*Approved 11/19/26

Alta California Regional Center
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, September 24, 2026
Minutes

Present: Carmen Aguilar, Jackie Armstrong, EunMi Cho, Johnny Deng, Lindsey Dyba, Dan Lake, Amy Lampe, Amanda Parker, Kelly Pennington, Akkia Pride-Polk, Anwar Safvi, Terri Scheufele

Absent (* excused): Steven Sanchez*, Ceasar Seabron

Staff: Lori Banales, Iqbal Ahmad, Jennifer Bloom, Tracy Brown, Tobi Chavez, John Decker, Jeavan Dhesi, Ciara Green, Jon Horbaly, Zach Horch, Camelia Houston, Kenisha Hurd, Mechelle Johnson, Tim Kuwazaki, Noemi Lira, Rowena Lopez, Jaspreet Mann, Jessica Markov, Faye McKenzie, Valarie Oldham, Ryan Patchin, Jyoti Sharma, Lisa Stewart, Icey Tinoco, Carol Wilhelm, Lisa West

Facilitators: Amy Fulk, Naomi Smith

Visitors: Julian Alferez, Jaclyn Balanay, Taylor Berry, Kim Christensen, Natalie Cooper, Maureen Fitzgerald, Artelias Guyton, Love Guyton, Malcolm Johnson, Shanita Jones, Abigail Lira, Maria Lira, Emili Lua, Shannon Mendez, Alfonso Tinoco, Marta Tinoco, Kim Zehring

1. ***Call to Order – Reading of ACRC's Mission & Vision*** – The Board of Directors met at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 24, 2026. Ms. Aguilar read aloud ACRC's Mission and Vision.

2. ***Staff Recognitions***
   - Ms. Banales shared that three times per year, the Board allows time to celebrate staff in a community setting. All joined our team at different times in various positions, but they all are dedicated to the Mission of our agency and the clients that ACRC serves. She introduced Ciara Green, ACRC Human Resources Generalist, who had the honor of introducing the following:
     - Recognizing five years of service: Zach Horch, Lisa Stewart, Icey Tinoco
     - Recognizing ten years of service: Noemi Lira, Rowena Lopez
     - Recognizing 15 years of service: Iqbal Ahmad, Tim Kuwazaki
     - Recognizing 20 years of service: Toby Chavez, Valarie Oldham, Jyoti Sharma
     - Recognizing 30 years of service: Jas Mann

3. ***Community Comments/Announcements***
   - Ms. Zehring's child has been in the Self-Determination Plan (SDP) for a little over a year. She is frustrated with delays in getting the budget and spending

plan approved. The process feels like it has become more complicated. They chose SDP because they understood that this program had greater flexibility and more choice. She understands that ACRC needs to follow requirements/ guidelines and hopes that processes can be streamlined and be more supportive of the flexibility that SDP is supposed to offer.

- Ms. Cooper, parent and Independent Facilitator (IF), noted the delays and barriers continue, and the process has become harder. She believes Participant Choice Specialists (PCS) should work directly with SDP clients. ACRC's current process puts strain on staff; both clients and families are hurting under the current structure. She requests the Board reinstate the previous structure and assign a unit dedicated solely to SDP participants.

4. ***Consent Agenda*** – **By consensus, the following consent agenda items were approved: a) excused absences of Steven Sanchez; b) regular session Board meeting minutes of July 23, 2026; and c) Client Advisory Committee (CAC), Executive Committee [2026-27 Board Committee Assignments], Finance Committee, and Provider Advisory Committee (PAC) minutes.**

5. ***New Business***
   - *Approve Conflict of Interest Mitigation Plan for Jackie Armstrong*
     - Mr. Lake noted that the mitigation plan for Ms. Armstrong is under Tab 7 of the Board packet and was sent to the Board by the Executive Committee. He read aloud the mitigation plan.

     M/S/C (Safvi/Cho) To approve Ms. Armstrong's Conflict of Interest Mitigation Plan as presented.

   - *Finance Committee*
     Issue: Monthly Financial Report

     Discussion and Action: Mr. Ahmad noted that the minutes from the last Finance Committee meeting are under Tab 5 of the Board packet, and the financial report is under Tab 8.

     ACRC's budget for this fiscal year (FY) is $1.1 billion; 90% of which is for Purchase of Services (POS). We will have at least two more amendments from the Department of Developmental Services (DDS).

     Mr. Ahmad will keep the department informed of his projections.

     M/S/C (Pride-Polk/Armstrong) To accept the monthly financial report as submitted.

- *Committee Updates*
  - CAC
    - Ms. Parker shared that the CAC met on September 8th.
      - Ms. Banales reminded CAC members to complete the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) survey which asks their opinion on terms that are acceptable to use when referring to a group of people with developmental disabilities. The CAC had decided years ago that they preferred "clients".
      - Sharon Kurpinsky, ACRC's Victim Advocate, shared a presentation on "Abuse Prevention and Safety".
      - The CAC is holding an Open House on Tuesday, October 13th, prior to the CAC meeting.
  - PAC
    - Ms. Dyba shared that the PAC met on September 10th.
      - Two representatives from the Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, shared a presentation about the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and their Payroll Audit Independent Determination (PAID) program, which is free to service providers who meet eligibility requirements.
      - The PAC Chair reviewed PAC membership attendance requirements and noted that there is an exception waiver, if needed.
      - On July 23rd, ACRC held a Day Services vendor forum.
      - In November, ACRC is sponsoring a half-day Person-Centered Planning Training for service providers with Kirk Hinkleman from Life Works.
      - The California Community Living Network (CCLN) is working with the Department of Finance on the Medi-Cal tax, which will affect any employer who has 250+ employees, that includes employees who receive Medi-Cal. Employers would be charged an annual penalty. They are working for solutions for the provider industry.
      - AB 2414 is on the Governor's desk waiting for his signature. This bill would standardize the direct support professional (DSP) definition in code.
      - A member shared information on the DDS webinar on the updated respite tool. The department is extending their pilot for more accuracy before it gets rolled out.
      - A group met with DDS to discuss access alignment and the Department of Rehabilitation's (DOR's) order of selection notification. DOR is now putting people on

waiting lists, including people with the most support needs.

- *President's Report*
  - Mr. Lake expressed appreciation for everyone in attendance today.
  - The October 5th committee meetings are cancelled.
  - The Board Retreat is scheduled for Saturday, October 17th. If you cannot attend, please inform Ms. West.
  - Today we celebrate Carmen Aguilar – she started on the Board at a haunted hotel in Placerville seven years ago.
    - Ms. Aguilar shared that it has been an honor and a privilege to serve an agency that is so important to herself and her family.
      - To Mr. Lake and Ms. Pennington – thank you for your leadership and dedication.
      - To Ms. Banales – with more than 30 years of service to those we serve and her continued leadership.
      - To Mr. Ahmad – for helping the Board understand regional center finances/budgets.
      - To Ms. West – for the support she offers to every Board member.
      - To ACRC's Leadership Team, Mr. Decker, Ms. Houston, Ms. Bloom and Ms. Johnson – for their leadership and guidance they provide to staff.
      - To each Service Coordinator (SC) for giving of themselves every day. And a special note for Jordan Saragoza, her son's SC.
      - To fellow Board members – getting to know each of you and learn from your experiences. Even though we come from different backgrounds, we share the same goals.
      - She encouraged members of our community to consider serving on the Board. Your voice and your experiences matter, and you can help shape the services for those individuals that ACRC serves.

- *Executive Director's Report*
  - Ms. Banales expressed appreciation to Ms. Aguilar for her years of service to the ACRC Board of Directors.
  - On September 14th, the Executive Committee acted on behalf of the full Board to approve ACRC's revised Resource Development Policy. ACRC staff worked with a designated workgroup formed by the PAC and came to a mutual understanding on the indemnification language. The day after the approval, staff started the process of implementing the changes.

    - Ms. Banales expressed appreciation to the Board and PAC for their continued efforts in this matter.
- Given the number of strategies that we have implemented over the last two and a half years, Ms. Banales is happy to report that we are processing all applications within the required Intake timelines that have been submitted as of May 2026. She noted that we still have a small list of applicants that need testing for a differential diagnosis; 1) individuals who have received their testing and will have an expedited eligibility review, and 2) individuals who still require additional testing (this number was in the thousands). Ms. Banales remains hopeful that we will continue to make strides, eliminating the backlog soon. The other variable that we have no control over is the number of individuals that are coming through our doors. Our online process allows for interested individuals to apply seven days a week at any time. This supports access and increases the number of applications.
- As she shared at the September 14th Executive Committee meeting, ACRC has received several complaints about our Self-Determination Program (SDP) process. Our intention is to reduce community and staff frustration through thoughtful consideration of process. The frustration in the community has added to intense discussions at the Planning Team that have been unproductive for both parties. We are making changes to support positive measures going forward. We are in the process of hiring another SDP Manager. Kenisha Hurd is focusing her attention on the SDP. Amy Silva has been promoted from a Children's Client Services Manager to an Associate Director. ACRC will continue to modify/streamline our processes. Ms. Banales has invited DDS to an internal discussion to review DDS Directives and procedures. She hears the concerns and is doing what she can to have ACRC staff move towards a more streamlined process. Ms. Banales would like to partner with community members in upcoming training.
    - Ms. Banales appreciates the community members that expressed their concerns today.
- Mr. Decker shared that the Sac Bee recently published an article indicating that ACRC has partnered with EAH Housing on a North Natomas affordable housing project. Although regional center funding is not being used, there will be a number of set aside units for ACRC clients.
- The City of Davis's Willowgrove housing project will have 20 set aside units for ACRC clients. This will be at no cost to the state; the city included this in their plans.

- DDS is currently requesting stakeholder comments on the priorities included in the FY 2026-27 Community Resource Development Plan (CRDP) Guidelines.
- Ms. Banales shared that Dr. Lou Vismara, a long-time supporter of our service system, is always looking for ways to enhance housing and employment opportunities for regional center clients. He and Angelo Tsakopoulos are partnering with Sac State University and their SUCCEED Program. Various departments across the university would have a placement for Paid Internship Program (PIP) for clients. ACRC would fund job-coaching. Ms. Banales noted that there are a lot of opportunities and diversity across the university.
- Ms. Houston shared that the MIND Institute's International Training Program in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities reached out to ACRC to see if we would host a visit of clinicians from other countries, as we have done in the past. Last Friday, we hosted a Developmental Pediatrician and her student intern from Thailand. They were interested in learning about our Intake process and had the opportunity to observe a social assessment.
- At the November 19th Board Meeting, we will be reviewing the National Core Indicators (NCI) and year-end Performance Measures data. Regional centers are required, in statute, to share this information during an open meeting. ACRC will notify the public 30 days in advance.

♦ *ARCA-CAC Rep. Report*
- The group met on September 18th and discussed the Trailer Bill Language (TBL).
- A special call meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 28th, at 12 noon via Zoom.
- The group will also be meeting on Friday, October 30th, from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon.

♦ *ARCA Delegate Report*
- The ARCA Academy is scheduled for tomorrow evening and Saturday at Harbor Regional Center. Several ACRC Board members will be in attendance, along with Ms. Banales and Ms. Bloom.
- The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 16th.

6. ***Adjournment***
The meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: Lori Banales