

January 15, 2020

Cover Letter for MHRAC Sub-Committee Annual Reports

2019 was a whirlwind of a year. The MHRAC continued to work closely with our police department and assist in providing guidance and assistance in the review of policies, and assisting with training as they related to interaction between law enforcement and those experiencing mental health crisis and those experiencing homelessness.

Several members of the MHRAC were directly involved with Crisis Intervention training that was conducted by the Albuquerque Police Department (APD) in 2019. The MHRAC also worked closely with APD command staff in continuing to address issues related to the core mission of the MHRAC as contained in the Court Approved Settlement Agreement (CASA). As Co-Chairs of the MHRAC we met regularly with Deputy Chief Eric Garcia and his staff to discuss any issues and concerns that the MHRAC was having. The MHRAC also provided information to the Department of Justice (DOJ) representatives on a regular basis. We also met several times with members of Dr. Ginger's Monitoring Team. We were also part of the team from MHRAC that met with the New Mexico Supreme Court Administrative group to discuss Certificates of Evaluation, in hopes of creating a standard policy and standard form for these evaluations. The MHRAC is waiting for direction from the Supreme Court on how best to proceed with this issue.

At our monthly meetings several items of interest was presented to the committee. One that we will carry into the New Year is the City's plan to build a homeless shelter in the city. The discussion that involves MHRAC is that this facility is slated to be a "one stop" facility. The City has issued several informational statements that claim that this facility will offer initial mental health treatment for those experiencing homelessness and that the new facility will offer law enforcement a "drop off" location for those who they encounter that are experiencing homelessness. This will require new policies, procedures and training for APD. The MHRAC is exploring how, or if we will need to create a separate sub-group to review plans and work closely with the City in the planning and implementing of policies and procedures as they relate to homelessness and mental health issues at this new facility.

It has been a productive year for the MHRAC and we look forward to what the New Year brings. We still have as the dual purpose of the MHRAC to one, provide law enforcement the tools needed to do their jobs safely for officers and the community and second, to help restore faith and trust in our police department. We feel that we have made great strides in assisting our law enforcement officers in accomplishing these goals.

Rick Miera,
Co-Chair

Danny Whatley,
Co-Chair