

Alta California Regional Center
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, November 19, 2020
Minutes

Present: Carmen Aguilar, Johnny Deng, Ron Mainini, Michelle Ramirez, Michelle Rewerts, Steven Sanchez, Retha Seabron, Yang Sun, Rita Walker, Patty Wallace

Absent (* excused): Romilda Jones*, Luis Rivera

Staff: Phil Bonnet, Iqbal Ahmad, Lori Banales, Jennifer Bloom, Tracy Brown, John Decker, Camelia Houston, Mechelle Johnson, David Lopez, Olivia Procida, Lisa West

Facilitators: Amy Fulk

Visitors: Benita Ayala, Sonya Bingaman, Breeanne Burris, Maureen Fitzgerald, Kidada Medina, Maxine Milam, Kelly Pennington, Angel Picon, Tyson Whitman

1. **Call to Order & Opening Statement** - The Board of Directors met at 3:46 p.m. on Thursday, November 19, 2020, by Webex/teleconference.
2. **Training – “Adult Services – Transition from School to Adult Service Options”**
 - Tracy Brown, Mechelle Johnson and Olivia Procida shared information about the services that are available for adult clients, both generic and regional center funded.
3. **Introductions – Reading of ACRC’s Mission & Vision** - All present introduced themselves. Mr. Mainini read aloud ACRC’s Mission and Vision.
4. **Community Comments**
 - ◆ Ms. Bingaman shared the following:
 - The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) and ACRC are holding a joint training entitled “Overview of HCBS Rule & How It Affects Regional Center Services” on Wednesday, December 2nd from 6 to 8 p.m. This training is primarily open to self-advocates and family members, but all are welcome.
 - SCDD has held several Tuesday Zoom Chats with DREDF (PTI) about their new grant to provide parent training on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and other education related topics to this region. The next one is schedule for Tuesday, December 8th, from 10 to 11 a.m. Registration is required.
 - The next Sacramento Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15th, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

- ◆ Ms. Ayala expressed concern regarding the virtual meeting process. She does not feel like it is user friendly; some clients/families may not have the means to attend.
- ◆ Mr. Picon, the Director of Community Organizing with The Arc of California, would like to partner with ACRC to help the Spanish speaking community participate in these meetings.

5. ***Consent Agenda*** – **By consensus, the following consent agenda items were approved: a) excused absences for Romilda Jones; b) regular session Board meeting minutes of September 24, 2020; c) Board Development, CAC, Executive, Finance and PAC minutes.**

6. ***New Business***

- ◆ *Board Development Committee (BDC)*
Issue: Approve New Board Members

Discussion and Action: The Nominating Committee interviewed Kelly Pennington and Jennifer Stratton and recommended their membership to the BDC, who is bringing them before the full Board today for consideration.

Ms. Stratton was not able to attend today. Ms. Pennington provided a brief introduction of herself.

Without objection, Ron Mainini made the motion to approve Kelly Pennington's and Jennifer Stratton's membership to the Board effective January 2021.

- ◆ *Executive Committee*
Issue: Approve Updated Whistleblower Policy

Discussion and Action: The updated Whistleblower Policy was discussed at the October Executive Committee meeting. ACRC's attorney's office suggested some revisions, which provide more clarity to the process and guidance on how someone can file a complaint directly with the Board.

Without objection, Michelle Ramirez made the motion to approve the updated Whistleblower Policy.

- ◆ *Performance Contract*
 - 2019: Performance Contract Outcomes
 - Each year, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) contracts with the 21 regional centers in the State of California to serve clients and their families. The department also reviews data to determine how well regional centers are

doing; this data is included in regional center's Performance Contracts.

- Ms. Banales reviewed:
 - ACRC's demographics – who ACRC clients are and where they live.
 - How well ACRC did in meeting DDS' compliance standards.
 - How well ACRC is performing on increasing client employment performance compared to their prior performance and statewide averages.
 - How well ACRC is doing at reducing disparities and improving equity.
- 2021: Performance Contract Overview
 - Ms. Banales provided an overview of ACRC's draft 2021 Performance Contract.
 - It was noted that regional centers were asked to select two activities related to reducing disparities and improving equity in Purchase of Services (POS) expenditures a few years ago, so that DDS could measure a regional center's performance. These activities cannot be changed.
 - ACRC is working with Asian, African American and Spanish families to target efforts to increase POS and connect clients with community and generic resources.

Without objection, Michelle Rewerts made the motion to approve the draft 2021 Performance Contract as presented.

◆ *Finance Committee*

Issue: Monthly Financial Report

Discussion and Action: The Finance Committee met on November 9th and reviewed the September 30, 2020 financial report which reflects the three months of expenditures for the current fiscal year (FY). With 25% of the year elapsed, ACRC has expended 31% of Purchase of Services (POS) and 25% of Operations (OPS). A few late bills will still be coming in.

Mr. Ahmad shared that we are still waiting on the second contract amendment from DDS. Based on ACRC's contract allocation, his projections are preliminary.

Mr. Ahmad provided the committee with updated statistics on client growth since the beginning of the State of Emergency in March of this year. From April through October 2020, our intake numbers have dropped significantly (whether it be Early Start or under the Lanterman Act). ACRC is averaging 44

new clients per month, instead of 100 clients per month pre-pandemic times. Other regional centers have in fact reported a negative growth rate.

As reported at prior meetings, ACRC has experienced increased support costs in residential, Supported Living Services (SLS), Respite/Personal Attendant (PA) and Independent Living Services (ILS) during the current health crisis.

Without objection, Michelle Rewerts made the motion to accept the monthly finance report as submitted.

◆ *Committee Updates*

- Board Development Committee (BDC)
 - Mr. Mainini shared that the BDC met on November 9th.
 - The group discussed our agency's bylaws. The most recent revisions have been sent to our attorneys.
- Executive Committee
 - Ms. Walker shared that the Executive Committee met on November 9th.
 - The group discussed establishing a new committee – the Legislative, Advocacy & Outreach Committee. They will continue to brainstorm about what this committee's focus will be on.
- Client Advisory Committee (CAC)
 - No update was shared.
- Provider Advisory Committee (PAC)
 - Ms. Ramirez shared that the PAC met on November 12th.
 - The group continued to discuss the impact that COVID-19 has had on client services.
 - Service providers are grateful for ACRC's efforts on distributing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
 - ACRC has had six clients "flip the switch" on the Self-Determination Program (SDP).
 - Mr. Decker's department holds "Coffee with Community Services" on Friday mornings.
 - The group had a healthy discussion about tensions in the provider community. There are growing concerns that some service providers are having face-to-face contact with clients, while DDS seems focused on ways to save day programs. In order to bridge this gap, we need to work together.
 - A new Legislative Subcommittee was established.
 - Ms. Ramirez and Eric Ciampa, the PAC Chair, are developing a survey that will revise the PAC's goals.

- Please contact her if you have suggestions on what the PAC should focus on in the coming years.

◆ *President's Report*

- Ms. Walker acknowledged ACRC staff and service providers for reaching out to clients/families during these difficult times.
- She noted that DDS is hoping that their recent survey is widely distributed. It's important to get people to participate.

◆ *Executive Director's Report*

- Mr. Bonnet shared that we are in a critical period right now. We are seeing rapid increase in infections around the state. At ACRC, we had one positive staff a month ago, now we have nine. 3,750 clients across the state have tested positive for COVID-19, 184 have died. ACRC currently has 186 positive clients, with 14 deaths, and 98 positive direct support professionals (DSPs). Partnering with SCDD, ACRC has distributed six million PPE items.
- Governor Newsom has ordered a curfew from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. beginning on Saturday evening. This is a significant step to help prevent more infections.
- Mr. Bonnet has spent most of today in meetings with DDS. We are working on alternative plans in case residential facilities are hit hard by the virus.
- The Vaccine Task Force for California is working with ACRC's ten counties. Some of our clients/families will be a priority for access to the vaccine, especially those in congregate settings.
- Several years ago, DDS approved the SDP that will be available to all clients age three and over on July 1, 2021. Currently, there are about 400 individuals from across the state who moved forward with this option. There are concerns regarding budget determination issues, but we are making some positive movement with the state to make this less complicated for those that are participating.
 - Many clients/families have chosen not to participate, because they are satisfied with the services they are currently receiving.
- Participant Directed Services (PDS) allows clients to exercise more authority over how, and by whom, services are provided. This option is being offered so that clients can potentially minimize risk/exposure to COVID-19. The only requirement is that clients must utilize a Financial Management Service (FMS).
- After reporting at the last Board meeting that we had 58 new residential beds opening, ACRC now has five care homes that are pending closure. We also have the following new service providers:
 - Pathway to Choices ILS

- Radiant (company which recently purchased several ABA vendors)
- Royal Innovative Solutions SLS
- Miranda Gardens Level 4I (care home with four beds)
- CL Starting Point Children's Specialized Residential Facility (with four beds)
- As Ms. Walker mentioned, Mr. Bonnet would like to encourage clients and family members to complete the survey that is posted on DDS' website.

◆ *ARCA Report*

- Ms. Walker shared the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) Board delegates last met in October and they will be meeting again in January 2021.
- ARCA has focused on involving community partners on voter engagement, how COVID-19 is impacting clients and families, and how regional centers are responding to the current health crisis.
- The ARCA Academy has taken over training for Board members. Four of our members participated in the November 14th training entitled "Boards in the Community". The next training is scheduled for Saturday, December 12th, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. The topic will be "Working Together".

◆ *ARCA-CAC Report*

- Ms. Rewerts shared that the group continues to discuss SDP.
- The next Zoom meeting is scheduled for tomorrow, November 20th, at 10 a.m.

◆ *Correspondence*

- In the Board packets, you will find copies of:
 - Compliance reports for various federal programs; ACRC was in compliance with all.
 - Ms. Walker noted that this is critical because federal monies makes up about 40% of regional center funding statewide.
 - ACRC's Plan of Correction for Caseload Ratio Categories

7. ***Closed Session*** – At 6:05 p.m. the Board adjourned to closed session to discuss legal and personnel issues.

8. ***Announcement of Closed Meeting Discussion*** - At 6:50 p.m. the Board reconvened in open session following a closed session in which legal and personnel issues were discussed.

9. ***Adjournment***

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: Phil Bonnet