

Meeting Minutes

REDWOOD COAST DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES CORPORATION

Meeting of the Board of Directors – By Zoom Video/Teleconferencing
And AT&T Teleconferencing

Wednesday, June 9, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

#8 FY: 2020-2021

Directors Present: Beverly Fontaine, Allison Hillix, Steven Jackson, Bill Lacy, Diane Larson, Tamera Leighton, Will Lewis, Dave Matson, Keith Peeples, Mike Sawyer, Teresa Schnacker

Facilitators Present: Mark Konkler, Electra Gamble

RCRC Staff Present: Sierra Braggs, Cindy Claus-John: Interim Director of Community Services, Dolores Delgado: Diversity Outreach Assistant and Interpreter, Jennifer Garcia: Diversity Outreach Specialist, Nichole Haydon: Director of Human Resources, Amy Medina, Director of Administration, Kim Orsi: Executive Assistant, Dr. Kimberly Smalley, Executive Director, Leah Thompson, CPP Resource Coordinator

Others Present: Joe Ayres, Community Member/Parent, Clifford Black, OCRA, Breean Burris: 24 Home Care, Pam Jensen: UVAH, Melissa Robinson: Primary Liaison, Department of Developmental Services Office of Community Operations Community Programs Specialist

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Introductions:** The regular meeting of the RCDSC Board of Directors was called to order by Board President T. Leighton at 6:02 p.m. T. Leighton called to K. Orsi to read aloud the disclaimer that the audio of the meeting was being recorded for future posting to the RCRC website. T. Leighton reminded the board during roll call to state their name, county they represent and title (if an officer). K. Orsi reported that a quorum was present.
- 2. Select Timekeeper/ Sharing the Vision:** T. Leighton called on M. Sawyer to be timekeeper and called to A. Hillix to share a portion of the Vision. A. Hillix shared the fourth paragraph, "We envision all people being empowered to communicate with their own minds and hearts to determine their supports and services."
- 3. Approval of Agenda:** T. Leighton called to approve the agenda and asked if there were changes and hearing none the agenda was approved as presented.
- 4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from May 12, 2021 Board Meeting:** T. Leighton called for any changes or corrections to the meeting minutes and hearing none the meeting minutes were approved as presented.
- 5. Community Input:** T. Leighton called for any community input:
 - Mr. Joe Ayres shared the following comments:

- **Thanks and Appreciation:** J. Ayres thanked and expressed his appreciation to the board for their time and service, especially during these difficult times.
 - **COVID19:** J. Ayres noted that the regional center and service provider, Parents and Friends, Inc., (located in Fort Bragg) have made many adaptations during COVID19 that have been very effective and reminded everyone not to forget the adaptations that have been made. J. Ayres also reminded everyone that COVID is not over, and we should all be concerned and prepared for potential resurgence from new variants.
 - **Abuse Prevention:** J. Ayres reported that several years ago he provided to the board a packet of information on the subject of abuse training for clients, caregivers, vendors and law enforcement. If any board member does not have a copy of this packet, please contact K. Orsi who will coordinate the communication with J. Ayres.
- H.S. shared that following comments/questions. Responses to questions were answered during the Executive Director and Director of Administration Reports.
 - **Board Meeting Packet:** H. S. commented that they like the lists of acronyms included in the agenda as well as the meeting minutes and reported that they differ and would also recommend additional acronyms be added (IPP, IFSP, RCDSC, CRA, etc.).
 - **New Director of Community Services:** Dr. Smalley's report referenced that the new director has been hired and H. S. asked if there will be a meet and greet scheduled.
 - **RCRC Legal Fees Increase:** The Director of Administration's Report indicates that there was a rise in legal fees and H. S. asked if A. Medina could provide an explanation during her report.
 - **Local Public Housing Authority:** H. S. asked if there is currently any involvement with the local Public Housing Authority as the current housing situation is dire as vacancies are low and rents are high and there are concerns for those in the Section 8 Program as there is not enough housing with low enough rents available for HUD payment standards. Perhaps a committee might coordinate with the Clients' Rights Advocate to review these difficulties and provide a statement for clients/families regarding these concerns.

6. Executive Directors Report: T. Leighton called on Dr. Smalley to share her report and Dr. Smalley provided the following updates:

- **COVID19:** RCRC remains a leader in the state with less than 100 clients who contracted COVID19 with three who passed away. https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/DDS_COVID-19_demographics-and-residence_06042021.pdf RCRC service providers continue to preform a Herculean effort and RCRC is grateful for all they have done to keep all individuals they serve safe.
- **DDS Dashboard:** DDS has a new data point available on their website that includes statewide COVID19 Vaccination Data for Regional Center clients age 16 and older: <https://www.dds.ca.gov/corona-virus-information-and-resources/data/>

The data shows that RCRC is currently at 30% of eligible clients vaccinated with at least one dose. RCRC Service Coordinators continue to reach out to clients/families. All four counties have made accommodations as are necessary for clients to get vaccinated and RCRC along with our service providers have supported clients in a number of ways to get vaccinated should they choose to do so.

- **Equity and Access Grant:** Eleven regional centers were awarded grants this year. Unfortunately, RCRC was not selected to receive a grant this year. Jennifer Garcia and Dolores Delgado continue to provide outreach across RCRC's four-county catchment that includes attending local Farmers' Markets and other scheduled community events.
- **RCRC Staffing Updates:** Jonathan Padilla who comes to RCRC from North Bay Regional Center (NBRC) with experience in community resource development. J. Padilla who is bilingual and holds a Master's Degree in Social Work will be joining RCRC on June 21, 2021. As a response to H. S., J. Padilla will be attending future Board meetings and once settled, we can look at scheduling a meet and greet.
- **May Revise:** Positions from DDS noted in the May Revise include positions for Deaf and Hard of Hearing expertise. It is unknown if this will be a designated regional center position or if this will be a position at the DDS. An additional position for each regional center will include a designated Emergency Preparedness position.
- **State Budget:** Over-all, the budget is looking good for our service system as a whole with additional one-time funding from the federal government along with the May Revise and the budget from the State Legislature.
- **RCRC Staffing:** At the time of her written report, Dr. Smalley noted that RCRC had 11 openings and she was happy to report that RCRC is currently down to six openings. RCRC continues to recruit for service coordinators and has experienced difficulties in filling the position for Director of Clinical Services following two separate rounds of interviews. RCRC will continue to advertise for this position and will soon be holding interviews for the positions of Behavior Psychologist/Autism Clinical Specialist (Dr. Smalley's former position).
- **RCRC Clearlake Office:** This has been a long held unmet need that A. Medina will address during her Report.
- **Local Housing Authority:** In response to the question by H. S., RCRC does work with our Housing Authority and has had two large successes in the Southern counties; The Orr Creek Project is located in Ukiah and RCRC is now accepting applications from clients. This project has 10 units that are designated specifically for RCRC clients (5 one-bedroom and 5 two-bedroom). A second project that is similar to Orr Creek will be breaking ground in Lake County in the near future. RCRC does not yet have an equivalent in Humboldt and RCRC continues to monitor the housing crisis.

7. Director of Administration's Report: T. Leighton called on A. Medina to provide her report and the following updates were provided:

- **Legal Fees:** A. Medina responded to the question from H. S. and reported that she is unable to provide specifics due to confidentiality and explained that the increase is due to claims/potential lawsuits that were brought against RCRC

where legal council was sought. There will be no additional costs projected for Legal Fees for the remainder of this fiscal year.

- **Payroll Changes:** A. Medina reported that RCRC will be making a change to payroll from a “current payroll” to an “arears payroll”. There is no financial impact and the only affect to RCRC’s Personnel Policies will be a change to the posted pay dates for RCRC staff.

a) 14888 Olympic Blvd., Clearlake, CA: Potential RCRC office and Lease

Agreement: A. Medina reported that for a number of years, there has been a dire need for another office in Lake County, specifically the Clearlake area to provide accessibility to services for clients located in this rural community. During the May 12, 2021, Board of Directors’ meeting, the Board approved that A. Medina move forward to negotiate and commit to a lease for the property located at 14888 Olympic Blvd., in the city of Clearlake. A. Medina has provided a copy of the draft lease to the Board and asked if there were any questions. A. Medina reported this is a standard lease that is in alignment with the reserved funding that has been requested from DDS. A. Medina noted the following specific about the property:

- The office space is 1600 square feet
- Rent is \$2,075 per month
- Beginning of Lease is July 1, 2021, with target opening date of September 1, 2021 (subject to change) as setup will be necessary.
- Term of lease is 10 years
- First three months of rent is free

A Medina called for questions. M. Sawyer asked what costs of construction would be to build out the space. A. Medina reported that the interior is currently an open shell and that she did obtain an estimate to build out individual interior offices which was approximately, \$200,000. RCRC is instead looking to purchase partition cubicles at a cost of \$80,000 plus installation/electrical hookup which the landlord has agreed to contribute up to \$10,000 toward the installation that includes the addition of a kitchen space. Once the Board approves the lease, A. Medina can move forward and begin implementing the project plans and timelines. A. Medina asked for additional questions and there were none.

T. Leighton called for a motion to authorize RCRC Director of Administration, A. Medina to move forward and execute (sign) a Lease Agreement for the property located at 14888 Olympic Blvd., in Clearlake, CA.

M/S/C: M. Sawyer (D. Larson) motioned to authorize A. Medina to move forward and execute the Lease Agreement for 14888 Olympic Blvd, Clearlake, CA. T. Leighton called a vote by rollcall and the motion carried.

8. Standing Committee Reports: T. Leighton called on Committee Chairs to provide updates.

- a) Client Advisory Committee:** B. Lacy provided the following update that he will be meeting with clients who would like to provide information to help the regional center provide better support. B. Lacy would like W. Lewis, D. Matson and K. Peeples to be part of this meeting as well. B. Lacy asked for assistance from T. Leighton who asked K. Orsi to assist with coordinating this meeting.

- b) **Vendor Representative Report:** S. Jackson provided the following updates:
- **ASP Meetings:** The group continues to meet twice monthly by Zoom format and will continue meeting by Zoom following the lift of COVID restrictions. The group of approximately 40 participants will continue sharing information including “What’s Working/What’s Not Working” and effective plans for service delivery to continue maintaining peoples’ quality of life.
 - **June 22, 2021 Public Meeting:** The ASP’s second meeting of the month that will be utilizing to partner with RCRC to hold their public meeting regarding FY: 2021-2022 Community Resource Development Plan. Invitations have been sent by RCRC as well as other avenues to invite community members, clients/family members, and vendors to attend and provide input.
 - **State of California Budget:** Vendors are awaiting the approval of the budget next week. As Dr. Smalley reported earlier, our service system is not anticipating any funding cuts. The vendor community is looking forward to building our workforce which has been challenging and any rate increases would we welcomed.

9. New Business:

- a) **Community Resource Development Plan (CRDP) Startup Contract of \$250,000 or more with Brilliant Corners:** T. Leighton reported that this topic was an updated item to the agenda. Information was received about the contract and the Board of Directors had access to and time to review entire Startup contract. T. Leighton called on RCRC Interim Director of Community Services, Cindy Claus-John to provide details and address any questions. C. Claus-John stated that she also invited Leah Thompson, RCRC Community Placement Plan Resource Coordinator who has led this project to assist with any questions.

A Hillix requested clarity and asked if this contract is only related to another agency purchasing the property or is it for the operation of the group home as well? L. Thompson reported that this is a two-part project. Typically, with Behavioral Support Homes, DDS likes to have a Housing Development Organization own the home so that if the service provider leaves the home and clients are still living in the home, they will be able to remain in the home. RCRC would then be responsible for finding another provider to provide services within the home.

L. Thompson explained that this is the first part of the project for FY: 2020-2021 where RCRC will contract with an HDO (Housing Develop Organization) to purchase and renovate a single-family home. Next year’s CRDP Plan (2021-2022) RCRC will contract with a service provider who will provide the services within the home. HDO’s own and manage properties (multi-family or single-family homes) and will be the landlord, responsible for any issues with the home (i.e., plumbing issues, roof leak, etc.). L. Thompson reported that this is RCRC’s first endeavor with an HDO purchase which is similar to the housing project with Rural Community Housing Development Corporation (Orr Creek multi-family project) that Dr. Smalley discussed during her Report.

A. Hillix asked if a property location has been found. L. Thompson reported that it has not, and that property is being sought in Humboldt County. DDS has awarded

RCRC a total of \$500,000, (\$200,000 is earmarked for purchase price of a home and \$300,000 is earmarked for the renovations of the purchased home). It will be up to the HDO to bring in the additional funding necessary to purchase the home. T. Leighton called for any additional questions. Hearing none, T. Leighton called for a motion to approve the CRDP Startup contract of \$250,000 or more.

M/S/C: B. Lacy (D. Larson) motioned to approve the Start-Up contract with Brilliant Corners. T. Leighton called a vote by rollcall (S. Jackson abstained from the vote) and the motion carried.

b) Election of 2021-2022 Officers: T. Leighton called for nominations of officer for the next year beginning July 1, 2021. The nominations/slate of officers is:

- **President: T. Leighton**
- **Vice President: M. Sawyer**
- **Treasurer: B. Fontaine**
- **Secretary: A. Hillix**
- **Client Liaison: W. Lewis**

T. Leighton called for a motion to approve the slate of officers for FY 2021-2022:

M/S/C: W. Lewis (T. Schnacker) motioned to approve the slate of officers: T. Leighton-President, M. Sawyer-Vice President, B. Fontaine-Treasurer, A. Hillix-Secretary and W. Lewis-Client Liaison. T. Leighton called for a vote by rollcall and the motion carried.

10. ARCA Reports: T. Leighton called on Dr. Smalley for her ARCA Report:

- **Grassroots Day and Budget:** The past several weekly meetings have not focused primarily on COVID and have focused on the Budget. Grassroots Day was an amazing success, and we were heard. T. Leighton had private conversations with reach-back from our representatives and advocacy around the state provided excellent results that can be tied directly to the May Revise with revitalization to our service system. Around the state, regional centers need 921 service coordinators; RCRC is small and needs six service coordinator positions. The May Revise has accounted for 800 of these positions and there are two other versions of the budget that are being worked out by our Legislature that includes rate increases for our vendor community (related to the recent rate study) and there is federal, one-time funding related to Home and Community Based Services. All three versions are helpful and a step in the right direction with more funding than our system has seen in a long while.

a) RCDSC Board Delegate Report: T. Leighton provided the following update:

- **Recent Meetings:** Recent meetings have been about advocacy for regional center service coordination positions which has been a huge success. Recent meetings also focused on outreach and Grassroots Day which brought additional conversations with Senator McGuire whose staff will be meeting next month with DDS to discuss concerns about service coordinator positions and the importance of these positions for the regional center system. We have made great progress and hope this will be successful.

B. Fontaine asked if there is an internships program for service coordinators with HSU (Humboldt State University). Dr. Smalley reported that RCRC currently does not have a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who can monitor internship

hours for service coordinators and because of this RCRC has not had interns for the past year. However, RCRC has worked with HSU to renew the Nursing Internship and is hopeful to get a nursing internship soon.

b) ARCA CAC Report: C. Miller provided the following update:

- **CAC Meeting:** The group met last week. In preparation for Grassroots Day the committee created an infographic on the service coordinator ratio and lack of service coordinators across the state. This was sent to the Legislature along with a short animation that ARCA developed regarding the Regional Center, what they do, as well as service coordinators and what they do.
- **ARCA Legislative Committee:** This committee discussed various legislative Bills that they have asked ARCA to support. Both of these groups are very happy about the information in the May Revise. Currently, this group is discussing conservatorship and training related to conservatorship and what it takes to be a conservator.

11. County Liaison and Connection Reports: T. Leighton called for updated from the following counties:

❖ **Lake County:**

- A. Hillix reported that she is very happy about the new Clearlake office that will improve accessibility to services for those living in the community.
- T. Leighton reported that she will be attending the following Farmers' Markets with RCRC Diversity Outreach Specialist and her team in Fort Bragg on June 16th, Willits on June 17th and Arcata on June 19th. T. Leighton invited others from these areas to join her to assist with recruitment efforts for new board members and to support J. Garcia and her team. Please email T. Leighton at tameraleighnton@gmail.com or contact K. Orsi for additional contact information.

S. Jackson commented that he met J. Garcia at the Farmers' Market in Crescent City today and encouraged everyone to attend to see the wonderful community outreach that the regional center is doing, adding that J. Garcia was keeping a tally on a box of N95 masks of the number of those she had connected that day.

❖ **Mendocino County:**

- D. Matson asked about the upcoming meeting with the Client Advocate Committee. T. Leighton reported that K. Orsi will be assisting with scheduling this meeting and will be contacting the Committee members.

12. Community Input: T. Leighton called for any additional community input/comments:

- Mr. Joe Ayres shared the following comments:
 - **Abuse Prevention and Training:** J. Ayres reminded the board about the packets of information that he provided them in the past regarding abuse and that abuse and neglect of disabled people is a national problem per evidence established by the NPR series, Abused and Betrayed. J. Ayres will continue campaign for training on the subject but has been disappointed with results and is unaware of any recent trainings. We do

understand that housing for clients as well as COVID are top priorities but keeping clients safe from abuse and neglect is just as important. J. Ayres is specifically advocating for trainings for clients, caregivers, vendors, service coordinators and other regional center staff as well law enforcement in recognizing, preventing, and reporting abuse and the appropriate response to abuse when reported. This training needs to be ongoing, especially for caregivers due to ongoing turnover and included for all service coordinators and vendors.

- **RCRC Vision Statement** J. Ayres noted that there is no mention in the RCRC Vision statement to keep clients safe and secure and recommended that the Vision be updated to include this.

T. Leighton noted that if anyone would like additional information from J. Ayres to please contact K. Orsi who will coordinate the communication.

- Pam Jensen, Executive Director at UVAH shared the following comments:
 - **In Person Services Resume:** P. Jensen from UVAH addressed the board and was pleased to report that each week, more people are returning to their services at UVAH facilities as they have been vaccinated and their comfort level has improved. It is exciting to see people coming back and it's wonderful to see their excitement and happiness as well.
 - **Trailer Bill language:** Per the discussion regarding how regional centers will benefit, there is also language that will benefit provider's rates that address the rate study that was conducted several years ago but never acted upon. The legislature has proposed a three-year plan to phase in rate increases which is welcomed.
 - **Self Determination Program:** Trailer Bill language proposed by DDS will block the authority and freedoms from those who have control over their lives by including language that will implement spending thresholds that will require facilitators (even if a family member) to get certified.
 - **Resolution:** Assembly Member Jim Wood introduced a Resolution praising DSP for the work that they have done throughout pandemic and the work that they continue to do everyday.
- H. S. shared the following comments:
 - **ARCA Report:** H.S. stated that she enjoyed C. Miller's ARCA Report that brought up a subject near to her heart on conservatorship. Several times in the past, H. S. has mentioned to the Board that there is a problem with the POS Guidelines around conservatorship. Due to time limitation, H. S. noted that she would be happy to discuss this topic further with anyone who wishes to discuss the topic further. Equally important are trainings on Special Needs Trusts and ABLE accounts.

C Miller responded to H. S. and reported that Cal-ABLE is holding webinars regularly and he would be happy to forward the links to H. S. for any upcoming Trainings. In addition, Disability Rights is providing training on Special Needs Trusts. Dr. Smalley concurred and added that the SCDD also provides trainings on Cal-ABLE, Special Needs Trusts and Conservatorship. Clifford Black of Disability Rights provided his contact for

further discussion and/or questions: Clifford.Black@disabilityrightsca.org or by telephone at 707-268-1388.

D. Larson also commented that the conservatorship process can be expensive and has learned that there is another way to process the applications online D. Larson asked anyone interested in obtaining the link to the website to contact K. Orsi.

- Denise Gorny from the SCDD provided the following update:
 - **Upcoming PPE Drive-Thru:** Denise Gorny reported that the SCDD along with RCRC will be holding a drive-thru PPE Pickup on Monday, June 21, 2021, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the HCAR facility in Eureka. Masks, hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies will be available. Please share this information with others. Similar PPE drive-thru events have provided supplies for over 200 individuals/families.

13. Close the Meeting: T. Leighton adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m. and announced that the next meeting will be held by Zoom on Wednesday, July 14, 2021.



Mike Sawyer, Secretary
RCDSC Board of Directors
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Acronyms:

AB: Assembly Bill
ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act
ARCA: Association of Regional Center Agencies
ASD: Autism Spectrum Disorder
ASP: Alliance of Service Providers
BCBA: Board Certified Behavioral Analyst
CAC: Client Advisory Committee
Cal-ABLE: California Achieving a Better Life Experience
Cal-OSHA: California Occupational Safety and Health Act
CARF: Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation
CCL: Community Care Licensing
CDC: Center for Disease Control
CDER: Client Development Evaluation Report
CPP: Community Placement Plan
CRA: Clients' Rights Advocate
CRDP: Community Resource and Development Plan
DDS: Department of Developmental Services
DHHS: Department of Health and Human Services
DSP: Direct Support Professionals
EBSH: Enhanced Behavioral Home
HDO: Housing Development Plan
HSU: Humboldt State University
IEP: Individualized Education Program
IFSP: Individual Family Service Plan

ILS: Independent Living Service
IPP: Individualized Program Plan
LCSW: Licensed Clinical Social Worker
MHSA: Mental Health Services' Act
MSW: Master of Social Work
OCRA: Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (See CRA)
OPS: Operations
PEP: Purchase of Services Expenditure Projection
PPE: Personal Protection Equipment
POS: Purchase of Services
RCDSC: Redwood Coast Developmental Services Corporation
RCHDC: Rural Communities Housing Development Corporation
RCRC: Redwood Coast Regional Center
SCDD: State Council on Developmental Disabilities
SDP: Self Determination Program
SLS: Supported Living Service
SB: Senate Bill
SELPA: Special Education Local Plan Area
SSI: Social Security Income
SSP: State Supplementary Program
UVAH: Ukiah Valley Association of Habilitation
WIC: Welfare and Institutions Code