

Alta California Regional Center
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, July 25, 2019
Minutes

Present: Jackie Armstrong, Eric Ciampa, Dan Lake, Amy Lampe, Paul Platner, Michelle Rewerts, Anwar Safvi, Steven Sanchez, Retha Seabron, Rita Walker

Absent (* excused): Romilda Jones, Yang Sun*, Austin Taylor

Staff: Phil Bonnet, Iqbal Ahmad, Lori Banales, Jennifer Bloom, Jennifer Crick, John Decker, Camelia Houston, Paul Hughes, Mechelle Johnson, Jason Lindo, David Lopez, Juliana Margil, Lisa West

Facilitators: Amy Fulk

Visitors: Sonya Bingaman, Melissa Kelly, Ron Mainini, Kidada Medina, Luis Rivera

1. **Call to Order** - The Board of Directors met at 4:02 p.m. on Thursday, July 25, 2019, at ACRC's main office in Sacramento.
2. **Introductions – Reading of ACRC's Mission & Vision** - All present introduced themselves. Ms. Armstrong read aloud ACRC's Mission and Vision.
3. **Consent Agenda – By consensus, the following consent agenda items were approved: a) excused absences for Yang Sun; b) regular session Board meeting minutes of May 23, 2019; c) CAC report (new member) ; d) PAC report (new member); and e) accept Board Development, Executive and Finance reports.**
4. **New Business**
 - ◆ *Community Comments*
 - Ms. Bingaman distributed copies of the community input that she collected regarding the caseload sizes at ACRC and reviewed some of the suggestions.
 - The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) received a grant to conduct trainings for self-advocates and parents/support staff. The trainings will help individuals know how to interact with police officers, as well as what to do in a crisis situation. Interested individuals should register online.
 - ◆ *Board Development Committee*

Issue: Approve New Board Members

Discussion and Action: Mr. Lake shared that the Board Development Committee (BDC) interviewed Ron Mainini and Luis Rivera earlier this month.

They both shared a brief introduction of themselves. The BDC is recommending them for Board membership.

M/S/C (Jackie Armstrong) **To approve Ron Mainini and Luis Rivera for Board membership.** (10 in favor)

◆ *ACRC Caseload Ratios – Public Input*

- On March 1st, regional centers are required to report their caseload ratios to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). ACRC must submit its plan of correction for not meeting two of the six mandated caseload ratios – “Medicaid Waiver” and “All others”.
- Mr. Bonnet believes it’s important to note that each month, ACRC grows by nearly two whole caseloads. In addition to that, the agency continues to provide competitive wages and benefits to support and retain our staff.
- DDS continues to fund regional centers based upon the core staffing formula which was created in the late 1970’s. This formula lays out all of the positions of the regional center; from the Executive Director on down to the Service Coordinators (SCs), Office Assistants (OAs) and Finance Department. It has been at least a decade since the last revision to include cost of living increases, etc. While Mr. Bonnet agrees that the rates that we pay our service providers are critical, he believes that we must maintain the staff to do the much needed service coordination that clients and families rely on every day.
- Mr. Bonnet continues to believe that our statewide system needs more support. ACRC loses staff to state agencies every month, while there has been a surplus of job openings at other agencies across the state, as well as the nation. We need more funding to keep the staff that we have, as well as to hire additional staff.
- Decades ago, Operations (OPS) was about 15% of the regional center’s budget. Today, 92% goes towards Purchase of Services (POS), while 8% funds OPS.
- To make the mandated caseload ratios, ACRC would need an additional 30 SCs, along with the already 30 SC positions that we are currently hiring for just for the growth in our number of clients.
- ACRC has a six-month “introductory” period so that we can make sure our new employees fit our agency’s needs.
- All of the regional centers were part of the push for rate increases for our service providers. Most will be receiving up to an 8.2% increase on January 1, 2020.
- Mr. Bonnet will ask for the department to relook at the core staff formula. We need an honest representation of what it costs to run a regional center.

- Mr. Bonnet will review the input that SCDD provided today and he requested additional input from the public, which included:
 - Additional funding.
 - Keep in mind the needs of the clients and the demands on the SCs time when a client's needs change.
 - Worth noting is the much needed development of resources for families who need placement for their loved ones.
 - Look at the Supervisory support that staff receive – this doesn't address the fundamental problem, but it would be helpful.
 - SCs are the heart of the regional center. This is why we are here. The balancing act that the regional center has to do is incredible.
 - The core staffing formula does not provide for the additional positions that regional centers need to fill as the needs of the system changes.
 - Providers will join with ACRC to ask that DDS look at the core staffing formula.
 - It's important to note the number of families that have the capacity to care for their loved ones. If that changes, our system could possibly quadruple in size.

◆ *Finance Committee*

Issue 1: Monthly Financial Report

Discussion and Action: Mr. Ahmad shared that the Finance Committee met on July 8th, and reviewed the May 31, 2019 financial report which reflects eleven months of expenditures for the last fiscal year (FY). With 91.7% of the year elapsed, ACRC has expended 90.7% of POS and 90.4% of OPS.

ACRC will need between \$5.3 and \$5.9 million in additional POS funding for the 2018-19 FY. The shortfall is mainly due to the bridge funding that some providers received. Mr. Ahmad believes the agency will receive at least two more allocations from the department to make us whole. Most regional centers are reporting the need for additional funding.

ACRC utilized our line of credit for nine days. When we received our cash advance from DDS, we immediately paid it back to the bank; this included several thousand dollars in interest.

Without objection, Mr. Lake made the motion to accept the monthly finance report as submitted.

Issue 2: Contracts over \$250,000

Discussion and Action: Mr. Ahmad noted that DDS has approved two grants that will allow service providers to receive federal reimbursement. The department has total control over these contracts and which applicants receive additional funding. ACRC will work with PRIDE Industries and Lincoln Training Center to ensure that they follow the Home & Community-Based Services (HCBS) rules.

These contracts will fund three-year projects that are designed to make the clients that they serve more independent and their program more integrated into the community. There is a clause in each contract which states that if the provider does not meet any of the requirements, the funding is repealed.

Mr. Bonnet encourages the Board's support for these contracts.

Without objection, Jackie Armstrong made the motion to approve the HCBS contracts for PRIDE Industries and Lincoln Training Center as presented.

◆ *Committee Updates*

- Board Development Committee (BDC)
 - Mr. Lake shared that the BDC met on July 8th and June 10th.
 - The committee interviewed Mr. Mainini and Mr. Rivera in July.
 - All committees are in the process of developing goals for the current FY.
 - Mr. Platner volunteered to review the agency's bylaws and provide feedback to the bylaw workgroup.
 - Those Board members that were able to tour the recently developed Community Placement Plan (CPP) homes shared their thoughts.
 - If anyone is interested in another opportunity, please contact him.
 - The group discussed facilitation and how the Board will look into it on an individual basis.
 - The committee discussed the upcoming training in September.
 - Mr. Lake and Ms. Walker will be meeting with Mr. Bonnet on Monday, August 12th, to discuss options and finalize plans.
- Client Advisory Committee (CAC)
 - Ms. Rewerts shared that the CAC met on July 9th and June 11th.

- As noted in today's consent agenda, the CAC voted on a new member, Anthony Stone.
- The group discussed the Self-Determination Program (SDP), the CalFresh Initiative and what dignity and peer-advocacy means to them.
- The "Friends Helping Friends" program is ready. Members will be hearing from the volunteer coordinator soon so they can start visiting clients.
- At the July meeting, Sonya Bingaman, with the Sacramento branch of the State Council, and Lisa Cooley shared a presentation about how SCDD promotes self-advocacy and leadership.
- As always, committee members shared information about the advocacy groups that they are a part of.
- Provider Advisory Committee (PAC)
 - Mr. Ciampa shared that the PAC met on July 11th and June 13th.
 - The key highlight from the last meeting was that the group had a positive discussion about the Self-Determination Program (SDP). They began discussions about how providers can help the regional center and what their role might be.
 - The group had lengthy discussions about the recent rate study and how an underlying deficit still remains. There are significant flaws that providers want to make sure are not memorialized for the next generation. It's important to note that some providers did not get their rate increased – this is significant!
 - They began talking about the PAC's goals for the current FY.
 - He encouraged Board members to review the Vendor Relations Committee's handout, which is included in the Board packet under Tab 10.

◆ *President's Report*

- The Board will be holding its Annual September Retreat on Thursday & Friday, September 26th & 27th, at the Historic Cary House in Placerville. A "Meet & Greet" will be held on Thursday at 1 p.m., followed by the Board meeting at 3 p.m. The training will be held on Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Mr. Lake is currently working on committee assignments for this FY. He will be in touch with those Board members who have made requests.
- As customary, each Board member should complete their Conflict of Interest statement before they leave today. Also, for your reference,

each Board member has been provided a copy of ACRC's Whistleblower Policy.

- It was brought to Mr. Lake's attention that the Monday afternoon committee meetings for October and November will need to be rescheduled due to regional center holidays. Committees will discuss this further at their September meetings, but Monday, October 21st and Tuesday, November 12th are potential dates.
- DDS is holding HCBS Trainings – Dan & Rita have flyers.
- As mentioned at the May Board meeting, this group may hold another Board meeting at ACRC's Roseville office.
- Austin Taylor has requested a six-month leave of absence. More will be shared soon.

◆ *Executive Director's Report*

- Mr. Bonnet recently travelled out of the U.S. While he was away, he had complete faith in his Executive Management Team. Mr. Bonnet introduced his team:
 - Lori Banales – Director of Client Services
 - Iqbal Ahmad – Chief Financial Officer
 - Camelia Houston – Director of Intake & Clinical Services
 - Jennifer Crick – Director of Human Resources
 - John Decker (effective August 1, 2019) – Director of Community Services
 - David Lopez – Client Rights Advocate
 - Lisa West – Executive Secretary

As mentioned at the May Board meeting, ACRC has three Associate Directors, who oversee several Client Service Managers (CSMs) and over 8,000 clients each – Jennifer Bloom, Mechelle Johnson and Jason Lindo.

- This year, there are 28 trailer bills related to our statewide service system. DDS has promised to distribute a summary document very soon that Mr. Bonnet will forward on to the Board. We may discuss these changes in more detail at future committee meetings.
- The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is currently in California and they will be visiting ACRC in the near future. The interview staff will be reviewing records related to Special Incident Reports (SIRs). Mr. Bonnet clarified that these reports are filed whenever one of our clients is a victim of a crime or of suspected abuse and/or neglect. SIRs are a very important tool to reduce risk to our clients and prevent future incidents.
 - Mr. Bonnet will update the Board after their visit.
- In February 2019, DDS conducted an onsite Early Start monitoring visit to reviews records for federal compliance of Part C requirements. ACRC was then asked to submit a plan of correction

to address the areas of noncompliance (i.e., noncompliance is anything less than 100%). Mr. Bonnet shared that sometimes staff struggle with the quick timelines that are mandated. Many cases require a separate discipline outside of our case management staff (e.g., occupational therapy, speech therapy and/or physical therapy) and we have to rely on service providers and work with their availability. Our resources have dwindled over the years and providers receive higher rates when they work with school districts. ACRC staff work hard to assist children and families, and it is frustrating when we are held accountable when someone else doesn't want to engage.

- The statewide Developmental Services Task Force will be meeting here at ACRC's Sacramento office next Wednesday, July 31st, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The long-term sustainability of our statewide service system remains a primary concern.

◆ *ARCA Report*

- Mr. Lake attended the last meeting which was held on June 21st. He also had the pleasure of attending the annual dinner on Thursday evening, where the group acknowledged the retirements of Peter Tiedemann, George Stevens and Laura Larson.
- The group recognized Mr. Bonnet for leading the Directors Group.
- Ms. Walker will be serving as the ARCA Board's Vice President this FY.
- ARCA distributed a list of their accomplishments over the last year.
- The group reviewed ARCA's Strategic Plan and their priorities.
- Mr. Lake encouraged Board members to visit ARCA's website and review their legislative page. He also suggested attending an upcoming meeting – this is an opportunity to learn from the Executive Directors and delegates from across the state.
 - Ms. Walker noted that if anyone is interested in receiving the minutes from the meetings, please notify her and/or Ms. West.

5. **Closed Session** – At 5:38 p.m. the Board adjourned to closed session in order to discuss personnel issues.

6. **Announcement of Closed Meeting Discussion** - At 6:24 p.m. the Board reconvened in open session following a closed session in which personnel issues were discussed.

7. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:24 p.m.

Lisa West
Executive Secretary

cc: Phil Bonnet