

Alta California Regional Center
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, July 23, 2026
Minutes

Present: Jackie Armstrong, EunMi Cho, Johnny Deng, Lindsey Dyba, Dan Lake, Amy Lampe, Amanda Parker, Kelly Pennington, Steven Sanchez, Terri Scheufele

Absent (* excused): Carmen Aguilar*, Akkia Pride-Polk*, Anwar Safvi*, Ceasar Seabron

Staff: Lori Banales, Iqbal Ahmad, Jennifer Bloom, Tracy Brown, Candice Calero, Thalia Castro-Vega, John Decker, Jon Horbaly, Camelia Houston, Mechelle Johnson, Jaspreet Mann, Faye McKenzie, Ryan Patchin, Lisa West

Facilitators: Amy Fulk, Naomi Smith

Visitors: Mikhaal Ahmad, Mizaan Ahmad, Steve Andrews, Sarah Anthony, Katelyn Cook, Dawn Dingman, Maureen Fitzgerald, Amber Hauck, Mary Ann Hauck, Patricia Kamlley, Emili Lua

1. **Call to Order – Reading of ACRC’s Mission & Vision** – The Board of Directors met at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 23, 2026. Ms. Parker read aloud ACRC’s Mission and Vision (**this took place prior to the CAC Update*).
2. **Meeting Our Mission** (**this took place after New Business – Finance Committee*)
 - ♦ Ms. Bloom introduced Mary Ann and Amber Hauck, mother and ACRC client, as well as Amber’s Service Coordinator (SC), Candice Calero. Ms. Bloom praised Ms. Calero for her expertise in navigating the Durable Medical Equipment (DME) process. Through the installation of a ceiling track system, the use of slings and a bathroom modification, Amber can navigate her home with greater independence and safety.
 - Ms. Hauck is grateful to ACRC – she is now able to assist Amber without worry. She also praised Ms. Calero, who is very responsive and understanding.
3. **Community Comments/Announcements**
 - ♦ No comments were shared.
4. **Consent Agenda** – **By consensus, the following consent agenda items were approved: a) excused absences of Carmen Aguilar, Akkia Pride-Polk and Anwar Safvi; b) regular session Board meeting minutes of May 28, 2026; and c) Board Development Committee (BDC), Client Advisory Committee (CAC), Executive Committee, Finance Committee, and Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) minutes.**

5. **New Business**

♦ *Finance Committee*

Issue 1: Monthly Financial Report

Discussion and Action: Mr. Ahmad shared that regional centers received their first allocations from the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), which equates to approximately 80% of their budgets.

Mr. Ahmad commends ACRC's Accounting Department for their dedication and hard work as they just closed out the 2025-26 fiscal year (FY). Staff are currently working on Quality Incentive Program (QIP) payments which are tied to the state's rate reform. 63% of ACRC's service providers are at the full benchmark rate.

- **Information only**

Issue 2: Independent Auditor

At the June Finance Committee meeting, Mr. Ahmad noted that ACRC can engage Paul Stroub, from Devant Certified Public Accountants (CPAs), to complete our independent audit. ACRC will need to rotate auditors after the fifth year. Devant's bid came in at \$63,500.

M/S/C (Deng/Lampe) To engage Devant CPAs for ACRC's independent audit.

♦ *Committee Updates*

- CAC

- Ms. Parker shared that the CAC met on July 14th.
 - Ms. Banales gave an update on the Trailer Bill Language (TBL) related to Regional Center Oversight as it relates to the CAC.
 - Michelle Rewerts, a former CAC and Board member, shared a presentation entitled "My Disability and The Person Behind It".
 - The CAC will be holding an Open House on Tuesday, October 13th, prior to the CAC meeting.
 - Five volunteers will meet at ACRC on Tuesday, August 11th, and participate in a roundtable discussion: regardless of their disabilities, they live full and active lives. This will be filmed and posted on the CAC's page on ACRC's website.

- PAC
 - Ms. Dyba shared that the PAC met on June 11th and July 9th.
 - In June:
 - Mr. Ahmad presented on the current Purchase of Services (POS) process and the new pilot system. This will be rolling out to all service providers this winter.
 - ACRC staff shared a presentation on the Self-Determination Program (SDP) and All's Well shared another about the Direct Support Professionals (DSP) Internship Program.
 - The Northern CA Workforce Summit was held at the end of May and provided a wonderful opportunity to build support amongst service providers and to advance the initiative to professionalize the disability workforce.
 - Beza Admassu was voted onto the PAC to replace Laleh Sharpe, both from Maxim Healthcare.
 - In July:
 - ACRC staff provided updates on Day Program Rate Reform.
 - The group discussed services to recruit high-level leaders.
 - The Vendor Relations Committee plans to survey the broader service provider community to gather topics that the committee can address.
 - The Resource Development Policy Workgroup met and will continue to discuss the policy.
 - A grand jury recently made recommendations to SacRT regarding access to transportation.

♦ *President's Report*

- Mr. Lake expressed appreciation to all in attendance and welcomed Ms. Parker and Ms. Dyba to the Board.

♦ *Executive Director's Report*

- Ms. Banales believes it is critical to highlight the good that is happening across our service system. Taking time in a public setting is valuable. We need to ensure that we do not lose sight of the critical services that individuals receive every day and how these services promote independence and safety.
- On July 14th, DDS released the Directive regarding the TBL, which provides some guidance on implementation, but most of the document refers to future implementation guidance.

- Related to Board of Directors governance: DDS to develop the curriculum for the Board training.
- Within the proposed TBL, there were three items that were deferred to the August legislative hearings:
 - The needs assessment which will require input from the community.
 - The department is seeking to operationally define substantial disability. These definitions will support standardization across the state with eligibility.
 - Combining the Community Placement Plan (CPP) with the Community Resource Development Plan (CRDP).
- The Assembly Subcommittee #2 Hearing is scheduled for August 5th. The Senate Subcommittee #3 Hearing is likely to be on August 12th or 13th. Both hearings will provide an opportunity for public comments.
- Disability Pride Month is celebrated every July, to commemorate the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The 2026 theme is "The World Works Better With Us."
 - ACRC has participated in several outreach events, and Ben, an abstract and geometric artist, is highlighted on our agency's website.
- DDS requested that ACRC arrange two visits for new members of their Early Start Appeals and Complaints team so that they could learn about Early Start services. These visits are scheduled for tomorrow, where they will attend two home visits and observe an annual Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and speech therapy session and an intake.
- Ms. Bloom and Ms. McKenzie saw a need to create an informal Early Start Quarterly Newsletter, which is a new way to share information and highlight the service areas in need with our Early Start service providers.
 - This newsletter will be shared with the Board.
- Registration opens on August 1st for the MIND Institute's Conference, Aprendiendo Juntos 2026, which will be held entirely in Spanish on Saturday, September 19th. ACRC has vendored this conference and we are sharing this information with our Community-Based Organizations (CBOs).
- ACRC has developed a Post Social Assessment Guide, which reminds applicants/families about what is needed to support the Intake process. This is provided to the applicant/family after the Social Assessment is completed.
- Effective August 1st, DDS is requiring regional centers to provide a Post Intake Survey to everyone that goes through the Intake process, regardless of eligibility determination.

- Ms. Houston noted that we are working to link this to Atlas so that it can automatically be sent out to individuals.
 - This survey is available in 19 languages; it will be sent out per the individual's identified primary language.
 - The intent of the data that DDS is gathering is to assist with the Intake Standardization Process.
- Mr. Decker provided an overview of ACRC's Ray-Ban Meta Supported Employment Pilot. This six-month pilot was set up to test the use of Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses as a job-coaching and workplace-support tool for up to ten individuals with developmental disabilities.
 - ACRC received a small grant and chose to work with Odyssey Life Center on this employment pilot project. The goal was to explore how wearable artificial intelligence (AI) technology can enhance on-the-job independence, task completion, safety and communication. ACRC staff are finalizing the draft project findings and will be presenting the information, along with DDS, at the October Supported Life Conference.
 - Odyssey Life Center would like to expand this opportunity to 40 individuals.
 - We have established a relationship with Meta. When the state releases their assistive technology guidance, this information will be included. Mr. Decker is thankful that ACRC was able to steer Meta to the developmentally disabled population. He has been invited to speak at Meta's AI Glasses Impact Grant Celebration & Community Summit in New York City from July 27th to 29th. He noted that job coaches have the ability to look through the client's Meta glasses and see what they are seeing. This is all emerging opportunities – we are all learning what these glasses can assist with.
 - Ms. Banales shared that everything that we do helps build opportunities for those that we serve. Employment is an area that continues to be a focus for our agency.
- For the past four years, DDS has awarded ACRC Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) grants, which create opportunities for service providers to expand accessibility to those served.
 - The DSP Collaborative is being expanded to all 21 regional centers.
- On Wednesday, July 29th, ACRC is holding backpack giveaways at all our offices, from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. We have 1,000 backpacks donated by Aveanna Healthcare.
 - Registration is required – we currently have 700 individuals registered.

♦ *ARCA-CAC Rep. Report*

- Ms. Lampe shared that the group is meeting tomorrow, July 24th, from 10:30 to noon via Zoom.

♦ *ARCA Delegate Report*

- Ms. Pennington shared that the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) is holding their next ARCA Academy on September 25th & 26th, in Torrance.
- Elections were held and Ms. Pennington is serving as the Delegates Chair for her third and final year.
- The August meetings will be held in Torrance.

6. ***Closed Session*** – At 6:07 p.m. the Board adjourned to closed session to discuss legal and personnel issues.

7. ***Announcement of Closed Meeting Discussion*** - At 7:24 p.m. the Board reconvened in open session following a closed session in which legal and personnel issues were discussed.

8. ***Adjournment***

The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: Lori Banales