

CBHPC Executive Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2026

Committee Members Present:

Karen Baylor
Erika Cristo*
Elissa Feld
Richard Krzyzanowski
Mike Phillips
Susan Wilson
Daphne Shaw

Barbara Mitchell
Javier Moreno
Don Morrison
Noel O'Neill
Maria Sierra
Deborah Starkey*

*=Remote Attendance

Committee Members Absent: Elissa Feld, Arden Tucker, Bill Stewart, Tony Vartan and Uma Zykofsky.

Staff Present: Jenny Bayardo and Naomi Ramirez

Welcome and Introductions

Chairperson-Elect Susan Wilson announced that the Chairperson and past Chairperson are not present for the January Quarterly meeting.

Susan called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. Council Members and attendees introduced themselves. A quorum was established with 13 of 18 members present at the start of the meeting.

October 2025 Meeting Minutes (Action)

Chairperson-Elect Susan Wilson allowed committee members to review minutes. Richard requested the spelling of his name be corrected to include the I in his last name. There was no public comment on the minutes. October 2025 minutes were accepted with the requested edit.

Council Membership Update

Naomi Ramirez reviewed the Council Member appointment list provided in the meeting packet, identifying separations and new appointments since the last quarterly meeting. There are currently two vacancies for Persons with Lived Experience. Since the October meeting, two Council Members have been added, Samantha Tossetti, Family Member and Janet Frank representative of the California Commission on Aging.

Susan Wilson asked each new member to introduce themselves to the Executive Committee. Samantha Tossetti and Janet Frank shared about themselves and why they wanted to be on the Council.

FY 2025-26 Expenditure Reports

Chief of Operations Naomi Ramirez updated the committee and reviewed the enclosed expenditure report and allotments for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Naomi highlighted spending for the Mental Health Block Grant, to date October meeting expenses and salaries reflect the bulk of expenditures. The expenditures for Mental Health Services Act funds also reflect staff salaries and quarterly meetings.

Barbara Mitchell asked about the transition of MHSA funding to BHSA for next fiscal year. Naomi shared we anticipate receiving similar allotments. Noel O'Neill asked about the recent cut to SAMHSA that was restored within 24 hours and its potential impact on the Planning Council. Erika Cristo stated that due to the quick turnaround an analysis of the impact was not completed before the reversal.

Council Focus for 2026

Susan Wilson shared with the Committee that the Officer team met with Council Staff to plan for the year. Susan stated that Chairperson Tony Vartan was the driving force behind the proposed Areas of Focus. The Officer Team agreed that the Council should identify key areas of focus. The members of the Officer Team present, Executive Officer Jenny Bayardo, Chairperson-Elect Susan Wilson and Past Chairperson Deborah Starkey helped lead the review and discussion of the proposed Areas of Focus.

Committee members discussed the four areas identified. The discussion included confirmation of priorities and proposed edits, additions as follows:

- Housing and Homelessness has not been explicitly addressed; although it falls under the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA), it should be clearly identified. Emphasis in the first paragraph or preferably a 5th area of focus specifically about housing. Supported by Karen Baylor, Noel O'Neill.
- The SAMHSA Strategic Priorities document is missing an emphasis on ending homelessness.
- Justice Involved needs to include identification of housing models.
- All committee members discussed how to identify which committee is responsible for the areas identified.
- Susan Wilson asked about the Executive Committee meeting in-between.
 - There was mixed interest in meeting in between quarterly meetings. Executive Officer Jenny Bayardo shared that it can be challenging at times to coordinate between committees. Although there are only four focus areas proposed these are big areas, some with significant overlap. It would be helpful to have committee Chairperson touch base between meetings to discuss even if just once this year.
 - Susan added we could include staff.

- Richard Krzyzanowski supported the focus and meeting in addition to the Quarterly meetings if needed.
- Karen Baylor supports in-between meetings if they are not long with a tight agenda.
- Mike Phillips suggested we use the committee report outs to focus on the key areas identified.
- Javier Moreno suggested that the Executive Committee decide the priorities and goals for the year to help committees focus. Also supports meeting in between quarterly meetings.
- Karen Baylor suggested we add more under Stakeholder engagement since it is such an important priority. Focus on persons with lived experience. (forums, listening sessions)
- Daphne Shaw wanted to include how to address the loss of consumer voice with recent initiatives.
- Noel O'Neill shared that focus on the areas suggested will only continue to approve the public opinion of the Council.
- Javier Moreno suggested adding a standing priority to protect access and open up more access. Impact of HR 1 on the Behavioral Health System should be added.
- Susan stated she would connect HR 1 to advocacy for persons with lived experience.
- Mike Phillips confirmed the section on Patients' Rights covers what should be covered, it also allows some flexibility.
- Richard Krzyzanowski encouraged the Council to broaden the scope on how we see patients' rights and advocate with, not for, people with lived experience.

During this discussion Barbara Mitchell stated that we need a method to address urgent/time sensitive items. Jenny Bayardo shared the current process currently used to address urgent items. For items that come up outside of the quarterly meetings staff review the Policy Platform and past positions taken. On occasion, there are items that do not clearly fall under the Policy Platform or past positions that we are unable to act quickly on.

The Officer Team will discuss the items brought up today and revise the Areas of Focus.

Workgroup Update

Susan Wilson described the work groups and read Bagley-Keene description of Ad-Hoc committees which have a limited purpose and are time limited dissolving once the task is complete. The Ad-Hoc is advisory only, cannot make decisions and includes only members of the governing body. The Officer Team met with the workgroup leaders. The SUD workgroup has disbanded after recommending that SUD be integrated into committees and General Session. The Children and Youth workgroup is on hold until there is an assignment. Workgroups have been asked not to have presentations at this time and instead refer to the appropriate committee of General Session. Noel O'Neill

noted that the workgroups are currently operating from a “What should we do?” approach, which is the opposite of what Bagley-Keene requires.

Report from CA Coalition for Behavioral Health (CCBH)

Daphne Shaw reported that the CA Coalition for Behavioral Health (CCBH) had a presentation from Cal Able which allows persons with disabilities to have money and still collect Social Security. Daphne suggested the Council consider having them present to the full Council. Daphne stated that the coalition approved three new members, elected officials and posted the annual report to the CCBH website.

Report from CA Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards (CALBHB/C)

Executive Director Theresa Comstock shared the top issues for support and advocacy identified: 1) Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA), 2) Unserved and Underserved Populations and 3) Resources. The resources identified are around the crisis care continuum, workforce education and training, and substance use disorder. Theresa Comstock reported that they continue to support the 59 local boards and commissions.

General Public Comment

Janet Frank shared that the Council Priorities document included in the meeting packet that shows the Council’s roles and responsibilities in law and their relationships to the committee is helpful.

Theresa Comstock shared that Liz Oseguera is the new treasurer for CCBH.

Wrap-Up and Plan for Next Meeting

Susan suggested we have a 45-minute in-between meeting on the Areas of Focus. The next meeting is on April 15, 2026, in Sacramento, California.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.