

# Memo

**To:** Board Members  
**From:** Aaron Byzak, Interim CEO  
**Date:** September 5, 2025  
**Subject:** Community Health Committee Minutes – **September 3, 2025**

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The Committee met on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, at 12:00 p.m. Members of the public were able to participate by telephone, Zoom, or in-person at the Grossmont Healthcare District Conference Center, located at 9001 Wakarusa Street, La Mesa, California. In some cases, discussion of items may have taken place out of sequence during the meeting.

**Attendees:** Director Virginia Hall, Chair  
Director Nadia Farjood, Member  
Aaron Byzak, Interim Chief Executive Officer (Absent)  
Amy Abrams, Chief Community Health Officer  
Holland Kessinger, Head Librarian  
Ryan Purdy, Sharp Grossmont Hospital  
Linda Dial, Guest  
Lani Lutar, Guest (via Zoom)  
Minola Clark Manson, Guest (via Zoom)

- A. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Director Hall at 12:02 p.m.
- B. Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved as posted.
- C. Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

Director Hall stated that while public comments are always appreciated and will be noted, unless they are related to an agenda item, the Board of Directors may or may not respond. Director Farjood further clarified that any member of the public can speak on any matter concerning the District, even if it is not on agenda. However, it is within each Director's sole discretion whether he/she will respond to a public comment.

## D. Reports/Discussion/Possible Action Items

### 1. Monthly Committee Report

CCHO Abrams presented the monthly look ahead of upcoming programs, events, and outreach for September-October 2025. The Committee discussed the East County Chamber of Commerce Health Fair, noting that the cost would be covered by a sponsorship and not counted as a direct cost. They also discussed the Covenant Health Fair at Mount Miguel in Spring Valley, which is a large health fair for residents at various levels of care. Director Hall inquired about the possibility of inviting students from Mountain Empire High School to the October 29<sup>th</sup> Grossmont Union High School field trip to the Grossmont Healthcare District. She cited Director Lenac's interest in getting a health pathways program started at Mountain Empire and including students in future field trips could potentially lead to increased interest in the pathways program. CCHO Abrams explained the Grossmont Union High School field trips are not part of the pathways program, are specific to GUHSD, and are at capacity. Holland Kessinger, Head Librarian, will reach out to Mountain Empire High School to explore their interest in future field trips to the Grossmont Healthcare District. Director Hall also recommended Board members be invited to attend the upcoming field trips. Director Hall expressed her enthusiasm to CCHO Abrams for requesting a report from the San Diego County of San Diego Community Health Statistics Unit for the important information such a report will provide.

Director Hall inquired if the mobile outreach library (Molly) goes out to Pine Valley, Jacumba, and Hot Springs. Ms. Kessinger stated Caitlyn Shaffer, Library Outreach Assistant, is actively working on expanding Molly's reach and continues to reach out to these communities to gain their interest.

The Committee focused on the addition of a new program, Older Adult Social Hour, which is a one-time event scheduled for October 28th. Director Hall expressed her concerns about adding new programs and the need to stay within budget. She stated that if the Older Adult Social Hour becomes an ongoing program, an existing program will need to be taken away in accordance with prior policy. Director Farjood disagreed with this, noting that the limitation to 12 programs was a temporary directive through June 2025. She expressed her view that programming should be expanded when feasible to meet the needs of the community, and there is both staff and budget capacity to increase programming.

Director Farjood attended the recent Wellness Wednesday which addressed diabetes and heart health and thought the presenter was excellent. She would like to explore the possibility of live streaming and recording these sessions for a digital library and asked that staff see what it would take to record them. Having the ability to participate virtually would increase accessibility, especially for those in rural areas. The Committee discussed the challenges of managing limited resources and capacity, with a focus on balancing in-person and virtual programs to expand their reach. Staff are requested to research the costs and staffing needs of developing recorded and livestreamed health information programs.

Director Hall inquired about the status of the Community Health Clinic because it was not on the list of events. Staff noted that all recurring wellness programs are not included on the monthly report. Director Hall asked CCHO Abrams if she went to Sharp first to see if they would be interested in the program, and CCHO Abrams explained that the proposal for the program came to GHD/Library staff from UCSD and the County of San Diego. Director Hall stated that the District has a partnership with Sharp and if there is a program being offered, it is important to offer it to Sharp. CCHO Abrams noted that Sharp is involved in many of our programs, at District staff request, and that staff are always receptive when invited by Sharp to collaborate on community programs.

## 2. April 29<sup>th</sup> Community Health Event Feedback Summary

CCHO Abrams provided a summary of the top health concerns/priorities received from public feedback made during and after the April 29<sup>th</sup> Community Health Event:

- Mental health/mobile mental health
- Chronic disease prevention
- Affordable healthy food
- Physical activity
- Housing
- Aging housing for older people
- Substance use
- Environmental health
- More translated materials
- More culturally competent care
- More outreach and streaming library programs
- Extending community events
- More transparency and accountability from Board members

A theme that emerged is that stress is a major barrier to accessing care, especially for older adults, refugees, immigrants, and the parents of children living with disabilities. This same held true with the findings of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA).

Staff are requested to provide the number of comments for each category to determine their significance. This information will be used in the strategic planning process.

The discussion continued with regard to the 3 comments received wanting more transparency and accountability from Board members. Director Hall stated she has been told by legal counsel not to respond to public comments that are not on the agenda. Director Farjood stated there is no limitation and no legal prohibition preventing a Board member from responding to any public comments. The suggestion was made to bring this matter to the Board and have legal counsel provide clarification on this subject.

### 3. Programs & Events: Staff Recommendations

CCHO Abrams presented the memo from staff recommending an adjustment to the programs budget in the amount of \$9,000 to expand the frequency of 4 existing programs (Crafternoon, Drums Alive, Memory Café, and Children’s Music Storytime). This request is due to the large number of public comments received recently about programs being at capacity and having wait lists for the past several months.

Public Comment - Linda Dial stated she believes it is important to increase the size of classes. She would really like to be able to come to more programs without worrying about a cap.

CCHO Abrams clarified this is not a call for expanding the size of a particular program due to space restraints inside the library, but rather increasing the frequency of those programs to make them more available. In addition, once the new community room is built in a couple of years, some of those programs will be able to expand.

Director Hall restated her concerns about adding more programs and the need to stay within budget and remain fiscally responsible, citing future hospital needs. She suggested having information on the website to redirect participants to other free programs not operated by the District. Director Farjood stated as a public health agency, our constituents are coming to us and asking for greater frequency of these programs, and that the District has an ample budget and capacity. Director Hall asked CCHO Abrams to include past reports that provide the numbers of people who

attend these programs when it goes before the Board. The Committee did not reach consensus on this item, and the request for a Community Health Support programs budget adjustment in the amount of \$9,000 will go to the Board for deliberation.

**4. Strategic Initiatives**

CCHO Abrams stated there are no meaningful updates on the Strategic Initiatives, but they will remain on the agenda awaiting guidance on the District's strategic priorities from Directors.

**a) Transfer of Care Collaboration**

CCHO Abrams stated hospital wait times continue to improve. Director Farjood has not attended a meeting yet.

**b) Rural Health Coalition: no updates**

**c) Grossmont Hospital Corporation Zone 1 EMS Contract Update**

Interim CEO Byzak was not in attendance today. No update was given.

**E. Next Meeting:** The next regularly scheduled meeting on the calendar is Wednesday, October 1, 2025, at 12:00 p.m.

**F. Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:57 p.m.