



**Division of Developmental Disabilities  
District South (Sierra Vista) Independent Oversight Committee  
Meeting Minutes & Action Items  
Thursday, January 9, 2020 – 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM**

**Call to Order**

Meeting called to order by Committee Chairperson, **Chere Solorzano**. The date is March 12, 2020 at 9:40 am. The meeting took place at 2981 E Tacoma St, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635.

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**Welcome and Introductions**

Attendance in Person:

- **Mary Haynes**
- **Amy Schroeder**
- **Keith Jansen**
- **Michelle Talley**
- **Chere Solorzano**
- **Jerry Regan**
- **Gloria Brunell**
- **Patsy Sartain**

Member Attendance by Phone:

- **Margarita Fate**

Absent:

- None

Public in Attendance:

- **Sophie Legaspi** (United Healthcare)
- **Vera Kramarchuk** (Mercy Care)

ADOA:

- No ADOA employees were available for the meeting.

DDD:

- **Eric Houghtalin** (IOC Liaison)
- **Mike Valdez** (Quality Improvement Volunteer)
- **Barbara Picone** (OIFA Program Manager)
- **Deserie “Desi” Preciado** (Statewide Benefits Coordinator and Justice Liaison)
- **Michelle Pollard** (NCI Coordinator)



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**DDD IOC Liaison and ADOA Updates**

**ADOA** – No ADOA present at the meeting.

**DDD - Eric Houghtalin:** Reminded the committee of the new plan to share incident reports with Tucson (Sierra Vista will read only open and Tucson will read only closed). He advised that the shared IR plan will likely mean that the workload will increase but still be far less than the other five committees in the state. He advised that sharing the work will get a second look from another committee on all District South incidents and that this will only be a benefit to our members.

**Jerry Regan:** Asked if the IRs would be sent to their homes or distributed at the meeting.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that they would normally be distributed at the meeting and that having to mail them last month was caused by a miscommunication between the District South Quality Improvement Manager and his office.

**Mary Haynes:** Asked for clarification.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that the increase would have the committee reviewing between 100 and 150 total IRs (average) and there would be three (3) copies of each. He estimated that there would be no more than 50 to 75 IRs being reviewed by each committee member each month.

He also advised the committee that while the District South PRC Chair's responsibility to the SV IOC was fulfilled by having a member present at the PRC meetings, she has agreed to work on a means of getting all the behavior plans out to the members for them to review and send inquiries back to the IOC member(s) attending the meeting for them to raise at the meeting.

**Mary Haynes:** Asked why **Keith Jansen** was the point of contact for the committee for BPs.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that it could be any member of the IOC that has agreed to go and that it doesn't have to be **Keith Jansen**. He added that he mentioned **Keith Jansen** only because of the fact that he has been going to all of the recent PRC meetings.

**Mary Haynes:** Asked if the committee members would be getting the BPs prior to the PRC meeting.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that the PRC Chair was working to coordinate the logistics but that would be the plan.

**Michelle Talley:** Asked for copies to be mailed to her as well.



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**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that he would contact the PRC Chair and ask for physical copies for **Michelle Talley**. He asked if there were any other members of the committee that wanted physical copies (no response from the committee members).

**Mary Haynes:** Asked if they would have to wait to discuss the BPs until the IOC meeting.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that committee members could discuss the BPs outside of the meetings but advised them to maintain HIPAA and other confidentiality laws.

**Mary Haynes:** Wanted to know who made the decision to make the changes discussed in this meeting.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that he brought the plan to the attention of the Chair (**Chere Solorzano**) and that her position as Chair allows her to make the decision to accept or reject the plan as it was proposed. He advised that the plan as proposed to the Chair gets two sets of eyes looking at the plans and that plans will be reviewed at least twice each. He noted that this would only benefit our members.

**Mary Haynes:** Noted that the four (4) counties that are covered by the Sierra Vista IOC weren't getting many IRs and that doesn't give the IOC members much to do. She added that the four (4) counties only have 1,800 members. Asked if they had to filter through all of the IRs to find the offices for only their four (4) counties.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Noted that the 1,800 was out of 44,000 members statewide (just over 4% of the DDD membership). Also noted that the committee would have to make note of the offices on the IRs if they chose to separate them for the subcommittee project. He added that the subcommittee could also choose to add the entire south to their scope of the subcommittee project should they choose to do so.

**Mary Haynes:** Advised that the subcommittee was on hold. She also advised that the committee only wants to serve the four (4) counties.

**Michelle Talley:** Clarified that **Mary Haynes** seemed to only want to serve the four (4) counties served by their IOC and not take on all of District South.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Answered that the problem that they have been having of only having a small number of reports to review would return. That would only leave IOC members with a maximum of 50 total reports and once they are broken down in groups of three copies each and dispersed, that would only give each member a total of maybe 15-25 total reports to review. He also noted that there is a greater chance that the IRs would not be prepared in time for the meeting as the Quality Improvement Managers have been going through a lot of changes and have been struggling to adapt in addition to maintaining their regular duties. He advised that he is happy to mail out reports but that still leaves them with a sense of not feeling useful to the



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members. He also noted that the one District South report is generated with both Tucson and Sierra Vista's IRs altogether. He advised that the person that does the separation has to open each report and that, with recent IT issues, this is a long procedure. Once the report is open, if it isn't a Sierra Vista report, the Redactor closes it and opens the next one. He advised that there were a lot of factors that were considered before proposing the plan to the Chairs of Tucson and Sierra Vista. He advised that we would be happy to send the list of offices under Sierra Vista IOC if they wanted to separate them for the purposes of the subcommittee project.

He added that was part of the reasoning behind the change. He noted that the committee has grown from four (4) members at one point to as high as eleven (11) in the last year. He advised that the current member count was nine (9) but that spending the time recruiting for a committee that wasn't doing much wouldn't help serve our members. He added that the committee's current nine (9) members have been doing a very limited amount of work and that the goal was to always get them closer to the same workload that other similar sized committees had at this point.

**Mary Haynes:** Asked if they work for ADOA.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that they were DES (Department of Economic Security) volunteers and oversight for DDD.

**Jerry Regan:** Added that he was glad to hear that they were coming to this point because there weren't IRs of BPs. He acknowledged that the lack of BPs was because of the fact that an IOC member was attending PRC. He advised that it was difficult to recruit thinking that there was nothing to do. He advised that he will be going back to the Rotary Club to recruit.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Acknowledged **Jerry Regan's** concerns.

**Mary Haynes:** Stated that before we (the SV IOC) starts to take on the entire state, they need to know what is going on in their own counties.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised **Mary Haynes** that IOC members could pick and choose the IRs they wish to review.

**Jerry Regan:** Asked if they were only over the four (4) counties or over the entirety of District South.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that it was his opinion that they were over the entire state as they are influential in policy changes that could affect the entire 44,000 statewide membership of DDD statewide. He advised that the committee was a good size with very little to do. He advised that it was the goal of the committee to provide oversight to DDD. He suggested that if that means having to bring IRs from the entire state that we (DDD) would. He acknowledged that the committee was only technically assigned to the four (4) counties but that they have been



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reviewing IRs from other committees when an IOC member was related to a member that had an incident.

**Jerry Regan:** Asked how they could determine open or closed IRs and who made the determination that an incident is closed.

**Mike Valdez:** Advised that the assigned personnel reviewing the incident will make the determination that an incident is closed. He added that the IR goes through a management review.

**Jerry Regan:** Asked if the incident is closed can the IOC be satisfied that proper oversight has been given.

**Mike Valdez:** Stated that that doesn't prevent the IOCs from asking questions. He added that this is the role of the committee.

**Jerry Regan:** Asked if all IRs (open and closed) were the responsibility of the committee.

**Mike Valdez:** Answered yes.

**Mary Haynes:** Asked if they could still talk about the reports.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that they can always talk about the IRs.

**Mike Valdez:** Stated that the committee lost the ability to discuss the incidents one at a time and discuss them in detail. He also suggested that IOC members attending PRC are taking away from the BPs being reviewed in the committee.

**Keith Jansen:** Asked if he shouldn't go to the PRC meeting.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that it was his call as a committee member.

**Jerry Regan:** Asked why the committees were getting more IRs and why did DDD increase them.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Corrected Jerry Regan stating that it was an AHCCCS call (not DDD).

**Barbara Picone:** Asked for clarification.

**Mike Valdez:** Explained that when he was the HRC (Human Rights Committee – what is now called IOC) Liaison, he hand-picked only the most serious incidents and those within the area being served by the committee. He acknowledged that the number increase won't allow that.

**Jerry Regan:** Advised that this made him feel like he was doing some good for the members.



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**Mary Haynes:** Asked if **Mike Valdez** was still able to get information when asked questions about Yuma (and other areas under SV IOC).

**Mike Valdez:** Answered yes. He also suggested that when the committee only reviews open IRs that he wouldn't be able to get the information that they have requested as there was no fact finding completed. He advised that he can only talk to the fact finder to determine what has been done so far.

**Barbara Picone:** Added that it was reasonable to have the committee ask for information about open incidents after they close (follow up).

**Michelle Talley:** Added that going to the PRC meeting was a great way to determining what was going on in their four (4) counties.

Advised that the members can still discuss every IR.

**Desi Preciado:** Asked what four counties covered by the SV IOC.

**Mike Valdez:** Answered Cochise, Graham, Santa Cruz, and Greenly.

**Desi Preciado:** Advised that her work all goes through Tucson.

**Mike Valdez:** Advised that all IRs for District South are processed through Tucson.

**Keith Jansen:** Added that the open IRs don't give the information but that the committee could help make suggestions of what questions should be asked in the investigative stage (open IRs). He advised that the PRC meetings may have to go to phone only format during the Covid-19 concerns.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Demonstrated the spreadsheet that the Redaction team uses and advised that the process is a lot longer. He summed up the plan and the reasoning behind the changes. He advised that PRC is still working with his office to figure out the logistics of the BPs being sent out to the committee members.

**Jerry Regan:** Asked what **Eric Houghtalin** was saying when PRC met their obligation when a member attends the PRC meeting.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that when a member of the IOC attends the PRC meeting, the PRC Chair is not obligated to send out BPs to the IOC committee at large because an IOC member has already signed off on the plans.

**Michelle Talley:** Added that she prefers hard copies.



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**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that DDD is still trying to keep the cost of printing down. He then asked if there were any other IOC members that wanted to receive hard copies of the BPs (other than **Mary Haynes** and **Michelle Talley**). No members of the committee replied.

He also acknowledged and thanked **Jerry Regan** for being willing to speak to his Rotary Club about the committee. He advised that he would be willing to make himself available as his schedule allows and given enough notice. He advised that if he is unavailable, that he might still be able to conference in by phone if help is still needed. He also advised that he could send out recruiting materials if needed for future events.

**Michelle Talley:** Provided two newspaper clippings with events in the Sierra Vista IOC.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that he will follow-up with the event organizers to see about setting up a table or at least pass out flyers.

**Jerry Regan:** Advised that he was encouraged that the committee was being more civil and holding fewer side conversations or interrupting.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Asked **Jerry Regan** if he would prefer that the Chair recognize members to speak.

**Jerry Regan:** Answered yes.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Asked **Chere Solorzano** if she was able to do that for the meeting.

**Chere Solorzano:** Advised that she was.

**Amy Schroeder:** Advised that there was an event that the Carmichael Neighborhood Association would have a booth at the West End Fair on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that he would be happy to attend.

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**Michelle Pollard:** HB 2769 passed and is working its way into the Arizona Senate.

*Please Note: Michelle Pollard's comment came later in the meeting but was added to the DDD Updates because she is an employee of the Division.*

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**Introduction to Deserie Preciado (Statewide Benefits Specialist)**

**Desi Preciado:** Advised the committee of what she does as the Statewide Benefits Specialist and Justice System Liaison. Advised the committee about Able accounts. Advised that she grew up



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in a small community. She added that she also works with the Able Accounts and advised the members what those accounts were.

**Michelle Talley:** Asked why it was only being offered through Able.

**Desi Preciado:** Advised that it is available to any member of DDD. She noted that it is also offered to those with chronic illnesses or disability before the age of 26. Able is not just for DDD members. The age of 46 is also being considered.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Asked if the Able Accounts would be considered a spend down for members.

**Desi Preciado:** Explained spend downs to the IOC members. Advised that it would be. She advised that some members have two iPads or other wasteful spending.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that Able Accounts also help members avoid being exploited as well. He explained a recent discussion in the District Central IOC about members that were spending down by purchasing burial plans and that they were being overcharged.

**Desi Preciado:** Added that she would send brochures for **Eric Houghtalin** to give to the committee members. She added that she is available to speak to DDD staff to educate them.

**Mary Haynes:** Asked who helps members get benefits.

**Desi Preciado:** Answered that one of the big things with Able is that it has to be set up by a guardian or an appointee.

**Jerry Regan:** Asked **Desi Preciado** to explain the spend down procedure. He asked why there was a \$2,000 benefit.

**Desi Preciado:** Advised that it was the AHCCCS benefit.

**Michelle Talley:** Asked if **Desi Preciado** about her role as Justice System Liaison for DDD.

**Desi Preciado:** Advised **Michelle Talley** of the role and what she does to protect the members that become a part of the justice system.

**Michelle Talley:** Asked if she helps get benefits started for non-DDD individuals.

**Desi Preciado:** Advised that they can definitely do that. She advised that she is limited by the lack of feedback from more rural areas of the state. She advised that District South only has two members in the justice system and that they are both out of Tucson.

**Jerry Regan:** Asked about the offences of the two cases.

**Desi Preciado:** Stated that the juvenile was a violation of probation and the adult might have been a kidnapping charge.





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**Jerry Regan:** Asked why the jailers call.

**Desi Preciado:** Advised that she sometimes gets calls from jails when a member has difficulty communicating or shows signs of one of the four diagnoses (cerebral palsy, intellectual disability, autism, or epilepsy).

**Amy Schroeder:** Asked if the jails know that they can call Desi Preciado.

**Desi Preciado:** Advised she is working on getting the word out. She also noted that if a member is jailed that they will have their AHCCCS benefits suspended. She advised that the jails will then bill the member or responsible party for any medical expenses. She advised that there is some sort of coverage that she is not aware of at this time.

**Jerry Regan:** Asked if the database was complete enough to show terminated members in FOCUS (the DDD internal system).

**Desi Preciado:** Advised that they are able to track these members. She also noted that jails will typically start AHCCCS and DDD paperwork within about 30 days of their release from custody. She acknowledged that DOC (Department of Corrections) has a new system that is not allowing the staff to know when the member is 30 days from release. She advised that DOC is working on a fix for the issue. She advised that she works with both release planning and health care services in the jails.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that **Desi Preciado** was a good choice for the position as she had a background as a behavioral unit Support Coordinator prior to her current role with DDD.

**Desi Preciado:** Expanded on her behavioral health experience prior to working for DDD.

**Jerry Regan:** Asked about the types of crimes that members are in for.

**Desi Preciado:** Answered that it can be people with any type of change. She noted that sometimes homeless members will get themselves thrown in jail to have a warm/cool place to stay. She noted that once members are released, if they have been placed in a group home, they have to be offered placement within the company (e.g., if the group home company owns multiple homes, they might opt to place the member at a different location as needed). She noted that there are high end cases that are covered by the media and some that don't. She meets with various stakeholders to try to keep members from getting into worse situations.

**Michelle Talley:** Asked about age limits.

**Desi Preciado:** Advised that she would work with juveniles if arrested. She noted that the youngest that she has now is 13 years old. She advised that client and vendor contacts are all done through support coordination.



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**Mary Haynes:** Asked about non-DDD members and helping them get the help that they might need.

**Desi Preciado:** Advised that if DDD isn't the correct agency, they will refer people to other programs that might be a benefit to them.

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**Introduction to Barbara Picone (OIFA Program Manager)**

**Barbara Picone:** Advised the committee about her role as the OIFA (Office of Individual and Family Affairs) Program Manager and the services that OIFA offers to the members. She mentioned housing, customer service, community engagement, justice, education, IOCs and town halls. She noted educating of people in the community such as first responders, school staff, etc.

**Jerry Regan:** Mentioned that DDD members are not being cared for well in the schools.

**Barbara Picone:** Answered that they can't act within the schools but that the unit provides supports such as IEP meetings. She advised that what the Division can do is make sure that the schools are aware that DDD is an option.

**Michelle Talley:** Asked if OIFA helped people get benefits.

**Barbara Picone:** Advised that the best action would be to start by calling customer service for guidance.

**Mike Valdez:** Added that members trying to get SSI or SSA should be aided by support coordination.

**Barbara Picone:** Advised that if a person is not a fit, that we can try to help them find the correct agency.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Asked about the pending two new advocacy positions.

**Barbara Picone:** Confirmed the hiring of two more advocates (one child advocate and one adult advocate). She noted that they just had interviews for the positions and are hoping to bring them into the office soon. She also noted a close relationship with the health plan Liaisons. She also pointed out that the unit has a Foster Care Liaison and a Tribal Liaison (currently vacant).

**Michelle Talley:** Invited Desi Preciado to come to do a presentation with her other volunteer organization (CASA).

**Barbara Picone:** Noted a paid internship for BSW or MSW students.



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**Eric Houghtalin:** Added that there are not enough MSWs that act as supervisors in the intern program.

**Barbara Picone:** Advised that they are working on that. She explained the need for the MSWs to the committee. She noted that MSWs need to be a Unit Supervisor or higher.

She also passed around the DDD Member and Family newsletter. She asked **Eric Houghtalin** to help IOC members sign up for the digital newsletter.

She also noted that health and safety would be something that **Eric Houghtalin** could pass along to her as a part of the OIFA mission.

She noted the affordable housing is working with organizations to help members get housing that only takes 30% of their income.

**Michelle Talley:** Noted that she is volunteering with an organization that she would like highlighted.

**Barbara Picone:** Asked **Eric Houghtalin** to pass it along to her.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Asked **Michelle Talley** to email him the details so he could pass them along.

**Michelle Talley:** Advised that she could send some information for upcoming events to Eric Houghtalin.

**Barbara Picone:** Asked IOC members if they were familiar with the DDAC. She shared two events coming soon in Nogales (April 22<sup>nd</sup> – 4:00-5:30pm) and in Santa Cruz County. She advised that the DDAC would like more people to get out to the town halls.

She asked **Eric Houghtalin** to send out the link to the DDD website. She also noted that DDD has a Facebook page.

She also asked **Eric Houghtalin** to confirm Pasty Sartain's address in FOCUS.

She noted that under customer service, there is also help available for providers there as well.

**Keith Jansen:** Asked about voting rights for members under guardianship.

**Barbara Picone:** Advised that **Keith Jansen** reach out to DDAC member, **Renaldo Fowler**. She asked **Eric Houghtalin** to get the phone number to **Keith Jansen**.

**Keith Jansen:** Asked if the owner of a group home can quarantine a home(s) without DDD making the call.

Barbara Picone: Advised that would be a case-by-case situation.



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**Mike Valdez:** Added that the Division is likely already communicating with the providers to ask them to create a response plan.

**Patsy Sartain:** Advised that the Director of DES (**Dr. Cara Crist**) sent an email last week that told them that DES was still doing their work and that they expected them to do the same. She noted that her husband works on the base and that he is being told that he needs to take home his work laptop in the event that they are asked to work from home.

**Barbara Picone:** Advised that the goal of the Division is to ensure that the members are getting the services that they need.

**Keith Jansen:** Asked if visitors could be stopped by the authorization of the home Manager.

**Barbara Picone:** Advised that she couldn't answer that question. She advised that the Division would like a consistent message.

**Mike Valdez:** Added that it was changing

**Barbara Picone:** Encouraged IOC members to attend DDAC events when they were able. She asked **Eric Houghtalin** to give the location of all DDAC and town hall events when he gets them.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that he provides those to the IOC teams.

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**Committee Recruiting Efforts**

**Eric Houghtalin:** Thanked the committee members for their service to the members of DDD. He added that the system only works if our communities step up to make sacrifices of their valuable time to be the guardians for those without a limited voice.

He challenged IOC members to take twenty IOC recruiting cards and pass all of them out in the community.

He urged the committee to share the names of organizations, people, and events that might be good points of contact for him to reach out to in future recruiting trips and in other communication. He added that he will continue to make every effort to fill the needs of this committee within the scope of his position.

He thanked **Michelle Talley** for the news clippings for the events coming.

**Michelle Talley:** Advised she would get more events to him every month.



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**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that the committee needed six more members to get to capacity and that he would like to see Sierra Vista get there first this time.

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**Subcommittee Report**

**Mary Haynes:** The project is on hold due to the source of money being on hold.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised **Mary Haynes** that the Subcommittee Report would remain on future agendas until the committee dissolves the group by vote.

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**Call to Public**

**United Health Care Liaison - Sophie Legaspi:** Advised that she had no updates.

**Mercy Care Liaison - Vera Kramarchuk:** Advised that she had no updates.

*Please Note: **Michelle Pollard's** contribution was added to the ADOA and DDD Updates section of this document as she is an employee of DDD.*

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**Committee Member Report**

**Michelle Talley:** asked to have the Subcommittee Report.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that the Subcommittee Report will remain on the agenda until the IOC dissolves the committee formally with a vote.

**Michelle Talley:** Asked how many IOC members were on the Subcommittee.

**Eric Houghtalin:** Advised that the Subcommittee includes **Michelle Talley, Chere Solorzano, Mary Haynes, Jerry Regan, and Amy Schroeder.**

**Michelle Talley:** Advised that they only had one formal meeting after and IOC meeting two months ago.

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**Chere Solorzano** motioned to go into executive session.

**Michelle Talley** seconded the motion.

There was no discussion.



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All present IOC members voted to move into the executive portion of the meeting. None of the members voted no or abstained.

(End of Public Portion of the Meeting: 11:54 am)

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**Discussion, Review, & Possible Action on Committee Membership**

This topic was skipped.

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**Discussion and Review of Incident Reports and Behavioral Plans**

The committee members reviewed 139 open incident reports. The District South (Tucson) IOC will review all of the closed reports pursuant to an agreement with members of leadership on both committees.

<b>Type</b>	<b>Open</b>
Accidental Injury	<b>26</b>
Deaths	<b>8</b>
Emergency Measures	<b>1</b>
Human Rights	<b>3</b>
Legal	<b>1</b>
Medication Errors	<b>39</b>
Missing	<b>2</b>
Neglect	<b>15</b>
Other Abuse	<b>5</b>
Other	<b>32</b>
Physical Abuse	<b>5</b>
Property Damage	<b>2</b>
Suicide	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>139</b>

IRs were divided among the members in attendance.

Number of Questions for QIM: members of the committee discussed the incident reports directly with the Quality Improvement Manager (via email) and QI Volunteer, **Mike Valdez**.

Number of Behavior Plans turned in by IOC Members: None. The Behavior Plans were reviewed by at least one IOC member in Program Review Committee for February.



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*Please Note: There is a plan being worked on that would allow the committee to review plans and submit inquiries directly to the IOC member(s) attending the Program Review Committee.*

**The next District South – Sierra Vista IOC meeting will be held on April 9, 2019 at 9:30 am.**