

**September Mental Health Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
September 15, 2020  
Online Via Zoom**

**Board Members in Attendance:**

Co-Chair Danny Whatley, The Rock at Noon Day  
Co-Chair Rick Miera, Executive Committee  
Betty Whiton, NAMI  
Gilbert Ramirez, CABQ-Dept. of Family & Comm. Services  
Nils Rosenbaum, MD., M.P.H., APD Behavioral Health Division  
Laura Nguyen, Albuquerque Ambulance  
Maxwell Kauffman, Law Offices of the Public Defender  
David Ley, New Mexico Solutions  
Paula Burton, Peer Representative  
Cassandra Bailey, Detective, APD CIU  
Matt Dietzel, APD CIU  
Lea Harrison, Haven Behavioral Hospital of Alb.  
Robert Salazar, NAMI/Peer Representative  
Sarah Alires, St. Martin's HopeWorks  
Elizabeth Romero, M.D., UNM Department of Psychiatry  
Rob Nelson, APD/C.O.A.S.T  
Sarah Alires, St. Martin's HopeWorks  
Rosa Gallegos-Samora, Albuq. Health Care for the Homeless

***Welcome first-time guests***

Danny

- We would like to welcome the first time guests. Please tell us who you are and what brought you to the MHRAC (Mental Health Response Advisory Board).

Stacy Kuntz

- I am an investigator with CYFD (Children Youth and Family Department), a certified rehabilitation counselor, and a licensed medical counselor.

Matt Cross

- Department of Health and have recently connected with Lt. Dietzel and he sent me an invite for today.

Diana Lopez

- New Mexico Department of Health. Here with Matt Cross and I am excited to hear more about what is going on today.

(missed a couple of first-time guests after Diana)

***Approval of meeting minutes***

Danny

- The committee should have received a copy of the minutes from the last meeting and the agenda. I need a motion to accept those as written.

Betty

- Motioned to accept minutes as written.

David Ley

- Second the minutes.

***Comments by Interim Chief Harold Medina***

Chief Medina

- For those of you who don't know me, I am Chief Medina. I have been with APD for 23 years. I have 26 years of Law Enforcement experience. I retired from APD in 2014 and from here I went on to be the Chief in the Pueblo of Laguna. In 2017 I came back and took over the Deputy Chief position for the Field Services Bureau. I think that the number one thing I want to stress is that we are continually learning and improving within the Police Department. I admit that our history has not always been perfect and I think this is a good forum because of the things we need to get good at is how we interact with individuals with mental illness or going through a mental crisis. I have a lot of compassion for the homeless community in particular. I helped coordinate with the West Side homeless shelter for weekend feedings for about 9 months last year until COVID hit. I asked that every Commander in the department undergo one of those feedings. Almost every time they complained that they had to go do it but came back with a different mindset. I think we have to find a balance with that and I intend for us to be proactive and taking the right individual into custody. I believe we have to remove drivers of violent crime within the community and have them incarcerated if they are not going to change their ways but at the same time, I believe in the diversion for individuals who are not criminals and experiencing other issues. I also believe we must continue to look at the way we do business and do a self-assessment so we can improve. The Mayor's idea of a team of social workers assisting us is great. The example I use is often we get dispatched out to a home where the family is having a difficult time with their child who might be 8 or 9 years old and I hate it because that child just had a negative interaction with officers that is going to last a lifetime, so having different methods and resources is important. Relationships take work and forgiveness and I know that as a department we will make mistakes and we will own our mistakes and move forward from them but we hope that we can always stay in communication with the community.
- DC Garcia let me know there were questions on the PRT, so I am more than happy to set up a meeting with the PRT and answer any questions that you might have.

David Ley

- I am happy to see a familiar face stepping in. On behalf of MHRAC, our success is largely been related to the involvement with DC Garcia.

***Public Comment (Two minutes per person, 15 minutes' total)***

Max

- We were given a presentation about Proactive Response Teams (PRT) and their Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). I discussed this during the sub-committee but I was confused about the intent behind this SOP. I was under the impression this was for non-law enforcement contacts and for outreach to connect people to services or Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD). I am finding that on Albuquerque Police Department (APD) twitter that they are using this exclusively for enforcement purposes, so it is confusing

because I thought this was for low-level crimes. I was concerned that our feedback/presentation we got from APD is not the same.

Lindsay Van Meter

- I think your concerns are important so I will work on setting up a meeting with you all and APD so we can further this discussion.

Diane

- We did teach every officer about LEAD and they know how to divert and use the program. They have all attended and have been trained citywide.

Max

- Do you know how many LEAD referrals there have been since the SOP went into effect?

Diane

- A rough number between Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) and APD is around 70.
- This is an extra tool and is up to the officers' discretion. We have to have a willing and cooperative victim.

### ***Albuquerque Community Safety Department Update, Mariela Ruiz-Angel***

Mariela

- We had a very successful week with the community input sessions. We had the most amazing conversations with experts who do this work for a living. We will continue to have the input sessions. One thing we talked about is having one with the MHRAC but we have not finalized that yet.
- We will not have final results or a report until mid-October to have a better understanding of how the community has felt with this new department.
- We might have some preliminary results around the insightful survey.
- We proposed 7.5 million for the ACS budget. There was a shock that there was not more money allocated to this but when talking to other cities across the nation, most were shocked we got that much money. Given we have a short year to spend that I think it is very workable.
- We are going to start moving a little bit. We are talking about implementing a potential "Houston Model". The model would be to place some sort of Mental Health Specialist in our dispatch center to help us understand what kind of calls can be sent to a crisis line or ACS.
- We are finalizing our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU) School of Social Work.
- The administration was clear that we will not be defunding the Police Department and pulling resources out from them for this Department. However, we will potentially be pulling positions down the road. That is not shown in the budget at this point but Mayor was transparent about that.

Rosa

- I know we talked about the pipeline with social workers for this department. I have concerns being a Social Worker about putting someone new who is fresh to this work into the field to deal with a crisis.

Mariela

- We are talking about having additional training in house. They have launched a master class and that is not enough but it was to help us understand the different models and what

capacity they would have coming in. I am in the process of writing up job descriptions and the type of training we will need to have available.

Rosa

- What are the job descriptions going to be based on? Are they going based on a similar department in other states or working with what we already have and maybe modeling it to what this department needs?

Mariela

- We are looking at all the call types we would be sending someone to and then shaping the job descriptions to fit what those individuals would need to have to respond. There is a lot of shifting room so we are trying to make sense of the calls and how many people we would need and the qualifications. The Houston model places Bachelor Social Workers in their dispatch center and it works very well, so I can say that potential we could bring in BSW for assessments.

Rick Miera

- That 7 million I imagine didn't come easily, so I can ensure a lot of questions. Is that for the personnel or another part of the programming?

Mariela

- It covers multiple areas:
  - o Contract work
  - o Personnel
  - o Equipment
  - o Partnerships

Danny

- Is the budget public?

Mariela

- Yes, it is online.

Danny

- I have a lot of questions, as does the board, which you have seen through email chains. Mention of the job descriptions has already been brought up, command structure, policies, and procedures, training, time frame, etc. I have a concern that MHRAC needs to be in front of this instead of behind it.

Mariela

- I am open to that. I am not opposed to having MHRAC at the forefront. I want to better understand if this is a recommendation process, check and balance, all of the above? My thought is how does MHRAC play a role and how it can work with this department.

Danny

- Those are the same questions we have. If we are not going to be involved, that's great, but you are going to be in the same position when it comes to the settlement agreement. I don't know how you can divorce yourselves from what the Court Approved Settlement Agreement (CASA) calls us to do.

Mariela

- I agree. I do want to make sure it functions well and good meaning for it. I want to figure this out and start having these conversations.

Lindsay Van Meter

- I am hoping that in the next few months we can start working on putting things on paper and seeing what it will look like. I anticipate we will put it on paper, have everyone review

them, and go from there. we are not there yet but we understand that MHRAC is a part of the process.

Rick

- That is where I was coming from. I was thinking from the obvious to the insane but questions on who will these individuals work under.

(Mariela sent the budget link through chat)

Max

- I was a part of the community focus group exercise and it was good. One thing that came up was a question about accountability. How is ACS going to hold themselves accountable? The advisory board, is it going to be internal or external? There was a suggestion that there would be both, but do you have more information on how that is going to be developed?

Mariela

- We have not gotten to that level yet but everything you said is what we have been discussing. Who needs to come in for an evaluation, do we have an advisory team or task force made up of internal and external. We are headed in that direction but we are in the works of getting our ducks in a row and understand ourselves. This has come up multiple times, so I appreciate you bringing that up.
- There are a lot of you on this call that has been doing this type of work, so I will include my email in the chat so we can have those conversations.

Danny

- I feel comfortable with the direction and how MHRAC is going to be involved. Let me know what you think.

David Ley

- I appreciate the budget being made public. Lindsay, I look forward to those conversations with the City on what this is going to look like. I appreciate the open communication and I think based on the discussion today, I don't think we need to have a separate conversation but would like for us to stay engaged as we go.

Leah

- I concur with Dr. Ley.

Max

- Are you working with the APOA in some sort of capacity for the development with the ACS?

Mariela

- The Mayor's office has been in contact with them, although, we have not gotten any recommendations or thoughts from them. Is that a suggestion you are giving?

Max

- No, just gathering some information.

Lt. Dietzel

- What I am seeing publically is them waiting to see what this will look like.

### ***New Shelter Update by Quinn Donnay, Family and Community Services***

Quinn

- Right now with the gateway(s), we are thinking about this in smaller sights versus one large site. We heard the community concern about the mega-shelter, so we are not doing that

anymore. We are thinking about the key gaps within the community relating to homelessness and what are the high-level impact strategies. We are getting through this in a committee process through the Homeless Coordinating Council. They have 5 committees underneath that, that encompass services. We also have housing because we know none of this matters if we don't have affordable housing. The details are laid out by the urban institute study and you can see that on the website. We have a coordinated street outreach committee and there is youth housing. With all of these, we are trying to solve all of these unmet needs. We are looking at providing some sort of report to the...and brought to the council by mid-October.

- We are sticking to medical respite as one of our solutions.
  - o Medical Respite Definition: Acute, post-acute medical care for patients experiencing homelessness, who are too ill or frail to recover from a physical illness or injury while living in a shelter or on the streets, but not sick enough to be in the hospital.
- ACS did a city-wide need assessment for medical respite and we would need about 50. Probably a little more with COVID. We are thinking about starting with 25 medical respite beds that are not a part of the general shelter population. Abq has only 37 throughout that are funded through hospitals, etc. The demographic for those beds have not been identified yet but we will let you know.
- The medium length of stay is roughly 30-45 days, so that could potentially give us the capacity to serve around 300 individuals a year. Medical respite is supposed to be a direct line into permanent housing, so in this process, we are looking at making shelter beds be more of a possibility and in town.

Unknown

- One of the populations I find most challenging for people coming out of homelessness are single men and specifically ones with a history of criminal record, mental health challenges, etc. I wanted to pipe up and make sure that a specific population is being addressed as the plans move forward.

Quinn

- Absolutely. We cant think about these solutions without thinking about them. Things like that could be brought to City Councils.

Chat

- How are participants for all the subcommittees selected and do you have a list for each group providing input?

Quinn

- The Homeless Coordinating Council is the voting body and those are the elected officials. All the other meetings are public and you are welcome to zoom into the meetings.

Unknown

- For those in the community, I would like us to explain how it will cover those who have psych as well.

Rachel Biggs

- The primary reason for someone to get referred to Medical Respite will automatically require a medical diagnosis.....

Chat

- Are the sub-committees listed somewhere?

Quinn

- They should be posted publically but if not I will send a list to this group of when they meet.

***Transportation of children 12 and under experiment with AFR DC Jaramillo***

Powerpoint presentation from DC Emily Jaramillo (Lt. Dietzel sent out the presentation via email)

Danny

- Everyone received a copy of the special order and we are going to set a deadline for that by this Friday. If you have any questions at all you will need to respond to Lt. Dietzel, myself or Rick, otherwise it will go forward.

***Social Dispatch Program by Commander Josh Brown and Xochitl Campos-Biggs, LMSW***

Powerpoint presentation from Xochitl Campos-Biggs and Commander Josh Brown (Lt. Dietzel sent out the presentation via email)

***Saved for next month due to time:***

- Certified Peer Support Workers, Jeremy Lithe New Mexico Leaders in Recovery
- (Time Permitting) MHRAC Bylaws discussion—Matt Dietzel/MHRAC Board

***Skipped:***

- Report and Update from CIU, APD and Dr. Rosenbaum
- Report and Update from C.O.A.S.T
- Report and Update from Sub-Committees

**Next meeting: October 20, 2020**