

CLERK'S SUMMARY OF MEETING AND OFFICIAL MINUTES  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD (BHA)  
JULY 15, 2024

The Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHA) convened its first meeting at the Stephen P. Clark Government Center, 111 N.W. First Street, Miami, Florida 33128, Conference Room 18-4, on July 15, 2024, at 10:03 a.m.

**II. ROLL CALL & INTRODUCTIONS**

The following BHA members were present:

- ~ Ms. Sally Alayon, Miami-Dade County Public Schools;
- ~ Dr. Tiffany Amrich, Psychologist, Miami-Dade Community Action and Human Services Department;
- ~ Major Melissa Barosela, Miami-Dade Police Department;
- ~ Ms. Karen Annunziato, State Attorney's Office;
- ~ Senator Rene Garcia, Board of County Commissioners (District 13);
- ~ Ms. Victoria Mallette, Homeless Trust;
- ~ Ms. Laura Naredo, South Florida Behavioral Health Network;
- ~ Ms. Lauren Rabbitto, Juvenile Services Department; and
- ~ Ms. Vicki Sabharwal, Public Health Trust.

Mr. Carlos J. Martinez, Public Defender and Ms. Edith C. Wright, Miami-Dade Corrections & Rehabilitation Department, were excused.

In addition to the BHA members, the following staff members were present:

- ~ Ms. Tania Avellanet, Assistant Director, CAHSD;
- ~ Ms. Amanda Dominguez, Mental Health Facility Program Manager, Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD);
- ~ Mr. Matias Buchhalter, Special Projects Administrator II, CAHSD;
- ~ Mr. Eduardo Tamborrel, Administrative Officer II, CAHSD;
- ~ Mr. Walter, Community Services Department;
- ~ Ms. Elisa Kesada, on behalf of Carlos Martinez, Public Defender; and
- ~ Ms. Zorana Milton, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Board.

**III. ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS OR A PRESIDING OFFICER FOR THIS BOARD MEETING**

Ms. Amanda Dominguez, Mental Health Facility Program Manager, Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD), recommended the Board elect a Chairperson and a Vice Chair.

Ms. Sally Alayon moved to nominate Senator Garcia to serve as Chairman of the Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHA). This motion was seconded by Dr. Tiffany Amrich; and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 9-0. (Members Carlos J. Martinez and Edith C. Wright were absent).

Senator Garcia moved to nominate Ms. Alayon to serve as BHA's Vice Chairwoman. This motion was seconded by Dr. Amrich; and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 9-0 (Members Carlos J. Martinez and Edith C. Wright were absent).

CLERK'S SUMMARY OF MEETING AND OFFICIAL MINUTES  
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JULY 15, 2024

**IV. PUBLIC'S REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD**

Ms. Amanda Dominguez, Mental Health Facility Program Manager, Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD), opened the reasonable opportunity to be heard; and seeing no one come forward to speak, the reasonable opportunity to be heard was closed.

**V. STAFF INTRODUCTIONS AND OVERVIEW OF THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD**

- ~ Tania Avellanet, Assistant Director, Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD);
- ~ Ms. Amanda Dominguez, Board Liaison, CAHSD Mental Health Services Program Manager;
- ~ Mr. Matias Buchhalter, CAHSD Special Projects Administrator II; and
- ~ Mr. Eduardo Tamborrel, Board Management, CAHSD Administrative Officer II.

Mr. Tamborrel stated the Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHA) was created to assist public and private entities to address individuals affected by behavioral disorders. The goal was to create a coordinated system of care to ensure that residents in crisis had access to quality behavioral health and substance abuse services, increase access to quality care, and provide direct links to community-based services.

Mr. Tamborrel provided a brief review of the BHA presentation, highlighting the Board's vacancies and appointment terms. He noted that non-public sector appointees would be subject to a four-year term limit. Mr. Tamborrel stated in addition to the provisions outlined in the County's Code, there were other attendance requirements for County Advisory Boards and advised that any member of a County Advisory Board would automatically be removed if absent from two (2) consecutive, or three (3) Board meetings, without an acceptable excuse.

Mr. Tamborrel indicated BHA members would be deemed absent from a meeting in the event they were not present for at least 75% of the meeting time. He explained that the term "acceptable excuse" was broad and required a two-third vote of members present.

Mr. Tamborrel noted that the Board's Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson was required to present a written report to the Board of County Commissioners on an annual basis describing the Board's recommendations and activities. He also announced that there was an annual requirement for Board members to submit a financial disclosure affidavit to the Clerk of the Board (COB).

Additionally, Mr. Tamborrel reported that the Administration would provide adequate staff and support services to the BHA; and the COB would maintain accurate membership records, ensure the membership record was current, enforce attendance requirements, maintain reports and recommendations, take meeting minutes and post final meeting minutes of the County's/COB website.

Mr. Tamborrel advised that Board members were required to complete a Sexual Harassment Course and Ethics Training and submit financial disclosure forms/affidavit(s) to the Department of Elections. He encouraged Board members to contact the Department of Elections (DOE) for any questions pertaining to their status. Mr. Tamborrel concluded his presentation and confirmed that links to the presentation were available.

In response to Ms. Sabharwal's comments that she was required to complete the required training and submit financial disclosure forms as a member of the Public Health Trust, Mr. Tamborrel stated that he would verify

CLERK'S SUMMARY OF MEETING AND OFFICIAL MINUTES  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD (BHA)  
JULY 15, 2024

whether training and filings completed for other organizations could substitute for the BHA's required on-line sexual harassment/ethics training.

Discussion ensued regarding virtual attendance of the meetings.

In response to Chairman Garcia's inquiry whether Board members were allowed to vote remotely, Mr. Tamborrel indicated that the Board must meet in person and achieve quorum to act on official business. He noted that he would contact Assistant County Attorney Shanika Graves, to confirm the rules related to general and Ad-Hoc meetings.

Mr. Tamborrel directed the Board members' attention to the contact page, which listed the names, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of staff members. He also noted that the calendar was attached.

**VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- A. ESTABLISHING A BYLAWS COMMITTEE**
- B. ESTABLISHING AN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
- C. ESTABLISHING ANY OTHER AD-HOC COMMITTEES**
- D. OPEN DISCUSSION BY THE BOARD FOR PERTINENT MATTERS**

Chairman Garcia stated that he wanted the Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHA) to have a positive impact on the community and noted the Board would be governed by its bylaws. He recounted a recent incident where a fire fighter committed suicide and pointed out that everyone was prone to having mental health issues. Chairman Garcia emphasized the need for this issue to be addressed in the community holistically and stated that the BHA should be able to identify needs and determine how to address these issues.

Chairman Garcia stated that he observed providers were reluctant to transfer patient information to new providers or facilities and suggested the County implement a system to enter patient information into a system and provide individuals with a number to track their medical condition, medication management, and monitor their medical progress to determine what worked best. He opined the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) could implement a rule to allow information sharing of patients amongst authorized agencies or networks.

Ms. Vicki Sabharwal indicated antiquated systems hindered the sharing of data which made interfacing with different systems difficult or incompatible. She reported a new system was needed, with a unique identifier that recognized patient information across all Jackson Health facilities (North and South locations).

Chairman Garcia asked that the Board look into the creation of a system to identify and cross populate/reference through providers. He also stated his interest in having further discussions on a marketing campaign option.

Ms. Tania Avellanet, Assistant Director, Community Action and Human Services (CAHSD), spoke of her experience in the area of victim advocacy. She discussed the use of the Navigator system and shared her experience using the system during the Champlain Towers collapse in Surfside. Ms. Avellanet explained the Navigator system, hosted by the Florida Crisis Response Team, was used by trained administrators to educate and help victims and families members access resources.

Discussions ensued regarding Board membership and the inclusion of a representative from the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue.

CLERK'S SUMMARY OF MEETING AND OFFICIAL MINUTES  
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JULY 15, 2024

Ms. Victoria Mallette moved to direct staff, within 30 days, to provide a report outlining the development of a County level data sharing system and exploration of scenarios or options for a public awareness campaign; and to recommend to the BCC the appointment of a representative from Miami-Dade Fire Rescue. This motion was seconded by Ms. Laura Naredo; and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 8-0 (Ms. Vicki Sabharwal, Carlos J. Martinez, and Edith C. Wright were absent).

Ms. Laura Naredo pointed out that there were some Board members who served on other boards such as the Miami-Dade Addiction Services Board (ASB) and questioned whether there was a possibility that the BHA and ASB could be combined to avoid duplication of membership and the types of matters discussed.

Senator Garcia stated that while he was not opposed to the idea, he was concerned about the logistics of such a merger. He asked Ms. Naredo and Ms. Mallette to serve as liaisons between the two (2) boards until a decision could be made by the BCC.

**VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Amanda Dominguez, Mental Health Facility Program Manager, Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD), announced the next Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHA) meeting would be held October 21st, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Behavioral Health Advisory Board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.