

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

Regular Meeting  
Friday, November 18 2022  
9:15 a.m.  
Gaia Hotel / Zoom  
Minutes

- 1. Call to Order:** 9:27 AM by Chair Cali McKinzie
- 2. Roll Call:**
  - a. Present: Cali McKinzie, Deborah Anderson, Lori Childres, Kim Leeseman, Daniel Strauss, Josh Flom, William Battles Terri M., Andreas Economopoulos, Christina Johnson, Joseph Cullis, Ginger Moyles
  - b. Absent: Timothy Howard, Araceli Garcia, Selene Mercado, Adrian Hugo, Edna Winkle
- 3. Public Meeting:** Far Northern Regional Center's NCI Child & Family Survey- Presented by: Melissa Gruhler, Executive Director

The National Core Indicators (NCI) Survey is used by the California Department of Developmental Services to assess performance in services and supports provided to people with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD). The NCI Survey has been used in California since 2010 as a requirement by the Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 4571 to implement a nation-wide quality assessment survey.

Each year, National Core Indicator (NCI) asks people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families about the services they get and how they feel about them. NCI uses surveys so that the same questions can be asked to a large group.

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Melissa Gruhler presented to the board and public an overview of the survey results. The survey is available for viewing on the FNRC Transparency Portal under National Core Indicators (NCI). This was noticed and presented in accordance with DDS requirements.

- 4. Public Input/Open Forum** Introduction of guests: FNRC Staff Mike Mintline, Tracy Duarte, Keith French, Dr. Christine Austin, Wayne Doerning, Melinda Roberts, Travis McIvor, Martha Alvarez, Bethany Miles, Cathy Tillman, Audra Feedback, Renee Bauer (SCDD), Tammy Torum (WCAL), James Ford (DDS), Patricia McCarthy
- 5. Approval of Agenda November 18, 2022**  
Addition: Add "In Person" to #3 NCI In Person Child & Family Survey  
Motion to approve agenda and Second Christina Johnson and Andreas Economopoulos No further discussion, Motion Passed
- 6. Approval of Minutes from September 23, 2022**  
Motion and second Daniel Strauss and Lori Childres No discussion, Motion Passed
- 7. Report from Chairperson, Cali McKinzie**
  - a) Introduction of New Board Members
    1. Ginger Moyles-Siskiyou County –Ginger introduced herself Excited to be representing Siskiyou County as a parent.
    2. Edna Winkle –new representative from Modoc County
  - b). Other
    1. Cali as Ex-officio of the Membership Committee motioned for approval of Patricia McCarthy as a new Member at Large from Siskiyou County Second by William Battles No discussion, Motion Passed Patricia briefly introduced herself.

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2. Cali thanked everyone on the Board for serving and how important it is. Announced Tehama County SELPA Movie Night “CODA”  
Red Carpet Celebration and Photo Opportunities Dec 7<sup>th</sup>  
State Theatre in Red Bluff.

**8. Management Reports**

a. **Financial Report:** Mike Mintline, Chief Financial Officer

- i. Purchase of Service (POS)-Reported by Mike Mintline-  
Chief Financial Officer  
Allocation is \$251,497,485; Year to Date \$45,487,050;  
Projected Annual Expenses \$216,360,811.  
Currently showing a surplus for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Mike  
explained vendors can bill up to three years in the rear.  
Also the Alternative Service Rates will be ending  
December 31, 2022. January and February expenses will  
give a better idea of what the total expenses will be for  
the year.

Mike reminded everyone that the fiscal year runs from  
July 1 of current year to June 30 of the following year.  
Training on Fiscal year –vs- Calendar year will take place  
in June 2023. Mike will be looking to the Finance  
Committee to give input regarding this training.  
Questions such as where does the money come from and  
where does it go? A flow chart may help with  
understanding this process.

- ii. Operations Report-Fiscal year 2022/2023-reported by  
Audra Feedback-Controller

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### Monthly Financial Report 2022/2023-

Estimated contract Allocation is 27,097,333 Projected Annual Expenses \$27,051,672 projected surplus \$45,661. A .2% of a buffer currently built into this figure. It is still early in the year projected includes positions that have not yet been hired. Travel remains to be something unknown. Travel has not yet reached pre-pandemic levels still a conservative projection.

### Salaries and benefits

Increase primarily due to the addition of new service coordinators, supervisors and support to comply with new caseload ratio requirements. 2% annual increases given to all employees per our CBA.

### Facility Rent

Full year 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.

### Facility maintenance/improvements

Decrease due to prior year leasehold improvements to office space in Chico and Redding. 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.

### Non-IT Equipment

Prior year included new office space furnishings in Chico and Redding.

### Consulting

Includes 2 LCSW temporary positions funded by the American Rescue Act (ARPA)

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Interest Revenue

Rates have increased, investing excess cash in short-term Treasury Bills

- iii. Other: DDS Audit-Clean Audit very successful. Some internal changes to procedures will be implemented; however the hard work and dedication of several individuals is what made this audit successful. Auditors Lindquist, Von Husen & Joyce LLP to begin in October; not expecting any huge change in standards.
- iv. Action Item #1- Columbia Bank Signers  
Contribution accounts including Holiday's are for Caring Program.  
Because the authorized list of check signers and employees authorized to use debit cards is not current, a new list of signers is submitted for Board approval. The bank now requires the Executive Assistant, who uses a debit card for purchases, be an authorized check signer.

Action Requested: Board of Directors approval of the following authorized signers:

Columbia Bank Account ending in 3701 (one signature required)"

Melissa Gruhler, Executive Director

Michael J. Mintline, Chief Financial Officer

Audra K. Feedback, Controller

Shelly Nickle, Executive Assistant (will use debit card)

Board of Directors approval to delete the following authorized debit card user is requested:

Cynthia Presidio, former Executive Assistant

Motion and second Dan Strauss and Joseph Cullis, No discussion, Motion Passed

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**b. Client Services Report:** Wayne Doerning, Associate Director,  
Client Services North Reporting:

**i. Report- Travis McIvor-Safety Officer**

Provided charts indicating where the emergencies have taken place in 2022.

Siskiyou County had the most activity this last year with Trinity County having activity towards the later part of the year.

To-Go Bags are starting to go out. Individuals need to attend a class then they can request the bag. Most classes are given via Zoom. It is a bag on wheels with side pockets to use as extra storage. These pockets could be used for extra clothes, medications, pet food etc. Included in the bag: Water filtration device; wool blanket; tent-reflective material, sleeping bag designed to keep heat in; emergency poncho, keeping out wet weather; Food Bag: Water; bars; iodine tablets can be used to purify water; personal hygiene wash cloth, comb, toothbrush, shampoo and toothpaste; First Aide Kit: Gloves; cord; first aide kit whistle/compass; safety goggles; Swiss army knife; sewing kit; pencil/paper; Light/communication bag: Light FM/AM radio; charge cell phone with a manual charger; etc

Good idea to keep a To/Go Bag in your car or office. These bags can be ordered directly from the company starting at around \$50.

To take a class the client just needs to email their Service Coordinator then they will receive a Zoom link to take the class.

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ii. Wayne Doering, Associate Director, Client Services  
North

Enhanced Service Coordination – Four positions have been given to us by DDS (Department of Disability Services) All have been hired. These positions will be addressing disparity in POS clients with less than \$2,000 in expenditures. This is mostly found in the Hispanic and South East Asian population. These Service Coordinators have a 1/40 caseload ratio giving them time to contact families and inquire why they are not utilizing services. The goal is to give instruction on services that can be utilized increasing the family knowledge of services and the success stories. Positive results are happening. It is voluntary to participate in this program quarterly. Once they complete the curriculum and begin utilizing services they can move out of the program and be assigned to a regular Service Coordinator. The barriers seem to be lack of trust in bureaucracy; confusion regarding the Far Northern Regional Center services and how they might effect other services they are receiving.

c. **Clinical Services Report:** Christine Austin, MD, Medical  
Director

i. Report: Brief update seems to have been a dip in COVID in the last couple of months.

Continuing to supply support and guidance regarding COVID. Historically over the last two years there seems to be a peak in summer and another peak usually in January. Slight uptick this month (November)

Health and Wellness Zoom meeting taking place the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month. All are welcome to attend-interactive.

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**d. Human Resources Report:** Melinda Roberts, HR Director

i. Report:

Year to date separations = 20

Retirements 25% of total separations

Year to Date Turnover = 8.58%

\*Promotion: One this month

Year to Date promotions = 12

\*Transfer- Two this month

\*New Employees: Seven this month

Year to Date new employees = 51

\*Open Positions/Active Recruitment = 7

\*Total number of employees = 233

**e. Community Services Report:** Todd Clarkson, Associate Director  
Tracy Duarte, Community Services Supervisor

- i. Action Item #2 – Performance Contract Revised in September. The draft of the Performance Contract was presented. The 2023 Performance Contract will span 18 months, ending June 30, 2024. The “18 month”, Calendar Year (CY) 2023-June 2024 Draft Performance Contract and survey has been announced and shared through Facebook and FNRC’s Website for general public review. The Performance Contract has been shared with the Butte County Coordinating Council, provided to the local office of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, and the Service Provider Advisory Committee. The Draft Contract was presented for public input by FNRC Board of Directors on September 23, 2022. A public meeting was held during the evening of October 5, 2022 via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic .

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Action Requested: That the Board of Directors approve the attached 18 month-Performance Contract for Calendar Year 2023 through June 30, 2024.

Motion and second Andreas Economopoulos and Lori Childres, No discussion, Motion passed

- ii. Action Item #3-(CRDP) Community Resource Development Plan; New Beginnings Housing Foundation DDS has approved funding for Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) to purchase a home located in Chico, CA currently occupied by three individuals served by FNRC. New Beginnings Housing Foundation has been chosen as the Housing Development Organization (HDO) to receive CRDP funding to purchase the home for continued use by individuals served through FNRC.

Action Requested: The Board approve contract PS-2611 with New Beginnings Housing Foundation (Vendor # pending) for CDSP Start-Up funding to purchase a home in Chico, CA to provide permanent housing effective December 1, 2022 through February 28, 2025 for a total maximum contract amount of \$325,000.00.

Motion and second Josh Flom and Terri M, No discussion, Motion passed.

- iii. Community Services Report:  
Purchase of Service (POS) contracts Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) paid a total of \$2,539,434.91 for September, and \$2,597,037.23 for the month October.

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Vendorization: In September 2022 (11) packets were sent out to prospective vendors; vendorization was completed for (7) new service providers; and (11) vendor files were closed.

In October 2022 (21) packets were sent out to prospective vendors; vendorization was completed for (8) new service providers; and (3) vendor files were closed.

- iv. Paid Internship/Integrated Employment Report  
Vendor updates: Currently (8) actively developing paid internships.  
Educational Activities: Continuing to hold LPA informational meetings regarding transition services.  
Paid Internship Program: (33) PIPS since July 1, 2022  
PIP Bonus since July 1, 2022 (17\*) 30 day and (14\*) 60 day  
Emp Bonus since July 1, 2022 (9\*) 30 day, (6\*) 6 month, (2\*) 12 month  
\*These numbers are an underrepresentation as several job development agencies have paperwork still to be submitted.  
Job Development and Pre-Employment Training-(45) new referrals since July 1, 2022

### **9. State Council on Developmental Disabilities:** Renee Bauer, Regional Manager, North State

- a. SCDD updates for November 2022:
  - i. NSRO is hiring for an Office Technician  
Other positions with SCDD:  
<https://scdd.ca.gov/jobsandexams/>

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- ii. **National Core Indicator(NCI)** is up and running! Letters have started to go out to Regional Center Consumers, informing each selected individual, that they will be contacted by a designated interviewer. Average time of an interview is 45 minutes, this survey cycle is in-person with the option to set-up zoom as desired. The intent of this project is to obtain feedback to improve services throughout the State. High focus on education that NCI is not to take any benefits or services from the Consumer. NCI Project is 100% voluntary and confidential. Mary Agnes-Nolan out of North State Regional Office, Chico is facilitating the project for: North Coast, North State and North Bay Regions. Three Regional Centers, with the overall goal of 1200 surveys completed by June of 2023. (400 per Regional Center)  
[maryagnes.nolan@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:maryagnes.nolan@scdd.ca.gov)
- iii. **Self-Determination Program (SDP): SCDD-DDS**  
November, fourteen trainings scheduled (English/Spanish) on varied times/days.  
SDP Orientation training calendar has been posted and updated for the past few weeks, on the SCDD Orientation webpage, and will be updated on an ongoing basis.  
<https://scdd.ca.gov/sdp-orientation/>
- iv. **Upcoming:**  
**North State Regional Advisory Committee (RAC)** next meeting date: 12/9/2022 at 1:00 pm. To be posted on <https://scdd.ca.gov/northstate/> ten days prior to meeting.  
**Scheduled Presentation:** Braille & Talking Book Library. Overview of application process and services offered.

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**10. FNRC Board Committee Reports and Action Items**

a) Consumer Committee-William Battles, Chair

- i. Review of the Board Packet and Action Items
- ii. Audra Feeback, controller presented the Financial forms
- iii. Melissa Gruhler, Executive Director went over the remainder of the Board Packet including Action Items and answered questions.

b) Service Provider Advisory Committee-Josh Flom, Chair

- i. HCBS Progress-presented by Tracy Duarte, Community Services, Supervisor

Update: 265 Providers

40 have closed since this process began

132 Providers Compliant

92 Services Not Compliant

Majority have submitted some documents

The Department recently provided the regional center with a letter to providers that are not responding.

10 day time limit for providers to respond when the letter is sent.

All providers must submit some documents by the 5<sup>th</sup> of December.

The Regional Center is available to assist with the documentation if needed.

Common struggles and issues with providers: Smaller providers-staffing issues and finding time to complete the documentation. Many are meeting the culture of the home, but not the documentation requirement.

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- ii. Quality Incentive-presented by Tracy Duarte, Community Service, supervisor  
Improve outcomes for consumers and providers

Phase 1- Includes prevention, wellness and access for workforce  
Those validating should receive their payments

DSP workforce-incentive payment for the workforce survey  
Validated by the Department and those providers were notified in September who would be receiving the incentive payment.

Located on the Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) website under "Provider Resources" future information will posted.

Four areas of focus:

Prevention, Wellness, Employment Access and Capacity

- iii. Social Recreation Grants-presented by Cathy Tillman, Community Services, Supervisor  
Announcement is located on website-enhanced community grants for integration.

DDS identified goals for these incentives

Culturally appropriate, Community based, Public and private camps, Afterschool programs, Religious organizations

Eight different project types are the outcome goals

This will help with vrending these programs.

It is specific to the ages 3-21 to be considered. Must be determined eligible for regional center services prior.

One goal: Looking into culturally diverse.

RFP available in documents section for this resource on the website if interested. Packet deadline: 5 PM 12/05/2022.

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- iv. Community Service Announcements-presented by Melissa Gruhler, Executive Director and Todd Clarkson Associate Director of Community Services.

SOC- Shasta County Opportunity Center has held several stakeholder meetings for clients who are working and have a concern of losing their jobs.

The County Board of Supervisors are moving forward  
The Regional Center is working with other providers in hopes finding a vendor to take on these contracts.

Historical Program established in 1964

The longevity of this program is really affecting those individuals that have been working there a long time. This program meets their social connections, interactions, community, and families.

Thank you Compass for helping these individuals express how they feel thru video taping. This was shared with the Board of Supervisors. This allowed them to be heard without fear of intimidation.

Downtown Grounds opened with Artistic Endeavors  
Made possible with HCBS grant money. This provides several employment opportunities.

Todd Clarkson announced he will be transitioning out of his role at the Regional Center. His last day will be January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023 after almost 23 years with Far Northern Regional Center.

- v. Success Stores –presented by Cathy Tillman, Community Services, Supervisor  
PIP-hallmark so successful all agencies are at capacity.  
Over the last year 89 interns at any given time  
Many referrals are being received  
\*Sunrise Mountain Wellness Center is working to create more internship programs and also an increase in resource sharing.

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- vi. SCDD State Council on Developmental Disabilities gave their report
  - vii. Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy – update from Kimberlee Candela
  - viii. SPAC Meeting Schedule:
    - January 25, 2023
    - March 22, 2023
    - May 17, 2023
    - June 21, 2023
    - September 27, 2023
    - November 15, 2023
- c. Membership Committee- Terri M. , Chair
- i. Recommendations for Board Training was presented and discussed. Ideas for additional training was also discussed.  
  
Recommended attending the Dialogue with Directors Team which takes place each month
  - ii. Review of the Board Composition Letter
  - iii. Member at Large applicant Patricia McCarthy will be taken to the Board for approval
- 11. Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA)- Daniel Strauss, Representative**
- i. ARCA-Association of Regional Center Agencies  
Protecting the Lanterman Act and Regional Centers.  
Regional Center System in place because of the Lanterman Act.

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- ii. The Little Hoover Commission, an independent state oversight agency, is holding hearings on the developmental disabilities services system.  
They've been exploring the challenges the system is facing and will be making recommendations for how to strengthen it.
  - \*The system is largely working and we need to have a voice that is reflecting that point of view.
  - \*Recent independent surveys of people served give a clear picture.
  - \*The experiences of the vast majority of people served in our system are positive.
  - \*Strong foundation to build from that respects people, supports their choices, and helps them lead good lives.
  - \*Committed to equitably serving Californians with developmental disabilities and their families and helping them to meet their unique needs.
  - \*The Little Hoover Commission is asking for ways to make the system work better.
  - \*We need to also have a voice for what is working well we cannot take for granted what we have.
  - \*Out of gratitude for what we have we need to have a balanced view. Otherwise all you hear is criticism.

**12. Report from Executive Director, Melissa Gruhler**

- i. The Little Hoover Commission will be conducting an interview with Melissa on how Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) handles challenges. This will take place on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.  
Currently gathering information on the success stories and the good work FNRC has been doing.

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- ii. Shasta County wanting to transfer the Opportunity Center During the month of October Stakeholder meetings were held. We had the opportunity to host one meeting; however the majority of the meetings were put on by the county providing additional information. Reporting this program is sustainable. The county proposed three different options:

1. Current Operation (Keep the same)
2. Different Service Provider
3. Keep some programs and eliminate others

Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) met with them to enhance their services such as paid internship programs. We did discuss our intention is to work with a provider in interviewing those individuals that could not be present at the meetings. For many of these individuals the meetings could be intimidating.

- iii. Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) continues to see our numbers increase. Although funds have been received for service coordinators who serve children 0-6 1/40 caseload and funds also to reduce caseloads not much relief is being felt with the growth we are seeing.

We have always been considered a small regional center but with the growth we are seeing we are pushing towards becoming a medium size regional center.

Our POS department continues to be short handed and much appreciation goes out to Melinda (HR director) and Mike (CFO) for their efforts in continuing to look at efficiency and make improvements. Many of our current employees are doing remote work and we will continue to look at ways to improve.

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- iv. National Core Indicator (NCI) is supplying valuable information that can be utilized for our Performance Contract and also the Regional Center Measurements.

**13. Announcements, Reports, Questions and Answers, Summary  
Comments-All Board Members**

- i. William Battles, People First of Shasta had a Christmas Party was a success. Red Bluff Chapter met in person for their last meeting.
- ii. Kim Leeseman- Chico chapter of People First will start meeting in person.
- iii. Melissa Gruhler announced the resignation of Todd Clarkson, Associate Director of Community Services. His last day with FNRC will be January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Todd has been with the regional center for over 22 years. He began his career with FNRC as a service coordinator and did a fabulous job.

Todd thanked the Board of Directors in appreciation for what they have done and what they continue do. This transition was not an easy decision. Thank you also to Melissa for the grace and acceptance always reflecting professionalism.

Cali (Chair) spoke for the Board thanking Todd and letting him know he will be missed.

**14. Transition to Executive (Closed) Session W & I 4663**

No items to address in closed session remained in open session

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**15. Success Story-Celebration**

- i. Brandy from We Care A Lot presented Daniel Strauss with a Celebration of Heroes Award.  
Dan was nominated due to the fact that he thinks outside of the box and is always willing to help others. “Not all heroes wear capes but Dan is one of those heroes”.

**16. Next Meeting January 26 & 27, 2023 – Gaia Hotel, Anderson, CA**

**17. Adjournment.**

Motion and 2<sup>nd</sup> Terri M. and Kim Leeseman, no discussion, Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned 12:45 PM