

Alta California Regional Center
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, July 22, 2021
Minutes

Present: Carmen Aguilar, Jackie Armstrong, Johnny Deng, Romilda Jones, Ron Mainini, Kelly Pennington, Michelle Ramirez, Michelle Rewerts, Steven Sanchez, Anwar Safvi, Retha Seabron, Yang Sun, Rita Walker, Patty Wallace

Staff: Lori Banales, Iqbal Ahmad, Jennifer Bloom, Tracy Brown, John Decker, DeLayna Eskridge-Brown, Camelia Houston, Rebecca Johnson, David Lopez, Wyatt Stroman, Lisa West

Facilitators: Amy Fulk

Visitors: Steve Andrews, Maureen Fitzgerald, Dan Lake, Amy Lampe, Peter Mendoza, Maxine Milam, Karen Mulvany, Kimberly Smalley

1. **Call to Order – Reading of ACRC’s Mission & Vision** - The Board of Directors met at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 22, 2021, by Webex/teleconference. Ms. Armstrong read aloud ACRC’s Mission and Vision.

2. **Training – “Clients Rights Advocacy”**

- David Lopez, ACRC’s Client Advocate, gave a presentation entitled “The Client Advocate Role at Alta California Regional Center”.

3. **Community Comments/Announcements**

- ◆ Mr. Mendoza, with the State Council on Developmental Services (SDCC), noted that his parents were instrumental in the passing of the Lanterman Act. He welcomed Ms. Banales as ACRC’s new Executive Director. Mr. Mendoza shared that following:
 - SCDD is collaborating with ACRC on several initiatives.
 - The rollout of the Self-Determination Program (SDP).
 - The Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) workgroup helps educate clients, families and community members how to enter into CIE.
 - CalABLE – assists clients and families in understanding this opportunity, which allows people with disabilities to save money without affecting their Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
 - SCDD is holding a conference on Friday, August 6th, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., with a keynote speaker at 9 a.m. followed by a provider discussion.
 - The California Business Advisory Council and SCDD will be holding a virtual job fare on Tuesday, August 24th.

- ◆ Ms. Mulvany sits on the Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SDAC), as well as other subcommittees. She and Benita Ayala have been working closely with ACRC to streamline the process for those interested in SDP.
 - ACRC assisted with promoting a SDAC/Service Provider Ad-Hoc workgroup, which helps providers learn more about this program; they meet every other week.

4. **Consent Agenda** – **By consensus, the following consent agenda items were approved: a) regular session Board meeting minutes of May 27, 2021; and b) Board Development, Client Advisory Committee (CAC), Executive, Finance and Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) minutes.**

5. **New Business**

- ◆ New Board Member Applicants

Discussion and Action: The Board Development Committee (BDC) is recommending Dan Lake and Amy Lampe for Board membership.

Without objection, Ron Mainini made the motion to approve Dan Lake and Amy Lampe for Board membership.

- ◆ CAC Member Applicants

Discussion and Action: The CAC is recommending Barbara Crow and Jacie Oakley for CAC membership.

Without objection, Jackie Armstrong made the motion to approve Barbara Crow and Jacie Oakley for CAC membership.

- ◆ Annual PAC Representative's Conflict of Interest (COI) Mitigation Plan

Discussion and Action: Ms. Walker shared that every year Board members fill out COI forms. Inherently, the PAC representative has a conflict, but sometimes the individual has another conflict that needs to be mitigated. Michelle Ramirez is now serving as the California Disability Services Association's (CDSA's) President, which needs to be disclosed to SCDD and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS).

Ms. Ramirez's mitigation plan reflects this conflict.

Without objection, Ron Mainini made the motion to approve Michelle Ramirez's mitigation plan as presented.

◆ September Board Meeting

Discussion and Action: Mr. Safvi shared that the September 23rd Board Retreat/Training schedule has been finalized. The BDC recommends that the Board meeting's start time be moved to 3 p.m. that day.

Without objection, Romilda Jones made the motion to move the September Board meeting start time to 3 p.m.

◆ *Committee Updates*

• CAC

- Ms. Wallace shared that the CAC met on July 13th and June 8th.
 - The group continues to talk about the importance of the COVID vaccine.
 - At the July meeting, Ms. Banales and Mr. Decker shared information about ACRC's initiative on "Coordinated Future Planning".
 - At the June meeting, the group received a presentation from the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) entitled "Understanding Fraud".

• PAC

- Ms. Ramirez shared that the PAC met on July 8th and June 10th.
 - The July meeting was Ms. Banales' first meeting as ACRC's Executive Director, so the group provided ample time for her to introduce herself.
 - They discussed the increasing number of COVID-19 positive cases; seven direct support professionals (DSPs) tested positive from one Supported Living Services (SLS) agency.
 - ACRC is putting together a taskforce that will be looking at caregiver succession planning. There are a lot of factors that can affect a client when someone passes or is no longer able to be the primary caregiver.
 - The group discussed the state's budget; a lot of funding is coming into our statewide service system.
 - The PAC is reorganizing their subcommittees/workgroups.
 - Mr. Decker created a "cheat sheet" on who to contact – Community Services Specialist (CSS) versus Service Coordinator (SC)/Client Services Manager (CSM).
 - The Vendor Relations Subcommittee is interested in developing a service provider agreement, similar to North Bay Regional Center (NBRC).
 - Robin Rhoades, a long-time PAC member, will be retiring in November and is recommending her staff, Kate

Hackley, to replace her. The group will act on this nomination at the September PAC meeting.

◆ *President's Report*

- Ms. Walker read aloud the committee assignments for the current fiscal year.
 - The new Strategic Planning Committee will be chaired by Ron Mainini.
- It's time to submit the annual Board Composition Survey to DDS. Ms. West will be doing this in mid-August.
- Today is Romilda Jones' last Board meeting. We will be mailing her a plaque acknowledging her last seven years on the Board.

◆ *Executive Director's Report*

- Ms. Banales is happy to be ACRC's new Executive Director.
 - She requested that Board members continue to let her know what they would like her to report on.
- Ms. Banales has selected Mechelle Johnson as ACRC's Director of Client Services. She started in this position this last Monday and has a wealth of knowledge and experience in our service system.
- The state's budget has been signed. We are waiting on some guidance from DDS on implementation. This is critical for our staff as they continue to have meaningful conversations with clients and families.
 - Provisional eligibility extends the safety net and creates an opportunity for children that have delays, with no diagnosis, to receive regional center services. Regional centers will place these clients into provisional status under the Lanterman Act, and support them from ages 3 to 4.9 and then a full assessment will be conducted to determine continued eligibility or a soft handoff to school districts.
 - More information will be provided by DDS so that regional centers will implement this consistently throughout the state.
 - Additional SC positions – 851 SCs are needed to get our statewide system into compliance with the mandated caseload ratios.
 - The allocation funding for these positions will be determined based on previous allocation formulas. ACRC should receive approximately 45 to 55 SC positions beginning 2022-23 fiscal year (FY).
 - DDS is allowing regional centers to plan for these positions and Ms. Banales' team will be reviewing data to implement the best outcomes for clients/families.

- Regional centers will receive funding for a disaster preparedness specialist; ACRC will be posting the position tomorrow.
 - This individual will need a specific skillset, which includes crisis intervention and quality assurance.
 - The department provided critical information so that regional centers could develop a comprehensive job description.
- Each regional center will also receive funding for a Deaf Specialist, who will assist with developing resources to support the community and consult at Planning Team Meetings (PTMs). ACRC will be posting the position within the next few weeks.
- The 2021-22 FY budget will continue to fund caseloads with a 1:25 ratio, which provide concentrated case management for clients for one year to 18 months.
- In this year's budget, regional centers will receive funding for case management for caseloads with a 1:40 ratio enhanced case management.
 - Five positions have been allocated to ACRC. The caseload focus is for mono-lingual, non-English speaking, clients with no Purchase of Service (POS).
 - ACRC currently has 728 clients that meet these criteria.
 - Staff will determine where these individuals are served throughout our catchment area.
 - This new funding and concept of enhanced providing caseload management to mono-lingual, non-English speaking, clients with no POS, is based on a successful pilot project out of East Los Angeles Regional Center (ELARC) that was originally funded through a disparity grant.
- Regional centers will receive funding for Participant Choice Specialist/Navigator positions. These non-case carrying staff will assist Planning Teams in transitioning clients into SDP, as well as providing information related to Participant Directed Services (PDS), if that service option suits the client better.
 - ACRC will be allocated two to four of these positions.
- ACRC currently has 31 vacancies, most of those SC positions. One idea that Ms. Banales put forward was to brainstorm with current staff about retention and recruitment. We have learned that our Student Intern Program helps expose interested individuals to our organization and the clients that we serve. She would like to grow that program.

- DDS is currently looking at the model for the Adult Residential Facilities for Persons with Special Health Care Needs (ARFPSHNs) and will be developing a similar service options for children (Group Homes for Children with Special Health Care Needs [GHCSHNs]). Ms. Banales believes ACRC will be asked to develop one of these.
- AB 2083 has directed regional centers to collaborate across systems to create seamless services and supports to children and youth identified in the child welfare system. Child welfare, behavioral health, education and regional centers are to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). ACRC is in collaboration with our ten counties.
- As of last night, we have had one additional individual that has fully transitioned to the SDP; it took 21 days for our team to go through the process. ACRC currently have 13 clients in the SDP. Ms. Banales shared that staff learned a lot with this last one and changed some of our systems to assist moving forward with additional individuals. 214 clients/families have completed the orientation and are ready and primed to move forward; an additional 290 individuals have expressed an ongoing interest in moving to SDP. Ms. Banales noted that partnering with our SDAC has been helpful. The group will be meeting monthly, instead of every other month.
 - DDS has allowed ACRC to fund Person-Centered Plans so that clients can transition into SDP. The criteria remain the same – a maximum of \$2,500. This has been a tremendous bridge for our community. We are learning so much as we move forward. This is all for the betterment of the community.
- The Board has requested updates on open and closed programs since the last Board meeting. The following are newly vended services:
 - Advanced Kids Inc. dba Kala House Jr. – Crisis Services
 - KV's Non-Emergency Transportation Services
 - Ascent Diagnostics Services * Supports – Behavior Intervention
 - TK Momentum – Supported Employment Services
 - Emma & Joyce Diala Unique Home – Level 4I in Sacramento
 - Speech Easy – Speech and Language Therapy
 - Ro Health – Home Health

Closed vendors:

- Marlynn Nelson Care Home – Level 3
- Progressive Therapy Clinic – Physical Therapy
- Summer Glen Haven LLC – Level 4C
- Preventative Approach – Special Therapeutic Services
- Love's Care Home – Level 3

- Placer ARC – Day Program
 - When staff met with licensing, they learned that Placer ARC gave up their site a year ago, which meant that they forfeited their license with CCL. ACRC staff have successfully transitioned these clients to another program with the same provider.

Change of Ownership:

- Strategies to Empower People dba STEP – company initiated an employee stock ownership plan (ESOP), which gives workers ownership interest in the company.
- REM California LLC (a subsidiary of Mentor) acquired the Aacres California Homes, including three in Sacramento.
- Ms. Banales noted that all of us have concerns about the Delta variant. Those individuals that are not vaccinated are most at risk for infection. ACRC has seen an uptick in positive cases for clients and DSPs. Those clients that were vaccinated were asymptomatic. Four clients were hospitalized and two of them have passed away. She wants to make sure each client has all of the information to make an informed decision. ACRC has the capability of getting in-home vaccinations throughout our catchment area.
 - ACRC currently has 43.9% of all of the eligible clients vaccinated; 17,337 clients are eligible – 7,610 clients have been vaccinated, 3,179 clients have declined with an additional 1,623 declining to share their information.
 - We do not have the ability to track DSP vaccinations.
 - Currently, 70% of ACRC staff have been vaccinated. We have been thoughtful in our process of bringing staff back into the office. We are going to engage with our Union so that we continue to make thoughtful decisions moving forward.
- Mr. Decker recently sent out a survey to our day program providers. As of June 21st, day programs have brought back in-person services at 25% for each day of the week. Planning for August, most day programs will be at 40 to 44%. This steady increase in numbers reflects the need to meet our clients' choice to receive in-person services.
- On June 21st, the building construction was completed for our long-awaited dental clinic. The Fire Marshall requested some modifications prior to the building permit approval. The equipment and dentists are ready. As soon as they receive clearance, they will do a soft-opening.

◆ *ARCA Report*

- Over the past year, ARCA has been focusing on education, advocacy and state budget issues, while collaborating with community partners. Their Annual Report highlights their major projects and achievements. Ms. West will forward this to Board members.
- There are still a number of open implementation issues and questions about the new programs and initiatives included in the 2021-22 FY state budget.
- Recently, ARCA surveyed Board members across the state about day preference and time for future ARCA Web Academies.
 - The next Web Academy for regional center Board members is scheduled for Tuesday, September 14th, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The topic will be "How services and supports meet the needs of infants and toddlers."

◆ *ARCA-CAC Report*

- The group met in June and each member gave a report on their regional center. They received a short presentation on an efficacy toolkit for advocates, which puts the person first versus their disability.

◆ *Correspondence*

- Under Tab 8 and 9 of the Board packet, please find information about the annual conflict of interest reporting statements for Board members, as well as regional center's Medi-Cal Provider Enrollment Requirements.
 - Ms. Walker has asked Ms. Banales to assist the Board with informing any interested individual about this requirement prior to them completing a Board member application.

6. **Closed Session** – At 5:59 p.m. the Board adjourned to closed session to discuss personnel issues.

7. **Announcement of Closed Meeting Discussion** - At 6:12 p.m. the Board reconvened in open session following a closed session in which personnel issues were discussed.

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: Lori Banales