



# Measure O Citizen's Oversight Committee

Meeting Minutes

May 15, 2024, from 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Recording:

<https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/j/98301970286?pwd=M2tWUfo1RXM2TU54ZUdKNE1na0lQdz09>

Access Passcode: =qkZmz5U

Members Present: Shirlee Zane (Chair), Gregory Fearon, Kevin McDonnell, Edward Sheffield, Ben Ford, Alea Tantarelli, Leah Benz, Betzy Chavez

Members Absent: Shannon McEntee

DHS Staff Present:

Tina Rivera, Director

Julie Gallego, Department Analyst, Fiscal

David Hiatt, Program Planning and Evaluation Analyst

Leah Benz, Administrative Services Officer II

Alea Tantarelli, Program Planning and Evaluation Analyst

Christina Welch, Department Accounting Manager

Carmen Morales, Accountant III

Jan Cobaleda-Kegler, Director, Behavioral Health

James Alexander, Health Program Manager, Homelessness Services

Wendy Sanders, Director, Health Services

Roy Dajalos, Special Project Director

Presenters

James Alexander, Health Program Manager, Homelessness Services

Ray Tovar, Community Development Commission - "George's Hideaway Update"

## 1. Call to Order/Introductions/Roll Call

Chair Zane called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. and welcomed everyone and a round of introductions was then conducted.

## 2. Approve Minutes of 2/7/24 (Action Item)

Attachment: Oversight Committee Minutes 2.7.24 draft

Action: Moved by Ben Ford, seconded by, Gregory Fearon; Approved under the condition that Ben Ford stated he was present at that meeting, though the minutes showed incorrectly that he was not. So approved with correction.

## 3. Opening Comments by Shirlee Zane; Chair

Shirley brought up an editorial written by Press Democrat reporter, Jeremy Hay which shed a negative light on how slowly the county is spending the funds received from Measure O. She stated we are here to get that money out on the street as fast as we can. Also, Measure O is quite a miracle, as it passed in the middle of Covid. We are making about 30 extra million dollars a year and that's a good thing. So even if we aren't getting it out there as fast as we'd like, it's really essential. And the fact that the public voted it in is a small miracle. It passed by .06%.

She wants let the Committee know that we have staff around table, including our Director of Health Services, that have a really challenging job these days, and we want to offer as much support and encouragement as we can, as volunteers. So thank you.

Gregory Fearon stated that we all aspire to do better. He thinks it's our job as committee members to point out where we think we might do a better job, and how we might communicate better, especially with the community. As Shirley said, this is a tender balance of community support for vital services, and we're kind of your ball work against something going wrong. We should be looking at from a distance point of view.

Shirley stated that she feels it's all personal for everyone sitting around this table. We've all had mental health stories. This is about saving lives. She lost her husband to depression 13 years ago - he was a Kaiser patient. She thinks we can all do better. She thinks that the fact that the state passed this bill that Gavin Newsome put forward, even though he stole money from Prop 63, it's still a good thing. It means we care in this state about taking care of people. Mental Health is one of our largest health crisis today - it affects all of our lives in one way or another.

### **3. HEART & SOUL Presentation**

Attachments: PDF of Powerpoint

Presenter: James Alexander, Health Program Manager, Homelessness Services, DHS



James' Measure O  
1Presentation 2024.

Staff comments:

Betsy Chavez – You are changing communities one life at a time, and for the person whose story you shared, you have broken a cycle. Sometimes we don't really take that into consideration when we're just looking at "numbers".

### **4. George's Hideaway Update; Ray Tovar with Community Development Commission**

He and James Alexander work very close together and the work that HEART & SOUL does is incredibly important to what they do. Ray worked as a manager in the program in San Jose and Santa Clara County, and was assigned to develop a project of 95 units. The Georges Hideaway is similar to that work. It is located on Hwy 116. Funding is from the state, as part of the Home Key Program. Thanks to Measure O (providing 4.6 million dollars), they are working through the process of getting permits for grading and encroaching. They will convert a building that sat unoccupied for years into 9 units on the second story and 13 individual unit studios in the back of the property. Construction begins in June, including demolition of the building, and hoping to have the new building process start in July. West County currently only has 13 units; and this project will add 21 more units.

### **5. Fiscal Review – Measure O Fund Balance**

Presenter: Leah Benz, Administrative Officer II; DHS

Leah reviewed several attachments that were included in the Agenda. Leah stated the importance of stating that the fund balance is not a fiscal document, it's rounded numbers and meant to be a layperson's view of what's going on. We have spent roughly 6 million of the balance this fiscal year. We increased utilization in our residential care and long-term care facilities which was right out of the expenditure plan and very much needed. These are the homes that people go into when coming out of psychiatric health facility, and these are very expensive. Some of the spending this year was taken for those facilities, as well as the

behavioral health school partnership staffing to increase the mobile crisis team moving to 24/7 which should be up and live by the end of this month.

Funding has been set aside for other innovative services that we have mentioned before. An RFP (Request for Proposal) will be going out for the ODS waiver (Organized Delivery System) changes. We are supposed to go live July 1. Everything about this will be amazing. We have to match the dollars that we are going to receive. We have also committed to the STRTP (Short Term Residential Treatment Programs). This program is for kids that need intensive therapy for a six-month minimum at the Valley of the Moon. We know we need to do a better job of letting the community know where our dollars are going, and that they ARE being spent.

**Highlights:**

**FY 24-25:** Estimated beginning Fund Balance = \$25,000,000

After Planned Expenditures of \$13,600, the projected ending fund balance will be \$11,350,000.

**FY 25-26:** Projected ending Fund Balance = \$2,700,000

Chair Zane asked for further clarification on the whole idea of matching or leveraging funding, because the county already has a Behavioral Health Budget, and we're leveraging that with Measure O. Leah stated that there is more information about this on page 19 of the packet. But to point out, there are things we already were funding, like the CSU. We used funds from the Realignment previously, but now we use Measure O, so then the Realignment funds can go somewhere else. The idea is that in areas where we don't currently get drug medical dollars, like for the ODS, we'll see an increase in Medi-cal reimbursement because we are going to opt in now to the ODS. As we put up the match dollars, then we get them all back.

DHS Director, Tina Rivera: Confirmed we received 8 or 9 million dollars in the general fund. We had to do an analysis of all counties throughout California to see what the general fund percentage was for health and human service departments. Santa Clara for example, had 25% more than we did, but we get about 1% less than our entire budget. As we move into the next year, we're going to experience Measure O becoming all the more important to keep critical services funded, alive and running.

Dr. Jan Cobaleda-Kegler; Director of Behavioral Health: Very thankful that we have Measure O to help us fund the Mobile Crisis program. Although it was a mandate from the State, we were not given any funding from them. The attitude is that we'll pull down big Medi-Cal dollars. Same with the Drug Medical ODS. Good news about Mobile Crisis – we are almost ready for full roll-out. I am excited to announce that our Call Center is very close to being staffed 24/7. The challenge has been filling the 7:30am-noon shift a couple of mornings. This is a very low-volume time for calls to come in; 2pm-12am is the busiest time. The toll free number is 800-746-8181, and this will be a public service announcement in the next week or two. This will replace 911 for those having a mental health crisis. We realize some people will still call 911; but they know about our new services and will refer back to us. This is a collaborative, us, InResponse, SAFE, etc. If any of us need back up, it's wonderful to have these resources.

**Presenter's Wrap up – Leah Benz:**

We know it's our job to communicate where our funds are going and we need to improve in our communications. We need positive narratives to be out about Measure O. It's only a 10

year measure. We will have to go back to the community after the 10 years. Let's try to work things out here. I believe we have a new communications person dedicated to positive communication.

Shirlee Zane – To our Oversight Committee, let's make a miracle talking point every time we meet.

Evaluation Program – David Hiett

[Attachment: Oversight 5.15.24 PE Highlights.PDF](#)

**Staff Reports:** Update on RFPs, Tina Rivera

We are having to align our RFP with the Opioid settlement funding, because this part of the funding plan goes before the board on July 9. For those who don't know about this, the board sued pharmaceutical companies. I believe there were only 3 counties at that point that were doing this, and it was a big deal. We don't have a final number, but it should be around 3 million dollars over 18 years.

Shirlee Zane thanked everyone for coming out and thanked the staff for their hard work and adjourned the meeting at 5:59p.m.