

# **MENTAL HEALTH RESPONSE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MHRAC)**

## **CO-CHAIRS 2020 COVER LETTER FOR MHRAC SUB- COMMITTEES ANNUAL REPORTS**

**2020 has been a challenging year. Starting in March we suspended in person meetings as a result of COVID 19. We resumed our meetings via ZOOM in May and have met monthly since that time. Our two sub-committees have continued to meet using ZOOM and their annual reports have been filed and are available as is this document on the CABQ.gov website.**

**While it has been a challenging year, MHRAC continues to focus on the Court Approved Settlement Agreement (CASA) and the directions the CASA provides to our committee. We have continued some in person training of police officers and offering guidance and suggestions to our police department as to training and policy. The policies submitted in 2020 to the MHRAC for review and comment are listed below:**

- 1. 1-10 Peer Support Program**
- 2. 1-28 Downtown Unit (Currently four (4) three (3) Community Response Unit)**
- 3. 1-81 Crisis Intervention Section**
- 4. 2-19 Response to Behavioral Health Issues**

**We have participated in three status conferences between APD, DOJ, other AMICI partners and the Independent Monitor and his team.**

**We have attended in person and via ZOOM two status conferences with the Honorable James Browning, the parties and AMICI members also in attendance.**

**We have had several conversations with the Independent Monitors team concerning the direction and activity of the MHRAC. We were recognized by the Independent Monitor as being one of the success stories of the CASA.**

**The MHRAC is made up of nineteen mental health professionals; service providers to the homeless and those experiencing mental health crises; law enforcement and others from our community. We have, in our opinion the best, not one of the best, but the best group of dedicated individuals in our city. This group has given of their valuable time and resources to make sure that the MHRAC is successful and is making a difference in our community for**

those who often don't have a voice. We have established relationships within the city and the police department that have never existed and because of these relationships we have made significant improvements in our city as it relates to how law enforcement interacts with those experiencing homelessness and those experiencing mental health crises.

The MHRAC looks forward to some sense of normalcy in 2021 and the ability to again meet face to face and continue the challenge of giving our law enforcement the tools they need to effectively and safely do their jobs and also to restore faith and trust in law enforcement by our community.

**Rick Miera,  
Co-Chair**

**Danny Whatley,  
Co-Chair**