . IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND EITHER THE BHC OR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING. In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), auxiliary aids and services for this meeting will be provided upon request when given three-day notice. Please call 650.573.2544.