



Whatcom County Behavioral Health Advisory Committee (BHAC)
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: April 12, 2021 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Virtual GoToMeeting

Members Present: Susan Wood, Todd Donovan, Chris Phillips, Michael Massanari, Anne Deacon, Wendy Jones, Dave Reynolds, Mullane Harrington (late arrival)

Members Absent: Nick Evans, Dascomb Jamison, Bill Elfo

Health Depart Staff/Guests: Jackie Mitchell, Health Department Program Specialist; Ashley Geleynse, Health Department Coordinator; Joe Fuller, Health Department Program Specialist; Perry Mowery, Health Department Supervisor; Ann Beck, Health Department Supervisor

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
1. Welcome, Introductions and Announcements	The meeting was called to order. A quorum was present.	Chris
2. Approve Minutes of January 2020	Anne moved to approve the January 2021 minutes as presented. Wendy seconded the motion. The committee voted unanimously and the motion passed.	Vote to approve minutes: Ayes 9, Nays 0, Abstain 0
3. 2020 Annual Report & Fund Balance	A brief version of the 2020 Behavioral Health Annual Report was distributed to the committee. The committee reviewed the report. Chris Phillips suggested adding a caveat that this report only frames the one tenth of 1% sales tax, and to share what percentage this fund is compared to all behavioral health funds. County staff will see how total funding can be incorporated in the future. Once the report is complete with financial information, it will be presented to County Council and distributed to the committee.	Anne
4. One Tenth of 1% New Sales Tax	Bellingham City Council and Whatcom County Council passed a new one tenth of 1% sales tax for affordable housing development (60%) and related behavioral health services (40%). Pursuant to County Code, the Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee will consult with this committee regarding the allocation of	Anne



	<p>40% for related behavioral health services. County staff will bring a strategic plan including possibilities for allocating these monies to the next meeting. There have been requests to expand the GRACE program and youth mental health services. Wendy suggested considering case management/navigation facilitation for people with serious mental illness who get stuck in the criminal justice system. County staff shared that we may have acquired funding for a full-time re-entry position for the jail.</p>	
<p>5. BH Crisis Service System Planning</p>	<p>The County facilitated the efforts of looking into alternative responses to law enforcement for people experiencing behavioral health crises. A committee comprised of City/County Councilmembers, Bellingham Police (BPD), Sheriff, Bellingham Fire, EMS, Dispatch, Community Treatment Providers, MCOT, GRACE, and County Human Services has met regularly over the past few months to discuss and explore options which fit for our community. The goals of the committee are to improve outcomes for people experiencing behavioral health crises, enhance integrated systems of behavioral health response and support, and safely reduce unnecessary law enforcement dispatches for people who are experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Phase One will focus on data collection in the field within the City of Bellingham, with a team consisting of a Behavioral Health Professional and a BPD Officer. Phase Two, using data from Phase One, will launch an alternative dispatch model; a team consisting of a Behavioral Health Professional and an Emergency Medical Technician. County staff will present the plan to City Council on April 26th, and County Council on May 4th. The committee discussed the planning efforts. This committee may make recommendations to Council regarding funding an alternative response.</p>	<p>Anne</p>
<p>6. State Legislative Provisos & American Rescue Plan Act</p>	<p>The Crisis Stabilization Center (CSC) has 32 beds; 16 beds dedicated to substance withdrawal management, or detox, and currently 10 beds dedicated to mental health stabilization. Since integrated managed care came into being, it has been unclear if there will be enough operational funding to support the center. In the last biennium budget, Representative Sharon Shewmake helped us secure an extra \$500k per year dedicated to supporting operations, Currently, Representative Alicia Rule has put an extra \$200k per year into the budget proviso, which has passed the house, but is not yet in the final budget. On the other hand, the Health Care Authority and Managed Care Organizations know that these services are a huge priority for the community.</p> <p>Additionally, Representative Rule put into the budget \$300k per year for the next two years dedicated to supporting youth behavioral health services.</p>	<p>Anne</p>

WHATCOM COUNTY
Health Department



Erika Lautenbach, Director
Greg Stern, M.D., Health Officer

	Through the American Rescue Plan, over \$40M is coming to the county to use over the next few years to help with recovery from the pandemic. The Health Department formed a committee to complete a needs assessment to present to County Council which will help inform a thoughtful response.	
7. Public Comment	<p>Joe shared that an abbreviated Healthy Youth Survey which was administered in March, and the results will come back sometime in May.</p> <p>Registration is open for a Hope Science training facilitated by Dr. Chan Hellman on May 25th.</p> <p>There will be a fundraising event for the new Recovery House on April 27th at 12pm. While this is a fundraising event, it will also be an opportunity to learn about the program.</p>	Chris
Next Meeting:	<p>July 12, 2021 3:30-5:00 Virtual GoToMeeting</p>	