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November 17, 2020

Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Subject:

Receive and File Status Report on the Recommendations of the Mental Health & Safety Task Force.

Recommendation:

That your Board receive and file the status report on the County of Ventura's Mental Health & Safety Task Force.

Fiscal/Mandates Impact:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation.

Discussion:

On January 21, 2020 your Board received the Mental Health & Safety Task Force report and approved its recommended actions that were spurred by the horrific tragedy that occurred at the Borderline Bar and Grill on November 7, 2018.

The horrible tragedy brought attention to safety concerns of residents and law enforcement, the accessibility of firearms, identification and coordination of services for persons suffering from mental illness, and the provision and availability of mental health services throughout the entire county.

It is important to note that the report did not assert a causation of mental illness in the borderline event. For the County of Ventura, the incident inspired the creation of the Mental Health & Safety Task Force.

The report presented to your Board contained 26 specific recommendations. The participants on the task force represented County agencies and community organizations whose focus for the report was on four central objectives:

1. Identify potential opportunities for improvements to law enforcement safety, access to firearms, access to mental health services and treatment programs, and coordination of mental health and safety services;
2. Identify legislative opportunities to further reduce access to firearms by persons suffering from mental illness or who are prohibited from owning a firearm, and to enhance mental health services and community safety;
3. Build upon the existing strengths of services throughout the County including, but not limited, to crisis-intervention trained law enforcement, the Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT), the Screening, Triage, Assessment & Referral (STAR) team, the Rapid Integrated Support & Engagement (RISE) team, the Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU), the Inpatient Psychiatric Unit (IPU), youth programs, and educational programs;
4. Identify financial resources, grant opportunities and collaborative relationships that can help support public safety, and the provision of mental health services throughout the County.

Since the issuance of the task force report, leaders within several County agencies, primarily the Sheriff's Department, Behavioral Health Department, County Executive Office and Health Care Agency have been overseeing the efforts to address and fulfill the recommendations as provided in the report.

Based on your Board's action, a steering committee comprised of the County Executive Office, Health Care Agency and Sheriff's Department was formed to guide and monitor the implementation of the recommendations. Even with the impacts of COVID-19, work towards implementing the task force's recommendations continued as a priority.

Of the 26 recommendations identified in the task force report, 15 have been implemented, 9 are actively being worked on and two recommendations are in the planning stages for future actions. The following chart provides a summary of the status for the recommendations by focus area:

Recommendation Areas	Total Number of Recommendations	Number of Completed Recommendations
1. Early Identification of and Intervention with Persons Suffering from Mental Illness	5 – Recommendations	4 out of 5 Completed (1 in-progress)

2. Crisis Response and Coordination	4 – Recommendations	3 out of 4 Completed (1 in-progress)
3. Initial Treatment and Services	3 – Recommendations	0 out of 3 Completed (2 in-progress, 1 in planning)
4. Long-Term Treatment and Case Management	7 – Recommendations	3 out of 7 Completed (3 in-progress, 1 in planning)
5. Ongoing Engagement with Community-Based Organizations and the Public	7 – Recommendations	5 out of 7 Completed (2 in-progress)

The presentation to your Board today is a synopsis of the status for each of the recommendations contained in the report and is not intended to be a comprehensive report on all of the programs, partnerships and activities conducted by the County that may support or align with the recommendation areas contained in the report.

This important work will continue. We will work to complete the remaining recommendations, monitor their effectiveness and continuously strive to improve the coordination and effectiveness of these critical mental health and safety programs. We thank you for your Board's unwavering support of these efforts and the resources needed to implement them.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, County Counsel, and the Auditor-Controller's Office. If you have any questions regarding this recommendation, please contact Barry Zimmerman, at 805-677-5105.



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Chief Deputy Director Health Care Agency


M.P.

Michael Powers
County Executive Officer