

Steve Sisolak
Governor

Richard Whitley, MS
Director



**DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**
DIVISION OF PUBLIC AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
Helping people. It's who we are and what we do.



Lisa Sherych
Administrator

Ihsan Azzam,
Ph.D., M.D.
Chief Medical Officer

DPBH COMMISSION ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
STAFFING LETTER MEETING MINUTES
October 28th, 2021
9:00 AM

MEETING LOCATIONS:

This meeting was held online and by phone.

Join Online

Zoom Meeting link: <https://zoom.us/j/96044872458?pwd=eYvWG0rL1ZLbzdCvE5KY29tVWcwQT09>

Meeting ID: 960 4487 2458

Passcode: 466241

Join by Phone

Phone Number: +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 960 4487 2458

Passcode: 466241

1. Call To Order/Roll Call:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Lisa Durette, M.D. (Chair), Lisa Ruiz-Lee (Vice Chair), Natasha Mosby LCSW, Gregory Giron Psy.D., Braden Schrag, Dan Ficalora CPC

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED:

Jasmine Troop, Arvin Operario, Billie J. Miller

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Staff:

Joseph Filippi, Executive Assistant, DPBH; Rex Gifford, Administrative Assistant III, Cody Phinney, Deputy Administrator, DPBH; Joanne Malay, Deputy Administrator, DPBH; Theresa Wickham, Agency Manager, LCC; Christina Brooks, Agency Manager, NNAMHS; Ellen Richardson-Adams, Outpatient Manager, SNAMHS; Julian Montoya, Clinical Program Manager II, ADSD; Dr. Betsy Neighbors, Statewide Forensic Director, DPBH; Dena Schmidt, Administrator, ADSD; Gujuan Caver, Clinical Program Manager II, ADSD; Jessica Adams, Deputy Division Administrator, ADSD; Katy Martin Waldman, Clinical Program Manager II, DCFS; Marina Valerio, Agency Manager, ADSD; Dr. Jacklyn Wade, DCFS; Ross Armstrong, Administrator, DCFS; Suzanne Sliwa, DAG; Roswell Allen, Recovery Manager, ADSD;

Others/Public Present:

None Present

Chair Durette called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Roll call is reflected above. It was determined that a quorum was present.

Chair Durette asked if everyone in the meeting could identify themselves. Mr. Filippi went through all of the list of attendees. All attendees are listed above. Additionally, Mr. Filippi let the Commission know that Commissioners Operario and Commissioner Troop were unable to attend the Commission on Behavioral Health meeting this morning.

2. Public Comment:

Chair Durette asked if there was any public comment. There was no public comment.

3. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: Discuss, edit, review, and approve the drafted letter from the Commission regarding the need to address staffing shortages in the state adult psychiatric facilities and regional centers. – Lisa Durette, M.D., Chair:

Chair Durette thanked everyone for attending the meeting and reminded the Commission that today’s meeting is to review the current iteration of the letter to the Governor and members of the legislature. As of the last meeting as per the Commission’s discussion, Mr. Filippi and the team have added some additional language, fiscal data and turnover data. Chair Durette asked Mr. Filippi to screen share so all of the attendees could see the letter and review the way it is written add any edits and if the Commission is comfortable with the letter to move it forward. This is a letter for the adult system ADSD and DPBH but that is only half of the population. The same issues that are plaguing the adult services are effecting the children’s services. It is great to see Dr. Wade because she is struggling with staffing at her agency. Chair Durette would like to repeat this letter for DCFS as well.

Ms. Wickham pointed out a possible grammatical error on page 2 in the second paragraph. The error in question was the difference between the word “breakdown” and “break down”. Mr. Filippi explained that upon review Microsoft Word suggested “breakdown”.

Chair Durette asked if there were any more edits and liked that the facts for both agencies were in the letter such as salaries, vacancies, and the turnover rate. This is a more substantive draft than the first and it speaks to what the core issue is.

Commissioner Ficalora stated that this draft represents the conversation that the Commission had at the last meeting well. Commissioner Ficalora feels comfortable sending the letter to the Governor and legislature in its current form.

Chair Durette asked Commissioner Ficalora if he would like to make a motion. Commissioner Ficalora noticed that his credentials were incorrect. Commissioner Ficalora is a CPC not an MFT. Chair Durette asked all the Commissioners to look at their name and make sure their credentials were correct. Mr. Filippi corrected Commissioner Ficalora’s credentials and Chair Durette let Mr. Filippi know to correct Commissioner Mosby’s credentials too because Commissioner Mosby is a LCSW.

Commissioner Giron let Mr. Filippi know that his credentials are incorrect as well because doctor Giron is a Psy.D.

Commissioner Schrag asked when will the letter be sent to the Governor and legislature?

Mr. Filippi let the Commission know that he would be happy to send the letter today after approval from today’s Commission on Behavioral Health meeting.

Chair Durette asked if there were any other items for discussion.

Commissioner Ficalora made a motion to approve the proposed letter to the Governor and legislature from the Commission on Behavioral Health with the revised edits. Commissioner Schrag and Commissioner Ruiz-Lee co-seconded the motion with no abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Durette recognized that the Commission quorum today was for the adult meetings, but there were some DCFS personnel anticipating discussion for the same staffing issues in letter format to the Governor and legislature similar for the adult mental health staff. Chair Durette made a motion to craft a similar letter for children's mental health staff.

Chair Durette made a motion to create a letter to the Governor and legislature from the Commission on Behavioral Health for DCFS staffing issues in children's mental health facilities.

Mr. Filippi asked the Deputy Attorney General (DAG) if this issue has to be placed on a future agenda to make a motion to draft a similar letter for children's behavioral health? The second question is does the Commission want to schedule this topic, for a children's mental health meeting, so that DCFS has the opportunity to give input on their agency specifically? How do we want to move forward with that motion?

Ms. Sliwa, DAG reviewed the agenda for the current meeting, and she thinks that the motion can be made to send a similar letter regarding children's mental health, however she agrees with Mr. Filippi that it would be better to put this as an agenda item in a Commission meeting with DCFS to get all of the relevant approval. Ms. Sliwa recognized that Mr. Armstrong is in the meeting and suggested that he might possibly want to discuss this with his staff. Such as what they would like to see in the letter in addition to the base letter that the Commission has already.

Commissioner Schrag asked in the spirit of trying to expeditiously send the letter to the Governor and legislature would it be prudent to have the current letter taken back and have edits and adjustments made from DCFS and at the next Commission meeting bring it together to speed up the process since the Commission already has this letter approved? Instead of setting up meeting after meeting. The Commission has 90% of the letter done. Just the added data is necessary. Is that permissible Ms. Sliwa?

Ms. Sliwa, after looking at the agenda for this meeting believes that the Commission can.

Mr. Armstrong stated that DCFS would be happy to provide the same data that you received for the adult system from the DCFS system. Mr. Armstrong said they could get the information to the Commission expeditiously.

Commissioner Schrag suggested the same process which was sending all the information to Chair Durette and Mr. Filippi to avoid any conflict with open meeting law requirements that the Commission could do a single data point collection and present a modified letter to the next Commission on Behavioral Health meeting and approve or edit and approve to move forward from there.

Ms. Sliwa stated that from the open meeting law perspective that sounds great.

Chair Durette asked when the next Commission on Behavioral Health meeting was, and Mr. Filippi let her know that the next meeting is scheduled for November 18th, 2021.

Commissioner Ruiz-Lee asked if the November meeting would be a good opportunity to hear from DCFS regarding the specific challenges that they are experiencing which are related to the continece of this letter so that the Commission can better understand them?

Ms. Sliwa stated that this is something that could be put on the November Commission on Behavioral Health agenda.

Chair Durette asked the DCFS representatives if they would be able to get the Commission information on frontline staff salary, vacancy rates, turnover rates? Those are the 3 core elements that are in this letter. Are the DCFS representatives able to send that information to the Commission so that the Commission has an agenized draft for the November meeting with the expectation that after the November 18th Commission on Behavioral Health meeting that letter would be sent to the Governor and legislature?

Mr. Armstrong told Chair Durette that yes, they will get that done.

Chair Durette thanked Mr. Armstrong and asked Ms. Sliwa if that was done properly and asked Ms. Sliwa if the Commission had to do any motions?

Ms. Sliwa answered that an official motion would be a good idea.

Mr. Filippi concurred with Ms. Sliwa and asked if the last motion was going to be amended to hold the letter pending additions from DCFS?

Chair Durette answered that there are two letters. One, the adult mental health staffing letter, that is approved and sent now to the Governor and legislature, and at the November 18th Commission on Behavioral Health meeting, the children's mental health staffing letter would be sent to the Governor and legislature since they are different entities. Chair Durette did not want to inflate the current letter into on giant document that gets lost in translation. Chair Durette asked the Commissioners what they thought and there was unanimous agreement.

Commissioner Schrag added that this letter would help prime the receivers and give them an expectation that something is coming up next.

Chair Durette recapped that the first motion would stay and asked if the second motion would have to be revised?

Ms. Sliwa suggested that the original motion could be withdrawn and a new motion with all of the details that have been discussed can be put forward. That might be the easiest way.

Chair Durette made a motion that the adult mental health letter that was discussed and approved be sent to the Governor and the legislature today. In addition, Mr. Armstrong and the DCFS team is going to get the data about salaries, vacancies, and turnovers to the appropriate administrators such that the paralleled letter for the children's mental health system is crafted in a draft that is presented for the Commission to review, edit, and notate on November 18th, 2021, with the intent to get the letter submitted to the Governor and legislature following the Commission on Behavioral Health meeting on November 18th, 2021. Commissioner Fialora seconded the motion with no abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Durette asked if there was any public comment and paused for comments. No public comments were presented.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

The DPBH Commission on Behavioral Health Public Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.