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26 February 2020

Board of Directors
REDWOOD COAST DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES CORPORATION
525 Second Street, Third Floor
Eureka, California 95501

RE: Communication to the Board for inclusion in Board packet for March 2020 meeting

Dear Directors:

My son and I have lived in Eureka for twenty years; I have been regularly attending RCDSC board meetings for nearly that long. I have been engaged in many discussions, the history of which seems to sorrowfully have been lost amid the changing landscape of Executive Directors, Executive Secretary, and Board Membership.

Issues I consider to have been resolved long ago keep cropping up, with no consideration of what has been already determined. Certainly *things change*, but I believe you are missing a great deal of history and not understanding that there are people 'out there' who are relying on matters to not change over such a short period of time.

Teleconferencing meetings

As I brought up at the last meeting – the bylaws do need to be modified to permit such a monumental change. The Board President's steamrolling this issue to a poorly-considered vote is indicative of an unwillingness to permit the transparency and fairness that is supposed to guide *everything* the Board does.

Shockingly, the non-RCRC-client board directors did not even briefly consider the RCRC client director's reasons for desiring in-person meetings. He also mentioned that another client director would not vote in favor of videoconferences; that being the reason the director did not attend the present meeting. And I informed the Board that former client-directors were adamant about wanting to visit each catchment area to meet in-person the last time this issue was raised. Is this not supremely disrespectful to the persons who are the very people the Board is supposed to serve?

Meetings are already substantially shorter than they used to be; now they will be conducted in a manner that two former Boards rejected, giving board members even less time together. Those former Boards were also concerned about the expense – but they came to understand the benefit to all (including client/family/public) of having the meetings as a whole group. Your directors are self-serving to the extreme by voting to not have to travel. Try finding the greater good sometime ... it's your job.

Brown Act

Long ago I remember being surprised that, even though RCRC was determined to *not* be a 'State agency', RCDSC was determined to be bound by the Brown Act governing public meetings. It was based on the private corporation's allocation of public monies – taxes. At this last meeting the Board President said there was a legal decision that the Brown Act does not apply now – but offered no proof or information for anyone wanting to see that ruling for their own eyes. I do not recall seeing that proof documented in any minutes from any RCDSC meeting in the last two decades.

However, completely regardless of whatever the legal experts are now telling us, decency and transparency require the Board act in a manner that both considers the effect to the larger community and permits the community to know in advance if there is an issue coming up for a vote. There are actually people who would participate more if they understood the Board's agenda and if items were noticed properly & considerately. Way too often a vote comes up at the last minute with no indication on the agenda.

Discussion of Agenda Items

I have been involved in an abundance of organizations, attended more meetings that I care to consider, and been governed in these meetings by parliamentary procedure for 42 years. The recent change at RCDSC board meetings precluding me from contributing to meetings, meetings that I have attended for the past two decades, is shocking to me and detrimental to the Board.

This is not easy for me to say, as it sounds like I have an Ego involved - but it is not my ego speaking. It is not good for the Board, the public, and clients for such a formidable barrier to be erected preventing participation and the free flow of information.

Accuracy

At the January meeting, I was prevented by the Board President from informing the Board of information regarding the accuracy of the minutes from the November 2019 meeting. This is what I would have said:

- New Directors were sworn in and it is not mentioned in those minutes.
- There is also no indication if they voted on any action items after being sworn.
- The Board President said he would swear in a new Director who was not present (at any office) at a later time & there has been no follow through on that.
- Some of the attendees have the [office location] included and some do not. In the future, this information may be critical in determining whether a quorum exists.
- On page 9, information is attributed to Mary Block. All of the information after "on January 17" was never spoken during the meeting. Sure, it is great information, but at the very least, a notation should be made.
- On page 10, #9 was not addressed at the meeting. (in general, "Action" can't be put on the agenda without specifically stating what the Board could be voting upon.)

At the January 2020 meeting

- there was no announcement of a quorum being present

Moving Forward

In general, I would like to take this opportunity to mention things (not so important) ...

- The bright colored paper used to divide sections in the board packet is not recyclable.

- Plus, I don't understand why an entire page has to be used to separate the sections. I believe just a LARGE title break on the first page of the Executive Director's report ...and such.
- Please do not be afraid of parliamentary procedure. A great book to own is The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure by Alice Sturgis. Especially please learn to use "point of order".

I will leave you with this request to address three issues that I bring up every 2-5 years:

- The Purchase of Service Guideline on Conservatorship needs to be changed. A blanket determination that a Limited Conservatorship is the only correct action for all Clients is in direct opposition to the fundamental directive to consider the individual Client's need. For more information, please refer to the letter I wrote in 2014.
- When RCRC staff ask me how I would like things changed *in the community* to make life better for Clients, for the past 15 years I have always responded, "Free or discounted rides on public busses". I do not believe any action has ever been taken to get us there. [And please I beg of you, do not ever talk to me about Dial-a-Ride; it is a nightmare.]
- "Outreach" as mandated by law, could use some attention. Kudos to Director Jackson for offering; more needs to be done & a permanent position should be established at RCRC.

Respectfully,

via electronic mail to Kim Orsi

holly

p.s. I initially put off writing this missive because I was so distraught and heartbroken that the Board believes it is justified in behaving as it did. And then, when I finally sat down to write, I could not find my notes from that meeting. So, while incomplete, I am grateful that this is all I remember to write about.

attachment

Additionally, I am attaching a private note I emailed to the Board President prior to my attendance at the last meeting. Given that things went the way they did and that I will not be there in the future to speak up or speak out, it now seems appropriate to share. I get the feeling that *some* of you might still care.

But first, another note to Steve:

Steven: I find your behavior as Board President to be appalling. Even after I emailed you in advance of the meeting and stated that the Board President must remain neutral and not express an opinion – and you agreed – you prefaced almost all of the issues considered at the meeting with your own opinion, sometimes with the aside that you 'just want to say a few things before getting into the matter' [paraphrased because I cannot bear to listen to the audio and re-live that horrible meeting]. You then proceed again and again to express your opinion about how the matter should be decided. Your presidency does not come with Executive Privilege.

Furthermore, I have spent the past 42 years of my life participating in meetings run by parliamentary procedure. Until your tenure as Board President began, I have *never* been excluded from speaking during a meeting because I am not a Member. Your policy – again – reeks of cigar smoke and closed doors. Your self-proclaimed generosity for *allowing* me to be heard is stupefying.

Steve... January 2020 RCDSC comments...

#1 . Parliamentary procedure is followed at the discretion of the Board President. SO much of the meeting is conducted with no consideration of proper procedure, until it is convenient for the Board President or members to enforce Procedure.

(a) At every single meeting I have ever been at, during "Community Input" time, RCRC staff, SCDD staff, or other 'partners' are permitted to speak as long as their hearts desire -- AND the Board responds & interjects & questions & otherwise engages those speakers. [Read Pam Jensen's comments in the minutes from the last meeting. Do you think she was held to 3 minutes? PLUS, everything she said should have come under Steven Jackson's report as Vendor representative. NB: she spoke for twice as long as he was permitted even though he has a formal time to speak & he represents hundreds.]

In contrast, always, I have been reprimanded for speaking in excess of 3 minutes.

This is inherently "not fair" and **fairness** is the #1 purpose of using Parliamentary procedure.

(b) Before discussion of any item to-be-voted-upon begins, a motion must be made and seconded. If someone feels that discussion would be better *before* a motion is made, then *that* is a motion that needs to be made.

(c) "point-of-order" and "point-of-information" (or "parliamentary inquiry") requests stop the proceeding so that the subject can be clarified. Directors need to learn how to do this properly and cease interrupting as they do.

(d) Have the Bylaws been amended to permit videoconferencing?

(1) You broke SO many tenets of Parliamentary Procedure by conducting meetings this way and by your introductory comments, essentially on an item that must be put as an action item. You fail to present information (if exceptionally necessary) in an impartial manner. Impartiality is critical for the Board President. (Especially in a forum such as the RCDSC which has always been a flock of sheep.)

(2) I will discuss your rules as pertaining to Facilitators.^

(3) I will discuss your rules as pertaining to persons with developmental disability.^

(e) Last minute additions of Action items. The Board *must not vote* upon items that have not been properly noticed.

(f) When you request people limit their presentation on Agenda items and submit a report via email bypasses the entire point of having a public meeting. Unless they are just speaking a report that is already part of the Board packet and the report is already available online & at the meeting site ... and if questions are permitted before moving forward. Otherwise, the report does not become part of the public record - again, thwarting "transparency".

#2. When a Director is absent, is the reason for absence noted in the record anywhere? ...because it is not noted in the Minutes. If a Director misses 3 meetings, the Board needs to be able to determine if those absences were for good cause.

~~#3. There is no mention of whether a quorum is present at the outset of the meeting.~~

#4. You interrupted and delayed Community Input for an hour so that a presentation could be made telephonically. This was poor planning and poorly executed. Community Input is an exceptionally valuable opportunity (rarely used due to zero outreach done by RCRC) and it is Universally agreed that people coming to address the Board should not be made to wait any longer than absolutely necessary.

#5. I don't understand why RCRC is advocating (through ARCA) to reinstate social/rec funding. That is never going to work. The place to start is with Therapeutic Recreation (aquatic, equestrian, gymnastics).

#6. If committees do not have anything to report, I don't see why they are on the Agenda. Have the committee chairs *tell you* when they need to report out ... or better yet, request a report from the committees when appropriate in advance of the meeting. [it is always disappointing when I stay to hear what people have to say and then not a word is said - I have to torture a child to attend the meeting and I'd like to be better-informed going in - the Agenda is basically worthless as is.]

#7. Legacy planning and Conservatorship.

(a) . I have been trying to get the Board to address my concerns about the Service Guidelines on these matters since I gave a workshop on the subjects for Humboldt-Del Norte SELPA in 2004. When I was railroaded with horrible information by RCRC as I was getting Jasper's conservatorship done, RCRC acted well-past any legal authority jeopardizing my case for Jasper. Every year I bring it up and every year I am ignored.

(b) . Conservatorship is NOT expensive!!! There is no cost whatsoever!!! You are continuing to perpetuate a complete fallacy. Please stop scaring people; first start with educating people. Read the California Probate Code.

(c) . I sent you a link for Special Needs Trusts workshop. You did not respond. There is plenty of FREE information out there for 'legacy planning'.

#8. Anh Nguyen - using "Dropbox"? Hasn't that gone kaput? But if you're just using that as a generic term for any cyber-file-sharing system ... doesn't that make all that information highly insecure? Will the names be redacted when submitting resumes to Selection Cmte? How careful are you being about ensuring subtle forms of discrimination are not employed by the Selection Cmte?

#9. I would very much like to be heard on the subject of Videoconferencing. I can address it in Community Input (and go over the 3 minutes), but by then the agenda will already have been approved.

#10 . Public comment is usually to allow the public to be heard on matters not on the agenda. You seem to use the time in the opposite fashion, since you do not permit non-directors to speak during the consideration of any topic or motion. But you *do* permit staff to be heard. This is highly irregular and majorly discriminatory.

