

THE HANFORD SENTINEL

Kings County Supervisors Hear a Range of Requests

January 25, 2022

By: Eric Gill

Jan. 25—The Kings County Board of Supervisors considered a wide range of important issues that impact Central Valley residents at this week's meeting.

The board approved a slate of Consent Calendar items including approval of a California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) Peer Support Specialist Certification Program.

The program helps improve efficiencies and reduce redundancies in implementing requirements for the delivery of mental health and substance use services.

"CalMHSA's peer support specialist program is in alignment with requirements established through Department of Healthcare Services [DHSC] Behavioral Health Information Notice No: 21-041," according to an information background summary.

CalMHSA is targeting a "go-live date" of May 2022 for the Peer Support Specialist Certification Program.

"Additionally the program includes elements of quality assurance, oversight, and monitoring," the report states. "CalMHSA will implement and administer all components of the Peer Support Specialist Certification program, including required data collection and submission to DHCS, certification of peers, exam administration, investigations, and approval, auditing, and monitoring of training vendors."

There is no impact on the county general fund for participating in the program, according to the Behavioral Health Department.

The Board of Supervisors also approved agreements with Health Net and Anthem Blue Cross to provide Housing Navigation, Housing Deposits, and Housing Tenancy and Sustaining Community support services.

As part of the agreement, the Board approved a request to allocate \$633,901 for fiscal year 2021 — 2022 for parenting education services administered through Champions Recovery Programs, Inc. Regular Agenda

Among several Regular Agenda items the Board approved, more than \$1M was allocated for the Kings County "No Place Like Home" project. The board voted unanimously to approve an agreement with Self Help Enterprises and UP Northstar LP from Jan. 25, 2022 through June 30, 2025 for development of the housing project.

"One of the key ways we can compete for state resources is to have support from local funding," Jessica Hoff Berzac told the supervisors, advocating in favor of "No Place Like Home."

After hearing a request to consider authorizing the county District Attorney to sign grant application forms to build a new facility, Supervisor Craig Pedersen (Dist. 4) asked for clarification on project plans. Although he voted with the board in unanimously approving the request to apply for a grant, Pedersen expressed concerns about the need to occupy a new building.

Representatives of the DA's office explained that a new building would make it easier for victims of crimes, as well as family members of accused domestic abuse defendants, to seek immediate assistance from personnel within various county agencies.

Kings County District Attorney Keith Fagundes explained it is currently difficult to offer timely assistance to victims and families trying to navigate the various services offered by the county.

A new building, District Attorney Fagundes said, would help place county personnel closer together, thereby facilitating more efficient services to residents — particularly crime victims.

"I think a 'yes' vote today is an agreement that there is a need" for a new facility, said Supervisor Richard Valle (Dist. 2).

Kings County Fire Department Chief William Lynch asked the board to consider purchasing state-of-the-art emergency response equipment. He asked the board to purchase two sets of hydraulic extension tools for the city of Corcoran to assist in providing rescue operations. The battery-operated tools are not only efficient, Lynch advised the board, they are portable and reliable.

Chief Lynch also requested the board consider purchasing eight Lucas 3.1 Chest Compression Systems. His second request generated positive comments from a few of the board members who have seen the devices in action during demonstrations.

The board unanimously approved both requests from the county fire department chief.

Finally, the board unanimously approved the appointment of Rose Mary Rahn to the position of Public Health Director at a salary of \$12,900/month. Rahn, who comes from the Fresno County Public Health department, has an extensive professional background as a nurse.