

**PUBLIC SAFETY  
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING  
AUGUST 2, 2021  
2:30 PM  
VIDEOCONFERENCE**

<b>Members Present:</b>	Councilmember Melissa Cabello Havrda, <i>Chair, District 6</i> Councilmember Jalen McKee Rodriguez, <i>District 2</i> Councilmember Phyllis Viagran, <i>District 3</i> Councilmember Ana Sandoval, <i>District 7</i> Councilmember Clayton Perry, <i>District 10</i>
<b>Members Absent:</b>	None
<b>Staff Present:</b>	María Villagómez, <i>Deputy City Manager</i> ; Liz Provencio, <i>First Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Jim Kopp, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Thomas Filopoulos, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Tina Flores, <i>City Clerk</i> ; William P. McManus, <i>Chief of Police</i> ; Karen Falks, <i>Deputy Chief, SAPD</i> ; Jennifer Herriott, <i>Deputy Director, Community Health Division, Metro Health</i> ; Laura Mayes, <i>Assistant Director, Government and Public Affairs</i> ; Richard Riley, <i>Assistant Police Director, SAPD</i>
<b>Others Present:</b>	B.J. Wagner, <i>Senior Fellow of Justice System Policy, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute</i>

**Call to order**

Chairwoman Cabello Havrda called the meeting to order.

**Public Comment**

**Written Testimony**

There were no written comments submitted.

**Live Testimony**

There were no citizens registered to speak.

**Items for Consideration**

Item 2 was addressed at this time.

- 2. Briefing and possible action on the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI) Final Report on the City of San Antonio first response system [Erik Walsh, City Manager; Claude A. Jacob, Director, San Antonio Metropolitan Health District]**

B.J. Wagner reported that the key findings included:

- Effective collaboration among leadership, providers and the community
- Growing experience with integrated intervention teams that would inform a broader system transformation
- The current crisis care continuum in the City of San Antonio considered transport to an emergency department for evaluation as the primary response to persons in behavioral health crisis.
- The Signify Community data sharing platform managed by the Southwest Texas Regional Advisory Council (STRAC) was an important community resource in data sharing that could support implementation of recommendations for system transformation.

Ms. Wagner stated that the key recommendations included:

- Follow a data-driven public safety model as system transformation was developed and implemented
- Review the current data systems for the City of San Antonio to identify gaps in information and develop plans to collect and report identified information
- Integrate licensed clinicians into the 9-1-1 call center to support identification and response to behavioral health issues
- The City of San Antonio and its public safety partners should adopt the Multi-Disciplinary Response Team (MDRT) model.
- Assess the optimal roles of peers and licensed clinicians over time

Ms. Wagner provided an inventory of existing local programs provided by the City of San Antonio, Bexar County Sheriff's Office, STRAC and The Center for Health Care Services programs and stated that the strengths of the local programs included: 1) Effective collaboration and leadership; 2) Growing experience in transforming first response options; and 3) Data sharing. She reported that the current continuum in San Antonio considered transport to an emergency department for evaluation as the primary response to individuals in behavioral health crisis. She indicated that there should be no "wrong door" to treatment and services should be coordinated so that appropriate assessments, connections to services and follow up as needed happened regardless of which program, team or provider made first contact.

Ms. Wagner stated that the following mental health call codes utilized by the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) in dispatch included: 1) Mental Health Routine; 2) Mental Health Disturbance; and 3) Mental Health in Progress. She noted that the data from SAPD dispatch was gathered for the period of January 2019 through April 2021. She provided information on the data gathered for mental health calls by frequency, code, service area and call type. She reviewed the most frequent call addresses for SAPD, the most frequent mental health call addresses for SAPD and the locations where there was overlap.

Ms. Wagner reported that to date, the Meadows Institute had identified six essential conditions for MDRT success and noted that each was present in San Antonio currently or could be added but would need to be augmented and aligned with MDRT implementation if it was to be successful:

1. 9-1-1 embedded mental health clinician
2. Same-day walk-in clinic/prescriber
3. Crisis intervention training for Officers, Clinicians and Paramedics
4. 24/7 community hospital bed capacity

5. Crisis medical care for intoxication
6. Housing referral network

Ms. Wagner reviewed other emerging best practices in Texas communities. She reported that the following recommendations were made by the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute:

- Close identified gaps in data reporting to improve the City of San Antonio's ability to manage the crisis first response system
- Add licensed clinical support to the 9-1-1 call center
- Adopt the MDRT model
  - Multiple MDRT teams between the hours of 7:00 AM and 10:00 PM in the 78207 zip code
  - A single MDRT team between the hours of 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM for zip code 78208
  - The large number of hospitals with emergency departments in zip code 78229 requesting emergency detention services from SAPD accounted for localized call saturation. Considering a partnership for emergency detention processing could be beneficial in this area.
- Align and enhance all six essential conditions of success with MDRT roll out and assess optimal clinical deployment for diagnosis and peer follow-up

Ms. Wagner provided an outline of key workplan components:

1. Gain consensus from leadership and key stakeholders
2. Designate an implementation workgroup and identify currently available resources that could be leveraged for system transformation
3. Determine additional funding needs and develop plan to secure implementation and ongoing funding, maximizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) fund use through 2026
4. Review data from City of San Antonio and key partners to identify gaps in data and explore data sharing to support service delivery and program evaluation
5. Gain consensus from leadership for an outcome and evaluation plan
6. Develop training to support new programs and protocols

Chairwoman Cabello Havrda asked if the community hospital capacity for mental health was within the scope of the report. Ms. Wagner stated that it was not and it was recommended that the City ensure that the capacity could meet service needs and the City did not necessarily need more beds but needed more prevention services. Chairwoman Cabello Havrda asked if there was a stronger recommendation to expand existing services or to implement updated types of care. Ms. Wagner stated that use of the MDRT model was recommended rather than expanding existing services.

Councilmember Sandoval asked if MDRT Teams would have access to non-lethal weapons other than tasers. Chief McManus stated that it could be an option. Councilmember Sandoval stated that she would like to see the MDRT Teams equipped with such non-lethal weapons. Deputy City Manager Villagomez noted that feedback received today would be incorporated into the proposed Budget.

Councilmember Viagran asked if staff identified the different hospitals where the calls were coming from in the 78229 zip code. Ms. Wagner stated that they had not but calls were dispersed amongst the hospitals. Councilmember Viagran requested that information and asked if demographics were included in the report. Ms. Wagner replied that demographics were not included. Councilmember Viagran requested that demographics be included.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked how data gaps would be addressed and what data gaps had been identified so far. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that staff had to capture the outcome of the call that started out as a mental health call and vice versa. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked how staff was working to identify other gaps. Ms. Wagner stated that once implementation began other gaps could be identified.

Councilmember Perry asked how much it would cost to implement the recommendations. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that staff were finalizing the Budget details for presentation to the City Council next week and staff had talked about allocating approximately \$3 million to strengthen the City’s mental health response. Councilmember Perry spoke in support of increasing the number of police authorizations to reflect the City’s growth.

Item 1 was addressed at this time.

**1. Approval of minutes from the Public Safety Committee meeting on June 23, 2021**

Councilmember Sandoval moved to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2021 Public Safety Council Committee Meeting. Councilmember Perry seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**3. Briefing and possible action on the Update of the Police Services Review Project [Maria Villagomez, Deputy City Manager]**

Deputy City Manager Villagomez presented the framework of the police services review:

Foundational Issues	Expectations	Input	Response Alternatives and Funding
Accountability Discipline Process Hiring & training Transparency & data Community engagement	Role of Police Encounters with Police Calls for service	City Council Public Safety Committee Neighborhood associations Stakeholder groups	Key Areas: Violence prevention Homeless Mental health Alternatives: City departments Other providers

Deputy City Manager Villagomez reviewed the timeline and noted that the FY 2022 proposed Budget would be presented to the City Council on August 12, 2021 and Budget Work Sessions would be held in September 2021. She added that the proposed Budget would be considered for adoption on September 16, 2021.

Deputy City Manager Villagomez presented the 9-1-1 calls for mental health and domestic violence:

Mental Health	2019	2020	2021 (Jan to April)
Mental Health Disturbance	8,732	10,300	4,185
Mental Health in Progress	3,897	4,226	1,631
Mental Health Routine	8,869	9,648	3,444
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,498</b>	<b>24,174</b>	<b>9,260</b>

Domestic Violence	2019	2020	2021 (Jan to April)
Family Disturbance	28,762	31,989	7,707
Family Violence	15,784	17,739	4,285
Threats	13,054	13,459	2,903
Violation of Protective Order	1,260	1,693	502
Child Protective Service Disturbance	1,196	1,480	325
Calls involving Gun or Knife	439	1,665	410
<b>Total</b>	<b>61,495</b>	<b>68,025</b>	<b>16,132</b>

Deputy City Manager Villagomez reviewed the mental health calls by substation, type and emergency detention calls not including hospitals and domestic violence calls by substation.

Dr. Colleen Bridger reviewed the current resources for mental health and domestic violence. She stated that staff would begin with a pilot program and recommended a coordinated response to include: 1) A team approach to include a combination of a mental health professional, advocate, EMS and police; 2) On scene advocated trained in triage for family violence, mental health and housing; 3) Crisis de-escalation; and 4) Warm hand-off to services that maintain sustained support.

Deputy City Manager Villagomez reported that the following calls were evaluated for a potential alternative response and included:

- Animal related
- Loud music
- Fireworks
- Emergency detention (hospitals)
- Property found

Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that residents wanted to see Police Officers in their neighborhoods so through the pilot program, some of their time could be utilized to attend community events. She presented data on calls for:

- Animal related

- Barking dog
- Fireworks
- Loud music
- Property found
- Emergency Detention (ED) at hospitals

Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that staff recommended that the City evaluate internal partnerships to respond to calls and maximize a Police Officers' availability. She stated that other recommendations included streetlights, relationships with the community and revamping the website for data transparency. She indicated that the City Manager would present the final recommendations on August 12, 2021 as part of the FY 2022 Proposed Budget. She noted that department Budget Worksessions would be held and community input would be collected in August and September 2021. She added that the City Council would consider approval on the FY 2022 Budget on September 16, 2021.

Chairwoman Cabello Havrda provided an example of a call that was made for an individual firing a weapon in the air which turned out to be a mental health issue. She expressed concern that call takers would rely on residents to identify a mental health issue. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that if a weapon was involved, a Police Officer would respond and once the scene was secured, the MDRT would be brought in if it was a mental health issue.

Councilmember Perry asked Chief McManus if he envisioned the City's system failing without instituting the recommended changes. Chief McManus stated that he did not. Councilmember Perry expressed concern that without a police response on every call someone could get hurt.

Chairwoman Cabello Havrda asked if the intent was for a Police Officer to respond to an immediate threat. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that once a scene was secured, the MDRT would arrive.

Councilmember Viagran suggested that the pilot program be held at substations which would have the most impact on domestic violence. She expressed support for sharing duties with Animal Care Services (ACS) and requested data on ACS. She asked that staff consider access for seniors and those with disabilities.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez stated that the City needed to allocate resources in a way that was smart, effective and efficient. He asked if there was a strategic plan to prevent crime. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that there was not. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez stated that he would like to see an emphasis on crime prevention, data analysis and the use of criminologists. He requested that an Office of Crime and Recidivism be created.

Councilmember Perry asked if additional police authorizations were included in the FY 2022 Proposed Budget. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that the FY 2022 Proposed Budget would be presented on August 12, 2021.

Councilmember Viagran suggested that a crime analyst be housed at each substation. Chief McManus stated that a substation analysis could be provided.

### **Consideration of Items for Future Meetings**

Chairwoman Cabello Havrda requested a presentation on best practices of other cities regarding police reform.

**Adjourn**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:47 PM.

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*Melissa Cabello Havrda, Chair*

*Respectfully Submitted*

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*Denice F. Trevino, Office of the City Clerk*

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