



County of Orange Behavioral Health Advisory Board

405 W. 5th Street
Santa Ana, CA 92701
TEL: (714) 834-5481
MHB Website:

<http://ochealthinfo.com/bhs/about/mhb>

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Doug Chaffee, Chairman
Fourth District

Katrina Foley, Vice Chairwoman
Fifth District

Janet Nguyen
First District

Vicente Sarmiento
Second District

Donald P. Wagner
Third District

Wednesday, May 27, 2026
10:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Meeting Location:

601 N. Ross St., Santa Ana, CA 92701
Hybrid Option for members of the Public:
<https://zoom.us/j/95862491099>
Meeting ID: ID: 958 6249 1099
Call In: +1 301 715 8592

MINUTES

Page 1 of 4

BHAB MEMBERS

Alan V. Albright, LMFT
Chair

Linda Smith
Vice Chair

Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento
Second District

Adela Cruz

Cielo Echegoyen

Michell Fernandez

Stephen McNally

Frederick Williams

Cecilia Vega-Gonzalez

Chase Wickersham

Members Present: Alan Albright, Frederick Williams, Linda Smith, Stephen McNally, Chase Wickersham, Cielo Echegoyen, Cecilia Vega-Gonzalez, Michell Fernandez, Adela Cruz, Frederick Williams,

Members Absent: Supervisor Sarmiento

Staff Present: Ian Kemmer, Amy Nguyen, Gabriela Saldana, George Varela, Dawn Smith, Lesa Weinert, Terri Styner, Flor Yousefian Tehrani, Brad Hutchins, Anthony Le, Vanessa Thomas, Xyanya Garza

Call to Order

Alan Albright

- The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Alan Albright who then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

Linda Smith

- Cielo Echegoyen motions to approve April 15, 2026, Public hearing minutes. Frederick Williams seconds the motion. Minutes approved (10 yes/0 No).
- Stephen McNally makes a formal request to add AI-generated comments about the Behavioral Health Advisory Board public hearing as an attachment to the minutes.
- Cielo Echegoyen motions to approve April 15, 2026, Public hearing minutes with addendum to include Stephen McNally's comments. Frederick Williams seconds the motion.

Behavioral Health Services Update: *Michelle Smith, Deputy Director*

Michelle Smith provided updates on State-level behavioral health items, including impacts from HR1 federal policy changes and the Governor's May revision, which only partially addressed County eligibility administration costs with no additional funding for behavioral health services. The discussion concluded with information about recent housing developments and program transitions, including the closure of two Children and Youth Services' contracts. Linda Smith inquired about a potential 5% cut and hiring freezes across County departments, to which Michelle responded that while reductions have been made, necessary positions are still being filled. A member requested a copy of the State of Behavioral Health Services PowerPoint and to report back estimated number of clients impacted by closure of Waymakers FSP programs and transition plan to other providers.



County of Orange Behavioral Health Advisory Board

MINUTES

Page 2 of 4

HEALTH CARE AGENCY

Dr. Veronica Kelley, LCSW
Agency Director
Healthcare Agency

Karla Perez
Staff Specialist
Behavioral Health Services

PIVOT Update – Older Adult Component:

- By: Flor Yousefian Tehrani, Psy.D., LMFT
Behavioral Health Services

Flor provided an update on the older adult component of the PIVOT project, explaining that it focuses on creating a referral process to coordinate care between mental health and physical health for older adults with co-occurring conditions. The project is in different implementation phases, including reviewing current processes, establishing referral pathways, and exploring the placement of medical providers in clinics. Flor clarified that while housing was mentioned in the original proposal, it is currently being explored but not actively implemented. Emphasizing that the project is not paused but rather taking a detour to address implementation challenges. Several board members expressed concerns about the project's focus shifting away from housing solutions and the lack of specific population size data for target implementation.

Follow up items from this presentation:

1. Provide details on the number of individuals currently enrolled in services who would qualify for the OA PIVOT project population, particularly those with co-occurring neurocognitive and behavioral health diagnosis.
2. Obtaining information on outreach efforts for older adults not currently connected to BHS Clinics.
3. Obtain updates on PIVOT OA component every 1-2 months, to include project implementation, progress on referral pathways and workflow redesign.

Old Business:

Alan Albright

Process for Requests and Ad Hocs: Alan Albright covered new procedures for requesting information and informs members that Karla Perez, Linda Smith and Alan are available to assist in making sure that requests are filled out timely and appropriately. Alan reviewed the process of establishing workgroups to focus on issues of interest, keeping them time-limited and focused.

BHAB Priorities: Alan reviews BHAB priorities list with members and asked if they are interested in taking lead in any priorities:

- Cielo Echegoyen is interested in creating a workgroup with priority #6, OC Links, Alan will be joining Cielo in this workgroup.
- Alan Albright is gathering information regarding priority #7, Law Enforcement disengagement Policies.

County of Orange

Behavioral Health Advisory Board

MINUTES

Page 3 of 4

- Cecilia Vega-Gonzalez would like to work on Priority #5, Suicide Prevention.
- Michell is interested in joining a workgroup on priority #7, joining Alan in this workgroup.
- Linda Smith recommends that a BHAB member attend future Workforce Development meetings and share meeting information with members. Steve McNally agreed to attend future meetings and share updates.
- Frederick Williams will continue supporting priority # 5, which is Substance Use Disorder Continuum of Care.

New Business:

Alan Albright

BHAB in the Community:

- Alan shared that Meeting of The Minds Conference was a well-attended event and there was lots of engagement with those who stopped by the BHAB table.
- Alan will listen to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) webinar on Thursday, May 28, 2026, at 1:30pm.
- Linda Smith attended an Older Adult Housing meeting focused on women and shared there is a big need for housing.
- Michelle Fernandez attended the Meeting of the Minds conference and enjoyed the experience. She obtained great information.
- Adela Cruz attended the CALBHB/C meeting.
- Stephen McNally attended the California Substance Use Disorder Conference in Anaheim and a Crisis Intervention meeting.

Public Comment:

Linda Smith

Jim Farrel: Mr. Farrel is seeking conservatorship resources to support families who need assistance navigating the conservatorship process. Many clinics are unfamiliar with the laws surrounding conservators, and families in the community often do not know where to turn for guidance. They also lack clear direction on whom to contact during a crisis. It is essential for behavioral health to prioritize efforts that help families obtain the conservatorship support they need.

Keith Torkelson: Mr. Torkelson provided a presentation on Housing Advisory with a Focus on Room & Board. His goal is to provide consumers with resources, including Orange County beds, to support access to healthy, safe, well-managed, high-quality housing options.

Helen Cameron: Ms. Cameron provided context on the PIVOT program's development, emphasizing the need for affordable housing solutions for older adults and veterans, and shared statistics on cognitive disorders among older adults.



County of Orange Behavioral Health Advisory Board

MINUTES

Page 4 of 4

Announcements:

Linda Smith

The next BHAB General Meeting will be on Wednesday, June 24, 2026, from 10:00am-11:30am.

Adjournment:

Alan Albright adjourned meeting at 11:49am.

Officially submitted by: Karla Perez ** Note copies of all writings pertaining to items in these BHAB meetings are available for public review in the Behavioral Health Services Advisory Board Office, 405 W. 5th St., Santa Ana, CA 92701, 714.834.5481 or Email: OCBHAB@ochca.com **

2026 BHAB Attendance Record General Meetings													
	MEMBER	28-Jan	25-Feb	25-Mar	22-Apr	27-May	24-Jun	22-Jul	26-Aug	23-Sep	28-Oct	25-Nov	23-Dec
1	Alan Albright	P	P	P	P	P							
2	Supervisor Sarmiento's Office	A	A	A	A	A							
3	Stephen McNally	P	P	P	P	P							
4	Cecilia Vega-Gonzalez	P	P	P	P	P							
5	Linda Smith	P	P	P	P	P							
6	Duan Tran	P	P	P	A								
7	Frederick Williams	P	P	P	P	P							
8	Chase Wickersham	P	P	P	P	P							
9	Michell Fernandez	P	A	P	P	P							
10	Adela Cruz	P	P	A	A	P							
11	Cielo Echegoyen		P	P	P	P							

Present: P

Absent: A