

Board of Directors' – Client Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 18, 2025
6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Robert Taylor (Chair), Debra Zeno (EK)

Committee Members Absent: Dave Matson (UK), Will Lewis (EK)

RCRC Members Present: Sedona B (Executive Assistant), Dr. Kimberly Smalley (Executive Director)

Members of the Public Present: Charlene Gonzalez (Client Advocate and Representative for People First – Lake County), Dolores Delgado (Spanish Interpreter), Crysalynd Miranda (Clients' Rights Advocate)

AGENDA

1. **Open the Meeting:** CAC Chair, Robert Taylor opened the meeting at 6:01pm
2. **Introductions:** Robert called on attendees to introduce themselves and share their interests.
3. **Announcements:**
 - a. **People First Conference in Lake County (Robert/Charlene):** Robert and Charlene went to the People First of California Conference in Sacramento on May 16-18. Charlene enjoyed being around other self-advocates from other counties and giving a speech. It was a good experience. Robert shared an anthem they had that was "Why We're The Mighty People First" and it talked about why we are fight for the rights of people with disabilities, to keep ourselves protected, powerful and proud. The keynote speakers were wonderful. One speaker was Rebecca Amick, a woman with disabilities, a mother and artist and self-advocate. She had found the inner strength to succeed and is now a mother and small art business owner. Cody Clark from Louisville KY presented the importance of knowing what autism is about, and he is also a magician. He shared ASD is nothing to be afraid of but is a different way of thinking. Go to <https://www.codyclarkmagic.com/> or on social media at @codyclarkmagic to learn more about him. Charlene had a great presentation in a breakout session that talked about how all friendships are precious and should be preserved. Adrian Mullen is a first responder in Indian Valley, and he taught us how to be safe in forest fires and wildfires and what to do in evacuations. Saturday night had movies and games and pool time. Rosie Ryan and Andreas Economoulopous called "We Refuse to Give Up". The next meeting will be in Lakeport on July 1st.
4. **OCRA Presentation - Voters Rights (Crysalynd Miranda):** Crysalynd shared a slide show presentation. She started with introducing herself and the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy.
 - a. The ice breaker question was "Why voting is important to you." She shared that she likes when people are treated kindly and equally and tries to vote in line with that. Robert shared the power client advocates have and how to get their opinion across by voting. Debra shared voting makes a difference and makes their voices heard. Crysalynd shared reasons why people might not vote, such as not liking the voting booths due to crowding or not knowing what to do or not wanting to wait in lines. Charlene shared some don't vote because they don't trust anyone to make the decisions. Crysalynd said when we cast our votes it is our right to try to make changes.

- b. Voting Eligibility – You need to be 18 years old or older, a United States citizen, not in prison or on parole for a felony, and some who are conserved do not have the right to vote but that is not always the case.
 - c. Places to get a voter registration form – Post Office, DMV, library, independent living centers, Disability Rights California, regional centers.
 - d. Voting Registration - It’s never too early to register to vote. You need to register at least 15 days before the vote day, but it is best to register as soon as possible. You may update your registration when you move, or as often as you need to.
 - e. Political Parties – The two main parties are Republican (image of an elephant) and Democratic (image of a donkey). There are other parties as well, and if you don’t choose one you will be registered as Independent, which means you may not be able to vote in primary presidential elections, which is when you vote for the president.
 - f. Regional Centers and Voter Registration – The regional center can help you to register to vote and you can ask your SC to help you. They will not tell you what to write down but will help you to understand what information is presented and being asked. You can call OCRA for help too.
 - g. People with disabilities have the right to vote! – If you have a disability that makes it hard to vote you can get help to access your voting options. OCRA can help you find accessibility if you are having trouble.
 - h. What types of things do you vote for? – President, State Senator, Governor, City Mayor, City Council Members, and propositions (changes to local/county/state rules).
 - i. Voting Responsibilities – Know the issues you want to vote for. Ask questions if you need help. Be a role model for others by having conversations with the people you love.
 - j. Things to do before you vote. – Try to meet the candidates, try to talk to them about what they believe in, read about what decisions they have made in the past.
 - k. Ways to learn about candidates/issues. – On Legislator Day (ask questions important to you and see how they respond), find out about issues and see where they stand on those issues, find out about non-partisan resources (no opinions for either side).
 - l. What happens when you vote?
 - i. In-person - Walk in, go to the table by the door, state your name and get a ballot book. In CA you do not need an ID. Take your ballot and go to a private space to mark the boxes you agree with. If you need accommodation let the people at the table know.
 - ii. Home - You can ask for a mail-in ballot ahead of time, mail it post-marked no later than the day of the election. Dr. Smalley identified that where she lives, she can only do mail-in ballots because they don’t offer a physical location.
5. **CalFresh Question:** Robert asked Dr. Smalley if she knew what would happen with CalFresh with the Medicaid cuts. Dr. Smalley shared that State Council is providing workshops to talk about Medicaid cuts and the effects it may have. Medicaid is federal money given to the state, which is then dispersed to the various programs in the state, which includes CalFresh. Dr. Smalley strongly advises everyone to attend one of the State Council meetings for more information and to have their voices heard.
6. **Review 2025 Goals (Standing Item):**
- a. Self-Determination (shared in February)
 - b. Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) – Tabled for another meeting.
 - c. Employment and Training for Clients – Tabled for another meeting.
 - d. Transportation: Client Driver Training – Tabled for another meeting.
 - e. Affordable Housing (shared in February and June)

- i. Charlene shared she is putting in applications to move into adult low-income housing. She likes living on her own in her own place because she doesn't want 24-hour staff care. She has done all of her applications on her own but has staff to proofread it. Debra really likes where she lives in a two-bedroom place but does have 24-hour staff. Right now, it is affordable, but she is scared if it becomes no longer affordable. She has been there 16 years and feels safe. She has good neighbors. Robert has been in his place for 8 years and the rent was increased several times but recently went down. He shared a presentation he did in Lake County with the Department of Social Services about affordable housing. He attended an HCBS advisory board meeting in February of 2025 where Lake County clients can share how they feel about affordable housing. Right now, they are making a review of changes to the law about section 8. Section 8 can help make housing more affordable. He shared about a booklet called "America's Future for 2024" that talks about placing individuals in affordable housing throughout the country. Section 8 is available in any county and can be carried from one county to another by filing a form with the Housing Authority. If you have issues that cannot be resolved with your property manager, you can ask your legal services agency to help you reach an agreement for affordable and safe housing. Affordable housing can be a reality for you if you know how to do it and don't give up. Charlene added that the only people that stop us from doing what we want to do is ourselves.
- f. Differences Between Supported Living and Independent Living – Tabled for another meeting.

7. Develop Agenda for the Next Meeting:

- a. Open the Meeting (1 min.)
- b. Introductions (4 min.)
- c. Announcements (5 min.)
- d. OCRA Presentation: Plain Language Medicaid Guide (OCRA) (20 min.)
- e. Review 2025 CAC Goal:
 - i. Differences Between Supported Living and Independent Living (15 min.)
 - ii. Transportation: Client Driver Training (10 min.)
- f. Develop Agenda for the Next Meeting (5 min.)
- g. Close the Meeting

8. Additional Announcements:

- a. RCRC Public Meeting - Community Resource Development Plan on June 26th from 5:30-6:30pm on Zoom. The link can be found on the RCRC website at <https://redwoodcoastrc.org/event/rcrc-public-meeting-community-resource-development-plan-zoom/>.
- b. There is a transportation service disruption notice for Lake County stating that buses will not be operating on June 30th due to transition to a new operations contractor effective July 1st. If you have questions, please contact the Lake Transit Authority at 707-263-3334 or email laketransit@pacific.net.

9. Close the Meeting: Robert thanked everyone for attending and ended the meeting at 7:06pm

Next meeting is Wednesday, August 20, 2025.

Respectfully submitted by:
Sedona Bowser, Executive Assistant