MEETING MINUTES

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

Date:	March 12, 2025
Time:	2:30 PM
Location:	Bishop COB Room 101, Lone Pine Wellness Center (satellite/virtual) and via Zoom

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson, Michelle Saenz called the meeting to order at 2:36 PM. All attendees introduced themselves.

MEMBERSHIP IN ATTENDANCE

In Person: Supervisor Trina Orrill, Michelle Saenz, Lynn Martin
Virtual: none

COMMUNITY & STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

In Person: John Laux, Vanessa Ruggio, Gina McKinzey, Araceli Morales, Carri Coudek, Jody Veenker, Scott Bayhurst, Brian Bell, Lucy Vincent, Brandon DeHaven, Cathy Rigney, Liliana Fregoso, Vivian De La Riva, Chrystina Pope
Virtual: Lori Bengochia, Gina Ellis, Manuel Fletes Medina

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chrystina Pope asked that a review on access to services be added to a future BHAB Agenda.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (ACTION ITEM)

Minutes from February 12, 2025 meeting. Ms. Martin requested that all acronyms be spelled out.

Ms. Saenz moved to accept minutes as amended, Ms. Martin seconded the motion. Motion carried: Ms. Saenz – Aye, Ms. Martin – Aye. There were no oppositions to the motion. Ms. Martin moved that all acronyms be spelled out moving forward, Ms. Saenz seconded the motion, motion carried: Ms. Saenz – Aye, Ms. Martin - Aye.

4. STAFF REPORTS (INFORMATIONAL ITEM)

a. Behavioral Health Updates – Mr. Laux reported on the following:
1) BHSA (Behavioral Health Services Act). To date DHCS (Department of Health Care Services) has finalized and approved the first module. Modules 2 and 3 are in draft review pending approval. 2) Effective tomorrow, a new case manager for child and adolescent services will begin working with the Inyo County Behavioral Health Team. 3) We want to get an adult case management position unfrozen. 4) CARE (Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment) Act: We have 6 applications to date. There may be a 7th petition effective next week. Mr. Laux explained the CARE Act petition and report process to BHAB Members. 5) Mr. Laux expressed his gratitude about having a SUD (substance use disorder) Supervisor, Carri Coudek. She is doing a good job in her new role.

b. Family Strengthening Team Updates - Jody Veenker reported her team is working with 4 families and onboarding 1. They are meeting with 2 more families about coming into services. The Family Strengthening Team is also working with families using PC Care (Parent Child Play Therapy), which is an interactive therapy. Ms. Veenker answered questions and expanded on what PC Care is.

c. DUI (Driving Under the Influence) Program Updates – Ms. Coudek reported the following: There are 18 clients in the following programs: 4 clients in 3-month, 2 clients in 9-month, 1 client in 18-month and 1 re-enrollment. Completions are as follows: 3 W&R, 2 clients completed 3-month, 2 clients completed 9-month, and 1 client completed 18-month programs. Ms. Coudek is doing groups at WC.

d. SUD Updates – Ms. Coudek reported the following for February 2025: 9 clients in an intensive outpatient program (IOP). It is 9 hours a week. Intensive services include - social skills, relapse prevention, and women's and men's wellness groups. 6 clients are enrolled in Drug Court. BHAB members asked questions, and she explained the SUD program in greater detail. Mr. Laux shared that people could be referred out if eating disorders referrals are received. There are currently 2 SUD counselor vacancies.

e. Wellness Center Updates – (1) Vanessa Ruggio reported: Things are going well. Groups, showers, and laundry are continuing to be available to Wellness Center visitors. The Crisis Care Mobile Unit (CCMU) has been busy. IMACA's (Inyo Mono Advocates for Community Action, Inc.) new food director is delivering food to Lone Pine and Bishop Wellness Center locations. (2) Vivian De La Riva shared CCMU Success stories. BHAB members expressed appreciation for the vital work Wellness Center Staff members are doing in helping community members in collaboration with Law Enforcement.

f. Progress House Updates – Gina McKinzey reported on behalf of Kelly Nugent: (1) Current resident count is 5. A resident successfully moved out recently. We have 1 woman's and several men's beds available. Peer Review, as part of the MHBG (Mental Health Block Grant) review conducted by UCLA (University of California Los Angeles), was held last month. It went very well; UCLA staff asked some interesting questions. They were impressed by how Inyo County works as a community to meet the needs of community members served at Progress House. (2) Mrs. McKinzey explained the Progress House application process criteria, which includes the following disqualifying characteristics: eligible applicants may not be actively using drugs or alcohol, in the process of detoxing, violent, have a serious medical condition, or unable to ambulate. The application packet is to be filled out by the referring clinician. People between the ages of 18 and 59, willing to adhere to Progress House rules, are eligible to apply. Prior to admission, medical clearance is needed.

5. BH-CONNECT (BEHAVIORAL HEALTH-COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZED NETWORKS OF EQUITABLE CARE AND TREATMENT) – INYO COUNTY'S ROLE (INFORMATIONAL)

Mr. Laux shared that BH-CONNECT is an incentive framework to displace IMD (Institutions for Mental Diseases) placement costs. We recently submitted a letter of interest, but the state is still working on guidance. Mr. Laux will have a new BHIN (Behavioral Health Information Notice) next month which will provide more information. We are generally interested but are not sure Inyo County will be able to participate. This will depend upon state requirements.

6. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (BHSA), FORMERLY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (MHSA) (DISCUSSION ITEM)

The Update is due to the state June 30, 2025. Mr. Laux will bring a draft of the Final MHSA (Mental Health Services Act) Update to April's BHAB meeting. With BHAB Member approval, it will be sent to the state. FSP (Full Service Partnership), which supports coordination of care for those enrolled as full service partners (FSPs), accounts for 30% of the funding change in BHSA. FSP will be part of the bigger BHSA (Behavioral Health Services Act) planning to begin in April. BHAB Members and attendees discussed what types of supports and resources FSP could provide for enrollees. It will be presented to the BHAB Members for review at the April 2025 meeting.

7. AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FOR UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) (standing informational item)
- BH (Behavioral Health) Connect and Inyo County's role (Informational)
- CARE Act updates
- Review of access to services

Meeting adjourned at 3:12 PM.