



Measure O Citizen's Oversight Committee

Meeting Minutes

October 23, 2024, from 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Recording:

https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/rec/share/s4UEUfrpXO6aegEDrdEXINVCALR00S283hdcl4vKJqpWUBroOzxswsPtMnNybRgZ.4c-KNW3cnXWgX_iD

Passcode: +ib3#1Ab

Members Present:

Shirlee Zane (Chair), Shannon McEntee, Gregory Fearon, Ben Ford and Kevin McDonnell

Members Absent:

Betzy Chavez and Ed Sheffield

DHS Staff Present:

Jennifer Solito, Interim Director, DHS & Assistant County Administrator
James Alexander, Director, Homeless Services Division
Dr. Jan Cobaleda-Kegler, Director, Behavioral Health Division
David Hiett, Program Planning and Evaluation Analyst
April Hurd-Mattos, Deputy CFO
Dr. Gabriel Kaplan, Assistant Director, DHS; Interim Director, Public Health Division
Lynnae Mann, CFO
Carmen Morales, Accountant III
Alea Tantarelli, Health Program Manager
Liz Treacy, Administrative Aide

Additional Participants:

Bert Epstein, PsyD – Manager, Mental Health Programs, Santa Rosa Jr. College
Brijida "Brijit" Alemán, AMFT, APCC - Mental Health Therapist, Santa Rosa Jr. College
Kinnaly Soukhaseum - Measure O Auditor from the firm Eide Bailly

1. Call to Order/Introductions/Roll Call

Chair Zane called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone. A round of introductions was then conducted.

2. Opening Comments from Chair

Chair Zane explained that Measure O is a miracle resource and an opportunity to achieve good in the community. She thanked staff for attending the meeting today.

3. Approve Minutes of 8/21/24 (Action Item)

Attachment: Oversight Committee Minutes, 08.21.24 draft

Action: Kevin McDonnell moved that the minutes be approved and Gregory Fearon seconded. No public comment was offered and the minutes were approved.

4. Santa Rosa Junior College Student Health Services – Mental Health Program

Presenters: Bert Epstein, Manager, Mental Health Programs
Brijida "Brijit" Alemán, Mental Health Therapist

SRJC described how Measure O funds are used on its campus:

1. Alemán is a therapist & outreach specialist who assists Latinx and African American students.
2. SRJC hired two social workers who address housing, food, and transportation needs, serving 276 students.
3. SRJC hired a nurse practitioner.
4. SRJC relies on psychology trainees from Sonoma State University.

Alemán helps monolingual, bilingual, and undocumented students. There are 350 students who need mental health services. For example, they have had success with 45 events/outreaches/presentations. They have also helped up to 80 students at a time in talking circles. SRJC collaborates with Buckelew, the Living Room, and other agencies to learn where to refer monolingual Spanish speakers, when needed. It was helpful for SRJC to have Measure O funds to establish a clinic where they can triage people with mental health issues. SRJC is exploring the idea of a foundation or pursuing state funds to increase supply.

Chair Zane noted that the partnership with Sonoma State is promising since it has a large training program. Gregory Fearon added that Certified Peer Support Specialists are being reimbursed by Medi-Cal and that they might be able to support young people at the SRJC.

5. Measure O Audit Presentation

Presenter: Kinnaly Soukhaseum of the firm Eide Bailly
Packet item: Draft Measure O Audit of Financial Statements

Eide Bailly provided an annual audit of Measure O funding as of June 30, 2024. The auditors' Scope of Work was to provide an opinion on Measure O financial statements for this FY. The firm registered a clean opinion on the Measure O financial statements, citing no material weaknesses in internal control, no instances of non-compliance, no sensitive disclosures, no misstatements, no need for consultations with any outside auditing and accounting firms, and no difficulties with management during the audit.

The committee made two comments. 1) Gregory Fearon noted that on page 3, there is a statement omitting the MD&A. 2) Kevin McDonnell asked, what was the cause of the rise in the budget from \$23M to \$39M during the FY? Chair Zane said it is because we can't work fast enough to get funds out the door; we learned in the pandemic how great the need really is. Gregory expressed interest in approving a draft version of the agreement. Dr. Kaplan explained that the committee would need to provide feedback in the meeting for it to appear in a subsequent version. Kevin recommended accepting the report as final and asked that the MD&A comments be shared for the next Oversight meeting. Dr. Kaplan had confidence that the department could address that request in consultation with Eide Bailly. Therefore, Kevin moved to approve the motion and Gregory seconded. The committee voted in favor of the motion.

Gregory expressed that he is interested in the speed, the spread (or distribution) of funds spent, and the impact of Measure O funds. DHS clarified there will be another detailed Annual Report going to the BOS in January.

6. Fiscal Update for Measure O – Draft

Presenter: Dr. Gabriel Kaplan, Assistant Director, DHS; Interim Director, Public Health Division
Packet items: Fiscal reporting

The Measure O Account Statements for FY 23-24 show inflows and outflows by quarter. DHS began the year with a fund balance and that grew modestly in Behavioral Health Facilities, Transitional Support Housing, with more substantial growth in Mental Health Substance Use. Fund balances were reduced in Emergency Psychiatric, Crisis Services, and Behavioral Health. The net change in the fund balance was a growth of \$2.35M.

In FY 24-25, spending will be robust. Overall, DHS is expecting a net decrease in the fund balance by \$10M with an ending fund balance of \$18.4M.

Dr. Kaplan explained that the Measure O – Revenue/Expenses/Fund Balance by FY chart (bar chart with green and blue trend lines), speaks to speed: the money came in fast and we were challenged to spend it right away. The signal to the community is that this money is here. It's here for a while, so DHS can expand your capacity and work programmatically to spend revenue down.

Chair Zane explained that funding “buckets” can be inflexible. Crisis is the biggest bucket in the budget, but crises change over time. As this tax measure sunsets, this chart will change. The goal is to build a healthier community and reduce crises. Staff has done a good job of managing flexibility within the budget. The takeaway is that chart -- it shows that we listen to the public and we'll spend the funds in a way that's strategic.

Kevin asked what the future of federal passthrough is? The answer, it was said, may depend on the election.

Dr. Jan Cobaleda-Kegler explained that the expansion of the Mobile Service Team (MST) ensures that we can get reimbursed by the State if we stay in compliance with regulations. The Team has only been 24/7 since June. There is a process to become certified and an MOU to do that. Step by step, the department is getting there.

7. Staff Reports: Update on Measure O Projects

Presenter: Dr. Jan Cobaleda-Kegler, Director, Behavioral Health Division

Dr. Cobaleda-Kegler presented on three main programs:

1. Crisis Assessment, Prevention and Education (CAPE): A core team is already working in the schools (Sonoma Valley and West County/Guerneville schools). CAPE is planning an expansion to 5 teams. It went live in September when school started.
2. Mobile Support Team: The MST met the State's requirements, which are rigorous. The program went live 24/7 on June 1, 2024. There is collaboration with SAFE & InRESPONSE partners, working under one umbrella. DHS is also partnering with the CORE Team of Healdsburg. One benefit of using Medi-Cal is that we can share data collection from a common electronic health record (EHR).
3. The Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF): At Los Guilicos, the PHF was funded by Measure O. It is running at full capacity (16 beds – Marin County contracts for 2 beds). This site is invaluable for Medi-Cal patients and the County gets reimbursed for eligible services. It stays busy. Dr. Cobaleda-Kegler explained that DHS could consider setting up a second PHF, as an idea.

Gregory Fearon asked for an update on the Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU), whose building has been closed. Interim Director Solito said there is some remediation scheduled next week and the Basin Street landlords' remodel will take 1-2 months. The hospitals agreed to meet with DHS. Interim Director Solito said DHS is looking into using an alternate location, but that requires BOS approval, among other steps.

Chair Zane explained we were ahead of the curve by creating an MST and the State was supportive. Dr. Cobaleda-Kegler reported that Measure O has been invaluable to building up staffing and ramping up to 24/7 service.

Staff Reports: Measure O Communications

Presenter: David Hiett, Program Planning & Evaluation Analyst

David covered examples of where some Measure O funds go -- to leverage funds to Valley of the Moon Short Term Recovery Therapeutic Program (STRTP) and to MST. Measure O funds have enabled the Valley of the Moon STRTP to draw down full federal participation for 16 beds as of July 1, 2024.

In the first four months of MST, operations were in high demand: 2400 calls were received and 300 calls were served. Alignment between MST and Medi-Cal requirements made more support for this program possible.

There will be an annual report with the kind of narrative content the Committee is interested in, coming this winter. The content will also be supported by thorough evaluation. Gregory Fearon inquired into the Measure O website. David responded and recommended looking for the *County Correspondent* newsletter, which will have more content on Measure O.

Staff Reports: Measure O Projects (Continued)

Presenter: James Alexander, Director, Homeless Division

The mission of the Homelessness Services Division is to provide compassionate care and support to individuals experiencing homelessness. One of the objectives James has been looking into is achieving a 10% drop in the unsheltered population. The Division's HEART and HOPE teams (which work in unincorporated areas of the County) are trying to get people into shelter. The last count of the County's homeless population found 1,500 unsheltered people.

Eliza's Village has capacity with single room occupancy for 80 people. Mickey Zane is still up and running. The Division is looking for more interim shelter. James shared the following notes: everyone in a shelter has a dedicated case manager who works to make people housing ready. The goal is to move people from interim shelter sites, with up to 6 months of case management, before moving into permanent supportive housing. There is an Intake, Exit and Oversight Committee involved. He said that CBOs are helpful to this work. A collaboration with Redwood Gospel Mission helped facilitate the purchase of the Social Advocates for Youth (SAY) Center for the homeless. There is a dedicated housing navigator who supports the Division's efforts. Gregory Fearon mentioned the Home Key plus program, aimed at veterans.

Update on Notice of Funding Award (NOFA)

Presenter: Alea Tantarelli, Health Program Manager

Alea reported that a Notice of Funding Award (NOFA) was launched September 23rd. There was a conference on October 7th. Proposals are due November 4, 2024. A Notice of Intent to Award is anticipated in December 2024.

8. Public Comment on Non-agendized Items: No comments were offered at this juncture.
The meeting adjourned at 6:07 pm.