

# MEETING MINUTES

## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

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Date: May 21, 2025

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Bishop COB Room 109, Lone Pine Wellness Center (satellite/virtual) and via Zoom

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson, Michelle Saenz called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM. All attendees introduced themselves.

### MEMBERSHIP IN ATTENDANCE

In Person: Supervisor William Wadelton, Michelle Saenz, Claude Peters

Virtual: none

### COMMUNITY & STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

In Person: Gina Ellis, Araceli Morales, Carri Coudek, Jody Veenker, Lucy Vincent, Kelly Nugent, Leah Harris, Katie Hawkins, Lori Bengochia, Brandon DeHaven, Liliana Fregoso, Vivian De La Riva

Virtual: Gabriel Dominguez, Shelley Scott

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

none

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (ACTION ITEM)

Minutes from March 12, 2025 meeting.

Mr. Peters moved to accept minutes as amended, Supervisor Wadelton seconded the motion. Motion carried: Ms. Saenz – Aye, Mr. Peters – Aye, Supervisor Wadelton – Aye.

#### **4. STAFF REPORTS (INFORMATIONAL ITEM)**

- a. Behavioral Health Updates – Mrs. Ellis distributed the Behavioral Health Staff Update Reports (attached) which cover all the programs listed in letters b. through f. below. Mrs. Saenz expressed gratitude about receiving written reports. Mrs. Ellis informed BHAB Members and meeting attendees that John Laux, Deputy Director of Behavioral Health, is no longer with Inyo County. She also explained that Vivian De La Riva has assumed the role of Interim Wellness Center Supervisor while Vanessa Ruggio is on leave.
- b. Family Strengthening Team Updates
- c. DUI (Driving Under the Influence) Program Updates
- d. SUD Updates
- e. Wellness Center Updates
- f. Progress House Updates

#### **5. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (MHSA) PLAN 25-26 (DISCUSSION)**

Lori Bengochia presented the MHSA Plan Draft (attached). A 30-day Public Comment period opens May 19, 2025 and closes on June 19, 2025. A Public Hearing will take place on June 11, at 2:30 pm at the next BHAB Meeting. Mrs. Bengochia walked BHAB Members and attendees through the MHSA Plan, expressing the importance of needed input from staff and community members. Staff and community members may email, call or attend the Public Hearing to submit their recommended changes. This is a one-year plan because we will be changing to BHSA plan next year. BHAB members and attendees asked questions and a lively discussion ensued. Discussion topics included the following: Involving the 5 Tribal Nations, geographic and other challenges that exist in providing services throughout Inyo County, and more. Mrs. Ellis commended Mrs. Bengochia for work on the MHSA Draft and for today's presentation.

#### **6. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (BHSA), (STANDING INFORMATIONAL ITEM)**

We will be changing to BHSA Plan next year. Work will begin on it after MHSA Plan is complete. A Board of Supervisor-approved plan is due in June of 2026.

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

Mrs. Ellis reported that after reviewing requirements, County of Inyo has decided not to move forward with BH CONNECT.

#### **8. CARE ACT UPDATES (INFORMATIONAL)**

Mrs. Ellis explained that Inyo County Behavioral Health, Superior Court, County Counsel, the District Attorney's office and Adult Services are collaborating as we all learn to navigate the components of this new Act. She stated that we are looking at the possibility of incorporating Mental Health Court in the future.

#### **9. OLD BUSINESS (INFORMATIONAL OR DISCUSSION ITEM)**

## **10. AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FOR UPCOMING MEETINGS**

- Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) (standing informational item)
- CARE Act updates
- Review of access to services

Meeting adjourned at 11:06 AM.