

# Behavioral Health Unit Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes

September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019

### Committee Members

**Lt. Casey Hettman** PPB BHU; **\*Ofc. Jim Stegemeyer** PPB CIT; **Emily Rochon**, PPB SCT; **Beth Epps**, Cascadia; **\*Capt. Jarmer** Multnomah County Sherriff's Office; **Cissie Bollinger**, Oregon Health Authority (OHA); **\*Melanie Payne**, Bureau Of Emergency Communications (BOEC), **Janie Gullickson**, Mental Health & Addiction Association of Oregon (MHAAO); **Leticia Sainz**, Multnomah County Mental Health & Addiction Services; **\*LaKeesha Dumas**, Office of Consumer Engagement-Multnomah County Mental Health & Addictions Services Division; **\*Tim Case**, AMR; **Juliana Wallace**, Unity; **Myrlaviani Perez-Rivier**, POC Led Cross Disability Coalition; **Sgt. Benson Weinberger**, PPB BHU; **\*Sgt. Stephen Mirau**, PPB BHU; **Kathleen Roy** Central City Concern

[\* Indicates Committee Member was absent]

### Report & Minutes

**July minutes** – Leticia Sainz motioned to approve and Juliana Wallace seconded – Myrlavianai Perez-Rivier and Cissie Bollinger abstained. **M/S/P**

**July Report** – Leticia Sainz motioned to approve and Beth Epps seconded. **M/S/P**

### Guests:

Stephanie Herro - Community Homeless Liaison for the Portland Police Bureau

Peter Zuckerman - 2020 Drug Treatment & Recovery Act presentation

### Notes:

BHU is moving from one command structure to another within the Bureau. The newly created Community Services Division will now house the Behavioral Health Unit. The new division is overseen by a Captain who reports directly to the Chief's Office. There should be no difference in the day-to-day operations of BHU. Chuck Lovell is currently fulfilling the Captain role in an acting capacity. Lovell is very familiar with BHU, as he was the BHU Lieutenant a couple of years ago.

On 10/5/19, BHU members will be joining the Out of Darkness walk and invited committee members to join.

Stephanie Herro introduced herself and gave an overview of her new position as Community Homeless Liaison and has been with the bureau for 5 weeks. The position is focused on understanding the impacts and interactions within the homeless community and the Portland Police Bureau. The position is new in the bureau and will continue to evolve over time. Stephanie has been connecting with various service providers and advocacy groups with the goal of building direct relationships in the community. A committee member asked if this position was focused on mental health or more broad. Stephanie's job will intersect with the mental health community, but it's unclear at this time in what way that

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intersection will occur. Stephanie also asked the committee to contact her if they would like to meet directly or have other suggestions of agencies to reach out to.

Peter Zuckerman presented an overview of the proposed ballot measure, 2020 Drug Treatment and Recovery Act. Peter presented background information, which was the driving factor of the proposal. Peter stated Mental Health America rated Oregon 49<sup>th</sup> on adequately addressing behavioral health concerns, there is access and capacity issues, two people die every day of drug overdose in Oregon, arresting individuals for drug offenses creates barriers to housing and employment, and although this is not true in Multnomah County, in other parts of the state, there are racial disparities in arrests and accessibility to treatment. In the state, 8716 arrests were for low level drug charges and 1500 of these arrests resulted in charges.

The goal is to create funding to divert individuals who are arrested for low level possession charges from jail to addiction treatment. Instead of going to jail, individuals would be cited and given the opportunity to complete a drug and alcohol assessment. Once assessment is complete, the charges would be dropped. It would only be for individuals in which the only charge is possession at the time of arrest. Funding would be secured through the Marijuana Tax Revenue. The revenue has exceeded the predicted 45 million dollars a year and the goal is to secure the excess revenue. Oregon Health Authority (OHA) will provide the oversight of the funding.

The committee asked details about how OHA will deliver funds. Recommendations for the delegation of the funds will go through a board, included representatives from mental health, addiction, and peers. The board members will be appointed by OHA and administration is capped at 3% of the total funding. The needs throughout the state looks different, especially in rural and frontier areas, so there needs to be flexibility in the implementation. Since the funds will be for the entire state, evaluation of the needs for different jurisdictions will look different, this includes rural and frontier areas.

Discussion/feedback from the committee: Multnomah County District Attorney office has been supporting diversion efforts for low level crimes, which has resulted in charges being dropped. Some members thought access into treatment should be the focal point, not the assessment. Peter stated by doing the assessment, the individual will also have the opportunity to be referred to appropriate services, but follow through will not be connected to whether the charges will be dropped or not. There was some concern that the focus is only on assessment, not treatment, which is not addressing the access and capacity issues. OHA currently has dedicated funding for diversion, but diversion only works if there direct access to actual treatment services and follow up. Peter stated the hope if the if we shift to a health care based approach the feeling is that there has to be somewhere for them to go. When asked how many times an individual can be diverted if they continue to be arrested for possession charges, the answer was they would have the opportunity every time. After so many times, the intervention should be evaluated for effectiveness. Committee members suggested clearly stating how the funds will be delineated and a process to ensure there is not duplication of services.

Committee members can contact Peter directly if they have further questions or comments.

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### **Mental Health Alliance formal response**

BHUAC Chair presented a draft of the formal response to the Mental Health Alliance based on several months of robust discussions within the committee about the request to open the meeting to the public. The feedback from the committee included: Mention the presentation from Jason Renaud to the BHUAC, restate the request from Mental Health Alliance, outline the City Attorney's determination that the advisory committee does not fall under the open meeting law, and the final decision of the committee.

The committee members did not formally motion for a vote on the request, but will focus on being more intentional on community engagement to be more outward facing and transparent. The committee agreed to submit a draft of community engagement ideas by the end of the year. This will also be added to the response letter.

The BHUAC Chair will update the draft and send it to the committee members via email for final approval.

### **Next steps for the BHUAC community engagement**

Due to time constraints, this topic will be placed on next month's agenda.

**The next meeting will be October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2019.  
2-4 PM on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor of the Justice Center**