

**Far Northern Coordinating Council on Developmental  
Disabilities dba Far Northern Regional Center  
Minutes**

Regular Meeting  
Friday, May 19, 2023  
9:15 a.m.  
Gaia Hotel  
Minutes

1. **Call to Order:** 9:26 AM by Chair Cali McKinzie
2. **Roll Call**
  - a. Present: Cali McKinzie, Deborah Anderson, Kim Leeseman, Daniel Strauss, Josh Flom, Joseph Cullis, Araceli Garcia, Terry M., Andreas Economopoulos, Adrian Hugo, Selene Mercado, Patricia McCarthy, Edna Winkle, Ginger Moyles, William Moore
  - b. Absent: Timothy Howard, Lori Childres, Christina Johnson
3. **Public Input/Open** Forum (*This section is for members of the public only; and is to provide the public an opportunity to comment and/or present information to the Board on any matter. **Each member of the public will be afforded up to five minutes to speak. If you have additional information you are encouraged to submit it in writing.***)

Introduction Megan Swope, Cindi Freshour, Melinda Roberts, Mike Mintline, Keith French, Renee Bauer(SCDD), James Ford (DDS)

No public input
4. **Approval of Agenda** for May 19, 2023
  - a. Motion and second Edna Winkle and Adrian Hugo. No discussion, Motion passed.
5. **Approval of Minutes** from March 24, 2023
  - a. Motion and second William Moore and Edna Winkle.

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Discussion some minor changes:

Page 17. \$47.700 => \$47,000

Page 18. \$431.500 => \$431,500

Page 18. #21.0 => \$21.0

Page 22. News Letter => Newsletter

No further discussion, Motion Passed

6. **Report from Chairperson**, Cali McKinzie:
  - a. Conflicts of Interest and Annual Forms  
Cali explained the forms and the importance of getting them returned in a timely manner so they can then be submitted to DDS.
  - b. ARCA Academy held April 29, 2023 was successful. Far Northern Regional Center was represented very well. Thank you for taking the time to attend. This academy pointed out the reasons FNRC is so important to the North State.

## 7. **Management Reports**

- a. Financial Report: Mike Mintline, Chief Financial Officer
  - i. Operations Report/ Purchase of Service Report FY 22-23  
Estimated contract allocation for operations \$26,983,859, even with the late end of year cut in the budget Mike indicated Far Northern Regional Center should be fine.  
The Purchase of Service allocations are more than enough to meet the needs of the individuals we serve.

A few areas we have had an increase: Personal services Salaries/benefits- Increase primarily due to the growth of the agency. Also the 2% annual increase given to all employees during Union negotiations.

Contracts/Software-Licensing for increasing number of employees. Software for virtual computer connections. Software purchases are now requiring ongoing subscriptions.

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Travel is returning to normal so we are seeing an increase in this category.

Communications increase \$110,518 due to iPad monthly fees and internet upgrades for those working remote. Looking at replacing our phones and emergency notification system in the near future.

Interest Revenue we are seeing an increase. Rates have increased, investing excess cash in short-term Treasury Bills.

Facilities (Rent, Maintenance and utilities)

Full year rent impact of new space in Chico and Redding.

Redding increase \$47,700/Chico increase \$39,900. Mt Shasta rate increase resulting in \$6,500 increase. This category showing a decrease due to prior year leasehold improvements to office space at 1367 E. Lassen Ave, Chico and Redding (\$331,912). New space to accommodate increased staffing levels. The new space expected to have some unassigned offices for persons who may spend some of their time working remotely.

POS expected to have a surplus of \$28,523,997. Plenty of money to cover the services requested.

ii. Other

Feel free to contact Mike should you have any questions. If there are forms you would like to see please contact Lori Childres our treasurer.

b. Human Resources Report: Melinda Roberts, HR Director

i. Update on Human Resources

A lot of change happening within the Regional Center. We have a number of staff retiring. The retirements are creating the need

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to recruit and hire new staff, which requires more training on policies and procedures.

We currently have 18 open positions as of today.

We have implemented a new recruiting program to help attract qualified candidates and also making it easier to share information regarding the applicants. Developing a bridge between the recruiting system and HR system making the department more efficient and productive.

A new training module course is currently taking place to help those being promoted to be successful in their new roles.

A new person in HR was just recently hired she will be the “Training and Communications” supervisor to help insure all the appropriate training is taking place at the right time such as:

- a. New hire orientation
- b. Training for individuals being promoted
- c. Consistency throughout the agency

This person will also be responsible for HR polices and communications regarding the Regional Center.

- a. Social Media
- b. Website
- c. Updating brochures –ARCA currently working on brochures that can be customized for each Regional Center.

### **8. State Council on Developmental Disabilities, North State Office Report, Renee Bauer, Regional Manager**

#### **i. Report**

State Council will meet on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, virtually

Two Councilmembers terms have ended, and it is anticipated that the newly appointment members will be announced at the upcoming meeting.

July State Council Meeting will convene in person, in Sacramento

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Cycle 46 Program Development Grants in: Education, Employment, Health and Safety and Self-Advocacy. \$300,000 total with a final deadline for submission on: May 22, 2023.

National Core Indicator project, In-Person Survey cycle has come to an end for the FNRC catchment area. Four hundred plus consumers were interviewed.

State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) has newly published brochures in English and Spanish

Statewide Self-Determination Orientations continue and are offered in several languages.

North State Regional Advisory Committee meets next on: June 9<sup>th</sup> at the FNRC Redding location. Membership opportunities available within the North State.

Please contact [renee.bauer@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:renee.bauer@scdd.ca.gov) for more information.

### **9. FNRC Board Committee Reports and Action Items**

#### **a. Consumer Committee, Adrian Hugo Chair**

- i. Review of the board packet. Megan Swope Community Services Supervisor presented and explained Action Item #1 and Action Item #2.
- ii. Mike Mintline-CFO presented and explained the financial reports located within the Director's Packet.
- iii. Introduction of Megan Swope the new Community Services Supervisor.

Board members were encouraged to discuss needs and successes in each of the counties that they represent.

These topics will be discussed further at future meetings

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iv. Newsletter

Discussed the vision of the newsletter and what type of articles the board members would like to include.

This will be a work in progress making January the target date for our first newsletter.

b. Finance Committee, Cali McKinzie, Ex-officio

i. Action Item #1- Merakey Allos Vendor #HF0690

Action Requested: The Board approves contract PS-2572 Addendum #1 with Merakey Allos, vendor number HF0690, to extend contract through September 30, 2023 at the DDS-approved fixed facility rate of \$66,738.12 per month for up to four residents.

Motion and second Finance Committee and Adrian Hugo

Discussion: This home currently being utilized and serving four individuals. This home is also available to other Regional Centers. Funds are provided thru our POS authorization system.

No further discussion, Motion passed

ii. Action Item #2- First Transit, Inc Vendor #HF0577

Action Requested: The Board approve contract PST-2636 with First Transit, Inc vendor number HF0577, for Transportation Services for on demand "Redi-Ride" transportation services to FNRC clients effective July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025 for a total maximum contract amount of \$600,871.20.

Motion and second Finance Committee and Kim Leeseman,

Discussion: This service is currently only offered in Shasta County at this time. Question: Could we do something like this in our rural communities? Answer: Resources would need to be developed. A collaboration with existing programs may be something that could work for our individuals. Megan Swope, Community Services Supervisor will look into this.

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If you know of resources we could tap into please forward those contacts to Megan email: [mswope@Farnorthernrc.org](mailto:mswope@Farnorthernrc.org)  
No further discussion, Motion passed

### c. Service Provider Advisory Committee, Josh Flom, Chair

#### i. Self Determination Program- Melissa Gruhler, Executive Director and Megan Swope, Community Services Supervisor

Introduction of Megan Swope and her new role in Community Services.

SDP increased capacity as more individuals are expressing interest. Statewide, the department is working to establish new rates. They are working to avoid any lapse of service or payments as they make this transition.

Currently the hope is there will be an increase of FMS providers.

Case management working with families to help make this program successful. Many families report that this new program is life changing for those individuals enrolled.

For the SDP services, enrollment is happening across the board; even more so in the rural areas. Currently no one in Trinity County has enrolled.

One barrier currently is the FMS waiting lists and families being able to find staffing.

June 1<sup>st</sup> we will see a new vendorization "GT Independence". This new vendor will be providing FMS services.

#### ii. DSP Staff Survey- Megan Swope, Community Services Supervisor

This is exciting for those attached to this service code. It is looking for factors that impact the workforce such as: turnover, staff just walking off the job and staff not showing up for work.

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The goal is to seek understanding into the challenges and policy changes in hopes of improving the retention of staff. This survey runs from May 1<sup>st</sup>-June 30<sup>th</sup>. There is an agency incentive of \$8k. Agencies must register to get the survey. All questions are on the DDS website: [ddsworkforce.ca.gov](https://ddsworkforce.ca.gov)  
Note: The agency must have been in business and served the community a minimum of six months in 2022.

- iii. Monthly Reports from vendors related to restraints-Megan Swope, Community Services Supervisor  
Vendors that do crisis/supports are required to report restraints. This new directive requires monthly reports for restraints that must be sent to DDS. This form is available on their website. Far Northern Regional Center did offer training prior for those that are expected to be impacted by this directive.

- iv. Success Stories

Arc of Butte County –Special Needs Carnival was a huge success, despite the concerns of rain.

State Council on Developmental Disabilities  
PPE-COVID is available for anyone needing gowns for isolation. SCDD stated that resources are available. A request form can be sent to you for these supplies.

SCDD has changed locations in Chico. Website is up to date  
SCDD reported that they now have new brochures regarding what the council is all about.

The National Core Indicator Project/in person cycle is coming to completion. Deadline is June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

- v. Arc of Butte County- June 16<sup>th</sup> –Highlight who we are.  
Will take place at 2040 Park Ave in Chico



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- v. Far Northern Regional Center, Travis McIvor  
“Are you Ready Event”  
May 31<sup>st</sup> at 1 PM –Register on Eventbrite  
Topics: Prepare car, fire prevention and preventing hot weather injuries
- vi. Next SPAC meeting June 21st

### 10. **Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA):** Daniel Strauss, Representative

- i. ARCA-What is it and why is it important?

Reminder of what ARCA represents: California’s network of 21 regional centers-approximately 400,000 people with developmental disabilities.

Achieve “the intent and mandate of the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act in providing community-based services that enable individuals with developmental disabilities to achieve their full potential and highest level of self-sufficiency.”

- ii. ARCA Academy

Learned more about the roles and responsibilities of Board members.

Far Northern Regional Center had the largest RC representation.

Thank you for taking the time to attend-including Melissa  
Big thanks to Cindi F. and Patricia for providing transportation

Agenda:

Themes and Trends in Developmental Services

How to Change Perceptions of Regional Centers-Marketing  
101

The Non-profit Board Officer-Care, Loyalty, Obedience

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Strategies for Encouraging Public Participation-  
Procedures & Policies

Why Your Role as a Regional Center Board Member Matters-  
Local

Strategic Planning-Direction, Priorities, Engagement,  
Inspiration- Do we do what we say?

Board Retention and Recruitment-Structure, Needs, Recruiting

Themes and Trends in Developmental Services

Outcomes-The Importance of Impact

Equity-Meeting Unique Needs Fairly

Transparency-The Power of Information

Accountability-Taking Responsibility

Consistency-Similarity and Predictability

Outcomes- The Importance of Impact

How do services and supports change our lives?

What does the data tell us?

What do individual experiences teach us?

Equity-Meeting Unique Needs Fairly

Can we give each person what they need?

Are there barriers in the way?

Do different people face different obstacles?

What can we do to improve access?

Transparency-The Power of Information

How can we make data available?

Are facts and figures understandable?

Can we protect personal information?

In available information answering the questions being asked?

Accountability-Taking Responsibility

Accountable to whom?

The state

The community

Each person served and family

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What measures are the most important?  
How does accountability support positive change?

Consistency-Similarity and Predictability  
How does consistency support efficiency?  
What is the role of community responsiveness?  
Can individual flexibility still be maintained?

Thank you for your commitment to ensure that Far Northern Regional Center continues to work to meet the needs of people with developmental disabilities.

### **11. Report from Executive Director, Melissa Gruhler**

ARCA Academy provided a lot of useful information

- i. Shasta County Opportunity Center – Shasta County workers on strike and this did impact some of the crews  
The Community Integration Program has been closed. Those supervisors had to take positions within the county and outside the county.

Many of the sights have also been closed.

Recycling crew given notice that they would be shut down in one week.

Currently brainstorming with the City of Redding and have agreed to provide support until 5/25/23. The Opportunity Center is making every effort to find a vendor and be open again by 5/31/23.

On June 30, 2023 many of the sights will be in the same situation. We are working to get vendors in place so the positions will not be lost. Our vendors are working to try and make this happen.

One contract will not continue and that is the Shasta County Mailroom. We are looking for ways to support these individuals by helping them find other employment opportunities.

The county will extend the mailroom contract to 7/31/23 in hopes these individuals will be successful in finding other employment.

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### ii. Growth

Far Northern Regional Center expanding currently as of April serving 9,740 individuals.

Includes 99 referrals from Butte County  
95 referrals from Shasta County  
20 referrals from Lassen County

We just recently promoted a staff member in the Lake Almanor office to do intakes. We are currently looking at the other rural areas and evaluating the need for an intake person in those areas as well to address the needs of the community.

### iii. Outreach

Outreach events and our Facebook posting have been successful

Recently in collaboration with Win River Casino we were able to put on an event “Week of the Young Child” engaging our tribal communities. We would like to do more of these types of events in Oroville and Susanville areas. Adrian Hugo (Board Member) has offered to attend these events as a board representative.

### iv. Self-Determination Program (SDP)

This program is going well as we are able to reach our community. With new programs there is always room for growth and improvements. We are currently evaluating our process internally so we can better serve those individuals in this program.

The Department recognized a need for improvement so they have implemented a rate increase for the FMS agencies.

It will take time to hire staff and get them trained even with this rate increase.

One new FMS vendor is coming on board soon and another one getting ready to come on board.

Megan Swope, Community Services Supervisor is reaching out to others to hopefully increase the number of FMS vendors.

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### v. Family Wellness

This new program is going extremely well. Two sessions have been completed and the turnout was steady. This program offers to eligible children, socialization training and group counseling. Available this summer a Spanish speaking only group will be conducted.

### vi. Regional Center Measurements – Employment, Participation in Competitive Integrated Employment

#### Desired Outcome:

To ensure that people get and keep jobs that maximize their skills and interests. To advance this outcome, the Department has set a statewide goal for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23 of increasing CIE placements by 20 percent over the number of placements in FY 2021-22. This will require attention over the next year. We will need to market this service.

### vii. May Revise released last Friday

Our current Operations Budget was reduced which was a surprise. This reduction was due to slow hiring of some positions that money had been allocated for. This reduction was statewide.

The budget looks good for the upcoming year. However the new budget has not been signed. Hoping to give an update on the budget at the June meeting.

## **12. Announcements, Reports, Questions and Answers, Summary Comments: All Board Members**

### i. Andreas Economopoulos-Teaching Music

Announced he will be having a recital on May 24 at 12:30 PM at the College of the Siskiyous. This will be a masterclass on music theory. Others will see those with disabilities can learn music.

Working to develop client to client teaching methods

Encouraged others to get out and teach others what you know.

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- ii. Terrie M. – People First-Red Bluff
  - May meeting was on Zoom. 7 people attended
  - Tina from SCDD gave a report
  - Terrie spoke about the ARCA Academy
  - Vickie (Lighthouse) spoke about the Special Olympics
  - A merchant's fair will take place in September
  - Next Meeting June 20 from 12-1:00 PM
  
- iii. William Moore – Division 2
  - Division two conference May 17-18, 2024 in person
  - Next meeting June 24 at Round Table Pizza-Guest Speaker
  - Subject: "Emergency Preparedness"
  - A new secretary was elected
  
- iv. Adrian Hugo-
  - Announced the Round House will be having their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual event July 8<sup>th</sup>. They are looking for vendors no fee to participate they just ask for a raffle item. Adrian can provide information if anyone would like to participate. Adrian also volunteered to attend the event as a board representative.
  
- v. Kim Leeseman-People First California
  - Zoom conference to learn how to be a self-advocate
  - The history of People First will be presented
  - Registration forms are available
  - Invite others to come and learn this skill and the history
  
- vi. Daniel Strauss-suggestion
  - The possibility of getting out into the community by moving the board meeting to different counties at least once per year.

Moved to closed session at 11:46 AM

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**13. Transition to Executive (Closed) Session, W & I 4663 (a),**

- (1) Real estate negotiations.
- (2) The appointment, employment, evaluation of performance, or dismissal of a regional center employee.
- (3) Employee salaries and benefits.
- (4) Labor contract negotiations.
- (5) Pending litigation.

Moved from closed session at 12:00 PM

**14. Success Stories:**

Kathryn Boroff, RDQA Employment Specialist presented:

Recognized: Daniel Perez as the May 2023 Outstanding Achievement Award winner.

Daniel has been working at the Shasta County Opportunity Center for 16 years

Jake Lingle was recognized as the May 2023 Inclusive Work Force Recipient –Shasta County Opportunity Center.

**15. Adjournment:** Motion and second Kim Leeseman and Patricia McCarthy, no discussion, Motion passed meeting adjourned at 12:17 PM

**16. Next Meeting:** June 22 and 23, 2023, Gaia Hotel, Anderson, CA