

Minutes for Yolo County Mental Health Board  
Monday, March 26, 2007

Members Present: Chairwoman Carolyn Reiff, Vice-Chairwoman Marilyn Moyle, Millie Braunstein, Annie Breault-Darling; Peter Brixie, Robert Canning, Martha Flammer, Robert Schelen, Marilyn Schwartz, Mike Summers, Helen Thomson, Yolo County Supervisor; Joanne Welty

Members Absent: Guille Libresco, Rev. Hank Scherer

Others Present: Tom Pinizzotto, ADMH Director; Richard DeLiberty, ADMH Chief Deputy Director; Mike Tucker, ADMH Deputy Director Fiscal & Administration; Christina Hill-Coillot, ADMH Deputy Director Clinical; Mark Bryan, ADMH Deputy Director Operations; Joan Beesley, ADMH Program Manager, Tawny Yambrovich, ADMH Secretary; Jim Holverstott, NAMI-Yolo, Leslie Carroll, NAMI-Yolo; Deanne Buchan, NAMI-Yolo; Albert Weiss, NAMI-Yolo, Caro Shea, NAMI-Yolo; Don Honey, NAMI-Yolo, Julie Honey, NAMI-Yolo; Joann Turner, NAMI-Yolo; June Forbes, NAMI-Yolo; Pat Williams, NAMI; Kathy Williams-Fossdahl, NAMI; Pat Todesco, NAMI; Walter Shwe; Kate Hutchinson, YCCC; Kevin Shea; William Shea; Pat Leary, Assistant County Administrator; Beth Oliver, The Compassionate Friends; Diane Sommers, Director, Suicide Prevention; Laura Bibelheimer, Deputy to Yolo County Supervisor

Location: Community Room 1, 500 Jefferson Blvd, Bldg A, West Sacramento, CA 95605.

- I. Meeting called to order by Chairwoman Carolyn Reiff at 7:05 P.M.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: *Motion was made by and seconded to approve January 2007 minutes; carried.*

- II. Announcements:

- a. T. Pinizzotto will be stepping down on April 13, 2007. Tom notes that over 300 people attended conference for the decriminalization of the mentally ill. Yolo County received 3 Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction (MIOCR) grants; also rural methamphetamine grants and Alternative to Incarceration for the Mentally ill (AIM) grants. Accomplished some program restructuring. Change is constant, and Tom is grateful to be part of the initial change. States we will do “great work moving forward” because we are “standing on the shoulders of giants.”

Tom believes we have the structure to move forward and create more access to care. “Recovery is a reality; resiliency is happening.” We have done a lot of work w/CBOs; “couldn’t do it without them.” Yolo County works together to get the job done. The Local Mental Health Board is, in many ways, the conscience of the community.

- b. Carolyn thanks Tom for all he’s done; states “We are going in the right direction; you will be missed.”

- III. Public Comment: NAMI is going to send a letter to the Board of Supervisors applauding the “culture of caring that strives for excellence,” which Tom P. fostered (attached).

*Motion made by Bob Schelen that the LMHB send letter of commendation to the Board of Supervisor on behalf of Tom Pinizzotto; motion seconded by Joanne Welty and carried.*

*Bob also asked that the record reflect that the high turnout for tonight’s meeting was in support of Tom Pinizzotto.*

Pat Williams noted that Tom is an excellent leader.

A meeting guest asked “In a county without a lot of resources and with a lot of needs, what guidance is being provided to struggling programs?”

Martha F. added that in her experience in CA, the history of mental health services has been extremely broken, and Mental Health Directors have been extremely challenged. Tom stepped in with tremendous courage, faced adversity, and did his job extremely well. Many County Mental Health Directors *are* leaving, because it is a difficult, fractured system.

Marilyn S. is shocked and saddened; she appreciated Tom’s accessibility. No question was too small to receive a personal phone call.

Bob S. – virtually every program is in crisis right now, in both budgetary and programmatic ways.

Carolyn R. stated that after personnel changes, it is the job of the LMHB to “keep things going.”

Marilyn Moyle added that she, Millie B, Leslie Carroll and June Forbes met with Sharon Jensen and Pat Leary of the CAO’s office and received assurances that the good programs that Tom started will continue to receive support. They do not want to lose what Tom has started, and are looking for someone “heroic” to take on the task.

Pat Leary made clear that there were moral and ethical challenges to discussing personnel issues. The CAO may send a representative to future LMHB meetings to improve future communication. She asked that it be respected that this was an “important and thorough decision.”

Robert Canning found Ms. Leary’s answers to be unsatisfactory, and would like the dept. to send a representative in the future so the board is not “caught by surprise. This is a disappointment to many people here.”

A guest commented that it is for the good of consumers and families to support qualified, hard-working candidates; that it is important to support intelligent, communicative risk-takers.”

- IV. Report: Board of Supervisors – Helen Thomson  
Helen T. thanked Tom for his collaborative working efforts, and for getting us through Proposition 63.
- V. Report: LMHB Chairperson – Carolyn Reiff
- a. Nominating Committee – Millie Braunstein, Joanne Welty and Bob Schelen.
  - b. Introductions: New member Annie Breault-Darling has a son who fell through the cracks of the Corrections/Mental Health systems in Sacramento County, and she hopes to be of service here, to help other families in crisis. She hopes to help family members with incarcerated loved ones to expedite appropriate mental health treatment.
- VI. Report: ADMH Director – Tom Pinizzotto
- a. SB 851 – Diversion and Mental Health Courts. 90 days to release is target; need to not lose sight of co-occurring needs of inmates.
  - b. Closing Comments – “I’m a believer in stages and phases; the Board will continue to function and do well; access will grow; differences with CBOs will be ironed out. There is a great community here. Take care of the business at hand...which is taking care of people. Work together, move forward.”
- VII. Report: Chief Deputy Director – Richard DeLiberty
- a. New Handouts for LMHB members’ binder
- VIII. Report: Fiscal – Mike Tucker
- a. Submitted appeal of M-Cal audit results – believe audit method was inappropriate.
  - b. All MediCare-MediCal (Medi-Medi) units were disallowed because the state changed the definition. Appeal paperwork has been accepted and there will be a full hearing in May.
  - c. Budget – Guidelines changed. MHSA will break out from core programs for greater accountability and to avoid supplanting existing programs. MIOCR adds \$1.1 million to budget. The budget will emphasize stepdowns to IMDs. A 3<sup>rd</sup>-party administrator is working to recapture MCR dollars. Budget hearings will be in June to approve the budget by July 1.
- Mike will present options to the budget committee, who will bring a proposed budget before the entire board.
- IX. Report: MHSA – Joan Beesley
- a. Thanks to Tom for the opportunity to work with stakeholders; have already had some client victories.

- b. Open house on April 19<sup>th</sup> at 825 East Street; have computers and internet access for consumers to apply for Section 8. Have added several para-professional positions and hired several consumers and family members.
  - c. Older adult program is working well.
  - d. Capay Valley has a new supervising clinician: Vickie Cruz.
  - e. 2034 is reeling from the loss of Samantha Fusselman; the adult wellness and homeless mentally ill program is currently without a supervising clinician.
  - f. Thankful for the foundation of support provided by Tom P.
- X. Report: Legislative Review – Martha Flammer
- a. Parity bills – The house version goes further in demanding parity for mental health treatment. We need to demand “quick and appropriate” action from our representatives
- Bob S. points out that in past congressional sessions, bills had requirements for parity, and this one only requires parity “when mental health coverage is offered.”
- June Forbes notes that MediCare has a lifetime limit of inpatient days for mental health treatment, and that this is the *only* disease that has a limit.
- Helen T. adds that the senate bill would allow states to drop parity legislation.
- More background will be provided next meeting.

- XI. Committee Reports
- a. Committee Schedules: Program committee is meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month at 9 A.M.; Forensics is meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays at 3:30 P.M.; Budget is meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays at 4:00 P.M., with the Executive Committee meeting following.
  - b. Executive
  - c. Budget
  - d. Forensics – Met February 20 and March 19. Mike Summers attended an intervention training with local law enforcement; wants to provide CIT class: 8 hours of training to local law enforcement agencies and 1<sup>st</sup> responders.
    - i. April meeting to be held at Guille L’s home in Davis.
    - ii. The committee will review PRSC recommendations 11 and 12.
      - 11) Developing RFP to request suggested improvements to increase the level of staffing and have full-time discharge planning at the jail. CFMG – case management meetings, diversion and discharge planning; Martha F. states that as a result of increased funding and resources this has already somewhat improved. 12) Mental Health Court – would like to reconvene strategic planning committee, which has fragmented due to changes in the court system. Since January 1, a team approach to court cases has caused confusion about where cases will be heard MHSA advocates have not been able to be as involved as previously. The court calendar is still being worked out; sweeping change has caused sweeping disruption. Need coordination with court administrator to see that services can be

effectively provided. *Motion was made by Millie Braunstein that Forensic Committee draft letter to court administrator expressing concerns; seconded by Marilyn Moyle; carried.*

- e. Program – Recommend accept action plan of staff for numbers 1, 4, 5-10 and 13; change wording for numbers 2 and 3. *Motion made, seconded and carried to accept recommendations of program committee.*

XII. Adjournment – Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.; next meeting will be held:

Monday, April 23, 2007

7:00 p.m.

Training Room

Families First

2100 5<sup>th</sup> Street

Davis, CA 95618

Respectfully submitted by:

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Tawny Yambrovich, Secretary

Attachment I – NAMI Yolo letter in support of Tom Pinizzotto

Attachment II – LMHB letter in support of Tom Pinizzotto



a chapter of NAMI, the Nation's Voice on Mental Illness

P.O. Box 447 \* Davis, CA 95617 \* (530) 756-8181 \* [www.namiyolo.org](http://www.namiyolo.org) \* [friends@namiyolo.org](mailto:friends@namiyolo.org)

March 27, 2007

To: The Honorable Supervisor Mariko Yamada, Chair and Members of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors

The NAMI-Yolo community and their friends are disheartened and discouraged to learn of the resignation of the Director of the Yolo County Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health, Tom Pinizzotto.

The Department is responsible for about three thousand of the most vulnerable of our population, psychiatric patients, children and adults whose safety depends on resolving their health crises promptly and preventing relapses. When Director Pinizzotto came to Yolo County two and one half years ago, our mental health system of care was broken. The gaps in care were great. Many people, for whom the Department was responsible, fell into homelessness or jail and in some cases, suicide. Our families despaired.

Since then, Director Pinizzotto has accomplished the most difficult mission any executive can ever accept: he has replaced a culture of diminished expectations with a culture of caring that strives for excellence. The challenges he faced were longstanding and included a huge budget deficit, unpredictable funding streams, unfunded State mandates, inadequate management information and data processing systems, high staff turnover, and a shortage of qualified candidates for promising new opportunities. The problems were entrenched and complex so change has been slow. But with time, he has made headway and we became energized with hope. Under his leadership, the Department has:

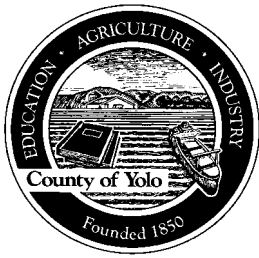
- Reduced the wait time for doctor appointments dramatically.
- Instituted the practice of phoning clinic patients to remind them of appointments and providing them transportation to appointments when necessary.
- Made sure patients got their medicine on time during the nationwide chaos of the MediCal to Medicare Part D transition, when patients Nationwide were unable to fill their prescriptions with sometimes tragic consequences.

- Made sure the department applied for and won over \$6.7M in very competitive grants to fund best practices and initiate them.
- Begun new services to school children in the Capay Valley and to young adults and senior citizens throughout the County.
- Begun collaborations with law enforcement and the justice system that, if Director Pinizzotto stays to complete them, will end the tragedy of criminalizing mental illness.
- Attracted top-notch psychiatrists and administrators despite our relatively low pay scale.
- Won the support of the people his department serves, their families and their advocates.

Director Tom Pinizzotto took on a challenge that any other leader would deem Mission Impossible: transforming our systems of care from a storehouse of failed visions to a wellspring of real recoveries, where people would no longer fall through holes in our safety net, because he would mend it.

Tom Pinizzotto has earned our gratitude and we thank him with all our hearts for the hope he inspired and for the positive changes he brought to Yolo County.

Sincerely,  
NAMI-Yolo Board Members  
Nancy Temple, President  
Stuart Buchan, Vice- President  
Joann Turner, Secretary  
Lil Birdsall, Treasurer  
Alison Breen  
Leslie Carroll  
Carol Foerster  
Jim Holverstott  
Jean Miller  
Steve Thomas  
Al Weiss  
Joan Weiss



## DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOL, DRUG AND MENTAL HEALTH

Tom N. Pinizzotto, MSW

137 N.

Director

Woodland, CA 95695  
Office – 530-666-8516  
Fax – 530-666-8294

### LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

Carolyn Reiff  
Chair

Marilyn Moyle  
Vice-Chair

#### District 1

Martha Flammer  
Mike Summers  
Annie Breault Darling

#### District 2

Mildred Braunstein  
Marilyn Moyle  
Robert Canning

#### District 3

Marilyn Schwartz  
Joanne Welty  
Vacant

#### District 4

Robert Schelen  
Peter Brixie  
Vacant

#### District 5

Guille Libresco  
Carolyn Reiff  
Rev. Hank Scherer

#### Supervisor

Helen Thomson  
Board of Supervisors  
Liaison

TO: Supervisor Mariko Yamada, Chair  
And Members of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Carolyn Reiff, Yolo County Local Mental Health Board, Chair  
Marilyn Moyle, Yolo County Local Mental Health Board, Vice-  
chair  
Members of the Yolo County Local Mental Health Board

DATE: March 30, 2007

SUBJECT: Resignation of Tom Pinizzotto

We were surprised and saddened to learn of the recent resignation of Tom Pinizzotto, the director of the Yolo County Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health (ADMH). Director Pinizzotto's positive, dedicated, caring approach to the complex problems facing our county has been appreciated by the local Mental Health Board (LMHB) and the community. The show of great support by community members and NAMI-Yolo's letter at the LMHB meeting March 26 is a testament to his success in the fundamental job of caring for family members and clients in our county.

We respect Director Pinizzotto's willingness to facilitate a smooth transition to new leadership and his continued dedication to quality, recovery-oriented services for Yolo County mental health clients and want to thank him for his accomplishments. In addition to internal administrative and programmatic changes, by working with partners in county government in a collaborative manner, ADMH has gained \$7.2 million dollars in grants that will help build services to increase the abilities of mental health clients to survive in the community, lessen the use of hospitals and IMDs and will help to divert individuals from jails. The two new psychiatrists he recruited will be a tremendous help to ADMH clients.

The Yolo County Mental Health Board is deeply concerned about the future of services to seriously mentally ill citizens of Yolo County. Tom Pinizzotto's resignation as director of ADMH after just 2½ years jeopardizes the positive changes he has worked hard to initiate in the department. We are aware that Director Pinizzotto inherited a nearly impossible situation when he took the job in October 2004. Chronic budget deficits, low staff morale, vacant positions with no money to fill

them, turnover in key positions in the area of fiscal management, the loss of managers who understood the history and politics of the county, the lack of consistent, qualified secretarial staff for the first two years of his tenure, all contributed to the difficulty of his job.

The need for long-term residential treatment in locked facilities has significantly increased. There are now many more, younger clients with serious psychiatric brain disorders and many more severe cases of substance abuse disorders in clients that also have chronic mental illness. Fewer realignment dollars and arbitrary, changing rules for Medi-Cal and Medicare reimbursement, created financial hardships out of the director's control.

Any new director hired by the county will face similar problems. How will this new director be supported to successfully manage this department in the future? We want to know what the county expects this new director to be able to do, and how the LMHB will be kept informed when serious difficulties arise so that we are not faced with another abrupt leadership change that undermines the ability of ADMH professionals to do the serious work of caring for our most seriously ill citizens.

We look forward to working with you to insure the best possible care for mental health clients of Yolo County.

Sincerely,

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Carolyn Reiff, Chair; and  
Members of the Yolo County LMHB