

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes July 17, 2025 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

ROLL CALL James Kyriaco, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:06pm. A quorum was established.

Members present:	Members not present:	Staff present:	Guests present:
Areli Miguel	Jeremy Ball	Pat Keelean	
Marina Owen		Grant Carmichael	
Josephine Torres		Jennifer Macdonald (Via Zoom)	
Angela Miller-Bevan		Monica Logan	
Alexander Saunders		Libby Martinez	
Hilda Zacarias			
Miguel Avila			
James Kyriaco			
Oscar Gutierrez			
Roy Lee (Via Zoom)			
Gloria Flores			

1. WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER

James Kyriaco, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm

2. PUBLIC COMMENT - Members of the public may speak up to 5 minutes each.

The public comment period is reserved for comments on matters within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board of Directors. Each person may address the Board for up to three minutes at the discretion of the Chair, for a total public comment period of no more than 15 minutes.

The CommUnify Interim Chair asked if there were any public comments. None

3. **CLOSED SESSION:**

a. Personnel Matter: None

b. Legal Matter: None

4. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:

May 7, 2025

M/S/A Angela Miller-Bevan Oscar Gutierrez Approved

5. RECITE COMMUNIFY MISSION STATEMENT/MISSION MOMENT-PAT KEELEAN, CEO:

We serve Santa Barbara County's most vulnerable populations through education and coordinated services so they may achieve economic stability, improve overall well-being and thrive.

Pat recited the updated version of The Promise of Community Action.



Pat also shared with the board CommUnify's Mission Moment:

Mission Moment

Secure Families/Familias Seguras Program

Six students from Santa Maria Bonita School District, facing expulsion and severe behavioral challenges, were enrolled in alternative education programs at Fitzgerald Court and Community School. With intensive case management, mentorship, and mental health support through the Secure Families team, all six youth made major strides - improving attendance, stabilizing behavior, and avoiding further discipline. They have now been approved to return to their home schools, where they can rejoin their peers – demonstrating the transformative power of dedicated support and second chances.



6. **CEO UPDATE:**

Agency Update

- · 211 Santa Barbara Immigration Resources Webpage
- Grant Awards
 - CalPrep/I&E Award (3-Years): \$1.3M
 - Walter & Holly Thompson Foundation: \$30k for Senior Safe at Home Program
 - SB County CDBG/PLHA: \$100k for Senior Safe at Home Program
- MediCaid Provider Application Approved by DHCS
- CalAIM
 - CenCal Incentive Payment Program (IPP): Awarded \$200k
 - CalAIM PATH-CITED (Round 4) Award Pending

Executive Director's Report – Presented by Pat Keelean

o 211 Santa Barbara Webpage Update:

Pat informed the board that the 211 Santa Barbara website now features Immigration Resources. Callers can access this information 24/7 and may request it from any representative.

Text Access to 211:

In addition to phone calls, individuals can now text "211" to request information directly.

New Grant Awards:

- CalPREP and I&E Award: CommUnify has been awarded the CalPREP and Information & Education (I&E) grant. This is a three-year award totaling \$1.3 million.
- Walter and Holly Thompson Foundation \$30K.
- CDBG/PLHA \$100K
- CenCal Health Incentive Payment Program (IPP Grant): CommUnify has received a \$200,000 award through this program to support implementation of the Cal AIM Initiative.

Medicaid Provider Status:

CommUnify is now officially approved as a Medicaid provider. As a result, the agency is preparing to hire new staff to support Head Start and other programs Mental Health and Family Wellness.

CalAIM PATH-CITED Status:

The CalAIM PATH-CITED proposal has not been awarded. If it remains unfunded, the agency will reassess the continuation and structure of the program.

Development Update

- 2024 Annual Report (August)
- Ambassador's Committee (Head Starters Group)
- Friendraiser Events (Fall 2025)
- Planned Giving Campaign
 - Legal & Financial Advisors (LAFA) Event (Pending)
- Champions Dinner: Raised \$253,950 for Family & Youth Services

Executive Director's Report – Continued

2024 Annual Report:

Pat shared that the 2024 Annual Report is nearly complete and will be mailed out in mid-August.

Head Starters Ambassador's Committee:

Two active groups are emerging in the Head Starters initiative:

- One group is focused on advocacy.
- o The other is dedicated to fundraising, with an initial emphasis on securing funding for Carpinteria Head Start, followed by expansion to other Head Start Centers.

• Upcoming FriendRaisers Event:

Julie is working to plan the next FriendRaisers events in the Fall of 2025 in Montecito.

• Planned Giving Campaign:

Julie is organizing a Planned Giving Campaign. Further details will be shared soon.

Champions Dinner Fundraising Update:

The recent Champions Dinner successfully raised funds to support Family & Youth Services Department.

• Pat offered a special Thank You to CenCal Health for being a Diamond Sponsor and providing \$100K in matching funds.



• South Coast Youth Safety Partnership – A Community Conversation: Understanding the Gang Ecosystem Presentation held at the Santa Barbara Library:

o A Community Conversation - Understanding the Gang Ecosystem

 Pat shared the recent SCYSP "Community Conversation" featuring Chuck Madson form Futures in Lompoc, who is a former gang member, was very successful with over 75 community stakeholders and members attending.



Presentations and Community Engagement

Opening Remarks:

Councilmember Oscar Gutierrez, Policy Team Chair, provided welcome remarks to open the session.

• Guest Presentations:

- Erin Cross, Probation Manager, led a dynamic presentation including a Q&A session.
 She provided a detailed overview of local gang activity, including common identifiers, trends, and legal consequences.
- Keynote Speaker Chuck Madson, CEO of Futures for Lompoc Youth, delivered a powerful and personal presentation. He shared his lived experience exiting gang life and emphasized the importance of protective factors and community-based support systems for at-risk youth.

Community Engagement – Cafecito Discussion:

Attendees participated in small-group discussions over lunch (catered by Freedom4Youth) to explore the local gang ecosystem and share community perspectives.

 The session was facilitated by Steve and Maico, who guided open dialogue among participants.

Board Inquiry – Youth and ICE:

Board Member Josie inquired about the agency's involvement with youth reunification and concerns related to ICE. She asked whether these issues are being raised with leadership and what steps board members could take to assist.

 Pat responded that the agency would explore opportunities to support affected youth and will consider ways to elevate the issue.

Upcoming Events:



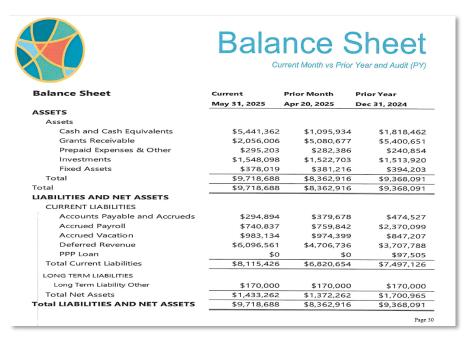
7. CFO UPDATE:

Fiscal Department Update:

Grant Carmichael, Chief Financial Officer, provided the Board with an update from the Fiscal Department.

Balance Sheet Review:

He presented CommUnify's **Balance Sheet** for the current month and discussed key highlights and trends related to the agency's financial position. His remarks included an overview of the organization's assets, liabilities, and overall financial health.



Fiscal Department Update:



- 2024 Single audit: New report draft target is August 1st
- New bank account update: Community West Bank
- MB&T Investment portfolio follow up
- New 2025 financial forecast targeted for July 25th committee meeting

• Administrative Discretionary Budget:

Grant reported that the Administrative Discretionary budget remains on plan and is under close observation.

 In response to a board inquiry about whether this serves as the agency's contingency plan, Grant confirmed that it does—alongside a hiring freeze in the Administration Department.

Program Exits:

YOBG Program:

The Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG) Program officially closed the agency as of June 30th. Due to rising operational costs with continued flat funding rendered the contract cost-prohibitive.

TAY Program:

The agency also exited the Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Program as of March 1st due to low referral rate.

 Pat informed the board that CommUnify is actively working with the County's BeWell Department to recoup financial losses incurred due to low referral rates during the contract period.

• Departmental Updates:

- Community Services Department:
 Currently stabilizing after receiving additional funding from the State.
- Head Start:

The program is on track to fully spend down allocated funds as planned.

 This includes adjustments related to the change of scope and implementation of incentive pay for staff.

Audit and Banking:

- The agency's Single Audit is scheduled to be presented to the Audit Committee on August 15th forreview and approval.
- Grant also announced that CommUnify is in the process of establishing a banking relationship with Community West Bank of Santa Maria.

• Pat thanked Board Member Hilda Zacarias for her instrumental support in facilitating this new relationship.

8. CONSENT AGENDA:

All matters listed hereunder constitute a consent agenda and will be acted upon by a single roll call vote of the Board. Matters listed on the agenda will be read only on the request of a member of the Board or the Public, in which event the matter shall be removed from the consent agenda and considered as a separate item.

8a. Approval of Minutes:

- 8a 1 Executive Committee Minutes: June 20, 2025
- 8a 2 Finance Committee Minutes: May 2, 2025
- 8a 3 Planning Committee Minutes May 9, 2025
- 8a 4 Planning Committee Minutes June 6, 2025
- 8a 5 Ambassador/Head Starters Committee June 16, 2025

8b. Approval of Grants \$10,000 and Under/Renewal Contracts, MOUs, etc.:

- 8b 1 Approval of and authorization to submit a grant application to the Bank of America Charitable Foundation in support of the Seniors Safe at Home program in the amount of \$10,000 for one year.
- 8b 2 Approval of and authorization to submit a grant application to **Santa Barbara Foundation's Youth Mental Health Providers Recruit, Retain, Rest and Recuperation (4R)**Grant program for \$10,000 to support CommUnify's clinical therapy team.
- 8b 3 Approval of **Children's Services Policy Revisions** for program year 2025-26 as outlined in the consent item. These changes ensure full compliance with current Head Start Performance Standards and relate to Child Guidance & Behavior, Child Health, Education, Enrollment & Record- Keeping, Family & Community Partnerships, Parent Meeting Guidance, Health & Safety, Human Resources, Management & System & Nutrition.
- 8b 4 Approval of **Children's Services Annual Program Self-Evaluation** to the California Department of Education. This report includes a Summary of Findings of the Program Self-Evaluation (PSE) to the California Department of Education (CDE) and Department of Social Services (CDSS). Key findings include need for timely submission of quarterly financial reports, need to increase DRDP scores in the language and literacy domain for infants and toddlers, and increasing Indigenous families' access to parent surveys.
- 8b 5 Approval of the new **Head Start Properties and Facilities Policy**. This new policy provides the necessary guidance and oversight to more effectively comply with Head Start Performance Standards.

M/S/A Alexander Saunders Gloria Flores Approved

9. ACTION ITEMS:

9-A Approval of and authorization to submit a grant application to the **Santa Barbara Foundation's Goleta Childcare Grant** program in the amount of \$15,000 to support CommUnify's Goleta Head Start Center.

- Pat explained that the agency plans to use the grant funds to establish a stipend fund for classroom applicants.
- This initiative aims to address staffing shortages that have led to under-enrollment in programs.
- The licensing requirement for staff to have Early Childhood Education (ECE) units has made it challenging to recruit qualified individuals, and the stipend fund is intended to attract and support potential candidates while they meet the necessary qualifications.

M/S/A Alexander Saunders Oscar Gutierrez

James Kyriaco (Abstained) Approved

9-B Approval of and authorization to submit a grant application to the **California Violence Intervention Program (CalVIP) Grant** program for up to \$5 million over a 3-year period.

- Pat shared that the agency is preparing a grant application that will be used in conjunction with the Familias Seguras Program. If awarded, the grant will enable the expansion of services to Lompoc families in partnership with the Lompoc Unified School District.
- The application is due by August 23rd. Board Inquiry:
- Board Member Marina asked whether this is a re-application and if the grant is competitive with other agencies.
 - Pat responded that while it is a competitive process, the agency is working in collaboration with UCSB to provide evidence-based support and has included the Lompoc area to strengthen eligibility for this grant opportunity.

M/S/A Alexander Saunders Oscar Gutierrez Approved

9-C Approve the Carryover of \$1,794,627 from the 2024 Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) Basic Grant into the 2025 Basic Grant year.

- Pat informed the Board that an action item was amended at the request of the Head Start Policy Council held on Juli 16th, 2025 to allocate an additional \$75,000 to support the Family Wellness Program.
 - The additional funding will support Mental Health First Aid training and ongoing Cafecitos sessions, addressing a current gap in funding for family wellness services.

- This program currently serves 26% of enrolled children, their parents, and teachers, and is a critical resource for:
 - Training teachers to manage and respond to challenging child behaviors
 - o Increasing the program's ability to serve more children and families

M/S/A Alexander Saunders Hilda Zacarias Approved

9-D Staff recommend that the Board of Directors **reconfirm CommUnify's commitment to the Brisa Encina Head Start Center** and authorize continued participation in the development of the Head Start Center located on-site in Mission Hills (Lompoc).

- Pat provided an update on the Brisa Encina project, which is being funded through a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).
 - The developer, CommUnify, and Santa Barbara County staff have convened to discuss the project timeline and key deliverables.
 - o A land use permit has been filed, and planning is underway.
 - The State of California will be contributing \$1.2 million toward the construction of the development.
 - Construction is scheduled to begin in January 2026 and is projected to be completed by August 2026.
 - The project includes the development of affordable housing in partnership with the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara, as well as the construction of a new Head Start Center on-site.

M/S/A Marina Owen Gloria Flores Approved

9-E Approve an extension of the current **Administrative Contingency Plan through September 30, 2025**, limiting the use of Administrative funding for out-of-town travel, new hires, and other non-critical expenditures, due to continued uncertainty regarding future levels of federal funding. In addition to continued cost containment in the agency's Administrative budget, this action grants the CEO authority to approve critical expenditures as needed.

- Pat asked for a continuation of the Agency's Administrative Contingency Plan.
 - o James, Chair asked if this was a second 90-day extension.
 - Pat replied that yes it was.

M/S/A Miguel Avila Oscar Gutierrez Approved

10. PRESENTATIONS/TRAININGS:

11a. 211 Santa Barbara Update, Kemba Lawrence, Community Services Director

Get Help. Get Connected.



211 Program Presentation - Presented by Kemba, Community Services Department

- Kemba provided an overview of the 211 Program, which operates under the Community Services Department. The presentation highlighted the program's services, accessibility, and role in connecting individuals with local resources.
- Board Inquiry:
 Board members inquired about where to download the 211 applications.
 - Kemba responded that the app is available for download on both the Google Play Store (Android) and the Apple App Store (iOS).

211 Santa Barbara County



Real people, real connections!



- Interface Staff Training and Partnership:
 - Kemba informed the board that staff operating the 211 Call Center through Interface Youth & Family Services undergo intensive training on the services and resources available to callers.
- She also noted that Interface is a nationally recognized organization, bringing a high standard of service to the program.

211-Kinship



Supporting Kinship Caregivers Across California

Supporting Kinship Caregivers with:

- Financial aid & benefits
- •Legal & guardianship help
- •Mental health support
- •Childcare & parenting resources

Statewide Impact:

In partnership with United Ways, 2-1-1 helped build a statewide kinship resource database—connecting families to local support across California.

Why It Matters:

- •1.15M+ children live in kinship care homes (2021)
- •For every 1 child in formal foster care, 14 are in informal kinship care

www.kinshipcareca.org

Board Inquiry - Kinship Program:

- Board members inquired about the Kinship Program mentioned during the presentation.
 - Kemba explained that Kinship is a service that helps connect children in the foster care system with their next of kin, ensuring greater stability and continuity in their care whenever possible.

Reentry



Santa Barbara County Probation Partnership

211 Santa Barbara County works with Santa Barbara County Probation to support individuals transitioning from jail or prison with targeted reentry resources and transportation support.





723 website visits have been made to the Reentry icon in 211 website.



 Kemba provided an overview of the Reentry Program, which operates in partnership with the Santa Barbara County Probation Department. She explained that the program supports individuals transitioning from incarceration by offering reentry resources and transportation assistance to facilitate their reintegration into the community.



Reentry +



Santa Barbara County Probation Partnership

211 Santa Barbara County works with Santa Barbara County Probation to support individuals transitioning from jail or prison with targeted reentry resources and transportation support.

211 schedules Lyft rides for clients referred by their probation officer

The top 5 Needs that individuals requested rides for are:

- Legal: Eviction Court; Court Ordered Community Service; Probation/Parole Check-in; Court Ordered Education; Commute to/from Court Proceedings/Counsel, Record Expungement
- Employment: Job Interview; Commute to/from Work; Pre-Employment Needs; Technology Acquisition
- Health: Medical/Dental/Eye Appt & Testing; Substance Use Support; Mental Health
- **Education:** Enrollment; Commute to/from School, Class, Daycare; Guardian School Engagement; Library or Internet Access; Technology Acquisition
- $\textbf{Economic Stability:} \ \textbf{Financial Coaching/Empowerment;} \ \textbf{Tax Preparation Services;}$ Essential Supplies (non-food); Record Obtainment (SSN, Birth/Death Cert., etc.); Transportation Services (DMV, car repair, etc.)



- The Reentry + Program supports former jailed individuals with support such as:
 - Legal
 - **Employment**
 - Health
 - **Education** and
 - **Economic Stability**

211 Community Day Celebration







900 attendees (community members, staff, volunteers, vendors)



65 vendors tabled the event



35 raffle prizes distributed



30+ Haircuts for all ages



100 vision screenings provided



500+ meals served to the public

Elected Officials & Dignitaries Present:

-Salud Carbajal, U.S. Congressman
-Monique Limón, CA State Senator
-Gregg Hart, CA State Assembly, District 37
-Roy Lee, SB County Supervisor, District 1
-Laura Capps, SB County Supervisor, District 2
-James Kyriaco, Goleta City Council

Oscar Gutierrez, Santa Barbara City Council
 Luz Reyes-Martin, Goleta City Council
 Kristen Sneddon, Santa Barbara City Council
 Monica Solórzano, Vice Mayor, Carpinteria
 Natalia Alardrón, Mayor, Carpinteria
 Jennifer Smith, Goleta City Council





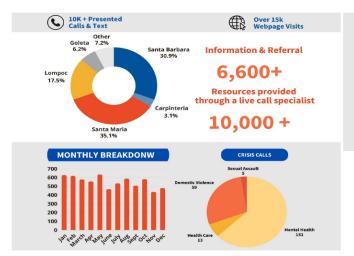
211 2024 Outcomes



Jan – Dec. 2024

Projected Funding

Director 3%





Challenges

FY 25-26 Program Budget

This Budget reflects the following changes:

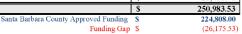
- •Associate Director oversight at 3%
- •Program Manager at 80%
- •Cuts to Basic Overhead

The funding gap is at -\$26,175.53 Based on County approved Budget funding capability.

Program Manager 80%	\$	56,291.63
Salaries S	Subtotal S	58,786.07
Fringe 30.5%	\$	17,929.75
Total Salaries & Benefits	8	76,715.82
Technology Expenses		
Interface call center	\$	131,118.00
Icarol Datbase Subscription		7,218.00
AIRS dues		225.00
211 CA dues		1,200.00
Website Management/upkeep		600.00
Website Licensing	\$	1,200.00
Total Technology Cost	S	141,561.00
Basic Overhead		
Communications	\$	300.00
Mileage		1,000.00
Training and Conference		1,000.00
Office Supplies		300.00
Printing and Outreach		200.00
Postage/Mailing		100.00
Insurance	\$	200.00
Equipment Lease	\$	400.00
Rent & Utilities	\$	3,725.00
Total Basic Overhead	8	7,225.00
Subtotal Program Expenses	S	225,501.82
Indirect Cost	\$	25,481.71
Total 211 Cost	S	250,983.53

211 Santa Barbara County Helpline

Projected Amount





- Board Member Marina Owen inquired about the 211 Youth Resource App, specifically asking who is funding the app.
 - o Kemba responded that a portion of the funding is being provided by United Way.
 - Marina also asked which organization managed the 211 Program before CommUnify.
 - Kemba explained that it was previously operated by Family Service Agency prior to 2014, but it was run exclusively by volunteers.
 - Marina raised concerns about potential Health and Human Services (HHS) funding cuts and their impact on the 211 program.
 - o Kemba clarified that the 211 program is county-funded, and
 - Pat added that so far, the HHS cuts only affect entitlement programs, not the 211 system.
 - Board Member James asked about overall 211 funding and how the agency could remain resilient by reallocating resources.
 - Kemba acknowledged the agency is experiencing funding gaps, and if not addressed, callers may face waiting times of up to 30 minutes.
 - Pat emphasized the importance of exploring additional funding opportunities, including ways to engage local municipalities for support.
 - Pat requested that Public Sector board members consider assisting with the funding gap in the 211 Program, suggesting that each municipality could potentially share the cost.
 - James responded that he would present the request to the City of Goleta and explain the importance of investing in the program.
 - o Oscar responded that he would discuss the City of Santa Barbara.
 - o Gloria Flores responded she would discuss the City of Santa Maria.
 - Josie inquired about staffing at Interface, the organization operating the 211-call center.
 - Kemba stated that there are 28 full-time staff members.

11b. Head Start/Early Head Start Update, Jennifer Macdonald, Children's Services Director

- Head Start Program Updates and Discussion on Immigration Status
- Jennifer informed the board that, due to changes within Region IX, the Head Start program currently lacks a Head Start Specialist, resulting in an absence of direct guidance and support.
- She also explained that Head Start receives funding from both the Department of Education and the Department of Social Services.

- Jennifer discussed the role of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), noting that these plans follow children through their school years. Some IEPs are for children with special educational needs who receive services through Tri-Counties Regional Center.
- She emphasized that, due to a change in program scope, the program has seen improved outcomes for children with special needs.
- Marina inquired about the percentage of individuals without satisfactory immigration status.
- Jennifer responded that the number is approximately 1%.
 - Pat added that the agency is currently awaiting guidance from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on how to identify children or families without satisfactory immigration status.

11. <u>INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS:</u>

- a. Head Starters Monthly Meeting: July 21st @ 3-4pm (Zoom)
- b. Joint Executive/Finance/Audit Committee Meeting: August 1st @ 12pm (Zoom)
- c. Policy Council Recognition Brunch: August 23rd @ 10-1pm (Hilton Garden Inn, Lompoc, CA)
- d. Board of Directors Meeting: September 2nd @ 6pm; Location: TBD
- e. Board Retreat: Strategic Planning: September 12th @ 10am 3:00pm (Location: TBD).
- Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm