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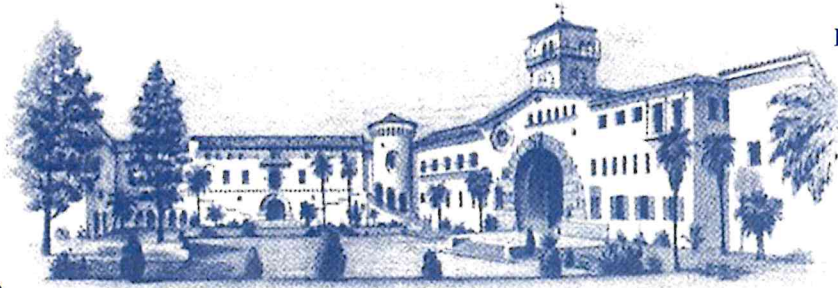
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BOB NELSON

Fourth District

STEVE LAVAGNINO

Fifth District, Chair



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

September 17, 2024

Honorable Pauline Maxwell
Presiding Judge
Santa Barbara Superior Court
County Courthouse
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Reference: Response to Santa Barbara Civil Grand Jury report titled, "Individuals in Crisis – The Right Care at the Right Time"

Judge Maxwell:

Please find attached the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors (Board) response to the above referenced Civil Grand Jury Report. As directed by the Grand Jury, all responses are provided in accordance with Section 933.05 of the California Penal Code (PC). Pursuant to PC Section 933 (c) and (d), responses are provided on behalf of the Board of Supervisors.

Sincerely,

Steve Lavagnino, Chair
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors

cc: Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Sheriff-Coroner Bill Brown

**Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
Response to the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury 2023-24 Report
“Individuals in Crisis – The Right Care at the Right Time”**

The County supports the Grand Jury’s desire for greater participation from law enforcement and the Department of Behavioral Wellness in responding to individuals in crisis in the community. The report acknowledges improvements made in recent years in supporting those in crisis such as the launch of Co-Response teams, training by various law enforcement agencies on crisis intervention and 5150 holds, and efforts to increase capacity for care such as creation of Crisis Stabilization Units. In its report, the Grand Jury highlights barriers for 5150 hold writing by law enforcement due to “obscure historical limitations.” The County and Grand Jury agree that the perceived limitations were not due to any official action taken by the Board of Supervisors.

As the responses below indicate, the County is committed to strengthening collaboration between law enforcement agencies and Behavioral Wellness to ensure adequate training and awareness of 5150 hold procedures. The County is committed to working with local justice and healthcare partners on strategies for training on 5150 holds and ensuring timely access to behavioral health services for those in crisis.

Finding 1

The Jury finds that increased implementation of the 5150 holds by trained law enforcement officers and more Behavioral Wellness clinicians would benefit all citizen of Santa Barbara County.

The Board of Supervisors (Board) agrees that the expansion of trained law enforcement officers with 5150 hold ability and more Behavioral Wellness clinicians would be beneficial to Santa Barbara County citizens. There is currently much collaboration occurring between law enforcement and Behavioral Wellness clinicians, but there is benefit to further investments in training and additional clinicians to support our community’s most vulnerable.

Recommendation 1a

The Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors direct Behavioral Wellness to increase the number of clinicians available for Co-Response Teams.

The Board has supported Co-Response teams as an opportunity to better serve the citizens and divert mentally ill individuals from our Jails. Behavioral Wellness coordinates Co-Response teams with the Sheriff’s Office, Santa Barbara Police Department, and Santa Maria Police Department. Each team is equipped with a clinician.

However, this recommendation will not be implemented as each team is fully staffed and Co-Response utilization data does not demonstrate need for additional staffing at this time.

In February 2024, Behavioral Wellness and independent consultant, KPMG, provided an operational and performance report on County Crisis Services to the Board.¹ Data from the report showed a low call volume for the Sheriff's Co-response teams. Per the report, "Co-response teams experienced low volumes over the four-week period analyzed with a total of 62 calls received across its three teams. This equates to an average of 16 service interactions per week, five service interactions per team per week, or one service interaction per day across each team. Across weeks, Co-response spent an average of 77 minutes on crisis services calls, lower than that of Mobile Crisis."²

To address concerns of disparate data from the Sheriff and Behavioral Wellness, KPMG made recommendations regarding establishing shared definitions for data collection and metrics for outcome reporting. The departments are in the process of working on these recommendations.

In early 2024, the Medi-Cal benefit for mobile crisis response in our community began. The County will be monitoring both the new mobile crisis response as well as the Co-Response teams' utilization and continue to evaluate whether additional resources are needed.

¹ KPMG and Behavioral Wellness Board of Supervisors Crisis Services Report, February 6, 2024.
Link: <https://santabarbara.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6503638&GUID=8B856364-807B-4F7F-BE35-6D84695EA6FB>

² Attachment A: KPMG and Behavioral Wellness Crisis Services Board of Supervisors Final Report, pg. 68