

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

Minutes of Regular Meeting  
Friday, May 20, 2022  
9:15 a.m.  
Gaia Hotel/Zoom

1. **Call to Order:** 9:31 a.m. by Chair Deborah Anderson
2. **Roll Call:**
  - a. Present: Deborah Anderson, Kim Leeseman, Lori Childres, Daniel Strauss, Terry M, Andreas Economopoulos, Josh Flom, Cali McKinzie, Adrian Hugo, Christina Johnson,
  - b. Absent: William Battles, Timothy Howard, Selene Mercado, Araceli Garcia
3. **Public Input/Open Forum:** Introduction of guests: FNRC Staff Mike Mintline, Todd Clarkson, Larry Withers, Keith French, Audra Feedback, Kelly Jensen, Mary Agnes Nolan (SCDD), Tina Reszler (SCDD) Cindi Freshour (WCAL), James Ford(DDS), Lidia River (Interpreter) Ellyn Bruce (AGT), Kristal Maikranz (AGT)
4. **Approval of Agenda** for May 20, 2022 Motion to approve agenda and second Terry M. and Daniel Strauss discussion under Client Services remove Success Story no further discussion motion passed.
5. **Approval of Minutes** from March 25, 2022: Motion to approve and second by Adrian Hugo and Daniel Strauss, No discussion, motion passed.
6. **Report from Chairperson,** Deborah Anderson
  - a: Conflicts of Interest forms, Whistleblower and Zero Tolerance Policies were handed out and an explanation was given for each form. Please sign and return.

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### 7. Management Reports

- a) **Financial Report:** Mike Mintline, Chief Financial Officer
- i. Review of FY 2020-21 Audited Financial Statements and presentation by AGT CPA's and Advisors, Kristel Maikranz presenting: During this audit, the firm AGT encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management relating to the performance of the audit stating Mike Mintline (CFO) and Audra Feedback (controller) pay close attention to detail. Per summary of Auditors' Results this audit has been deemed a clean, unmodified audit with no significant deficiencies identified. Financial Statements Audit-Nothing found; Federal Awards Audit-Nothing Found also deemed a clean audit.
  - ii. Purchase of Service Report FY 2021/22: Presented by Mike Mintline (CFO)  
Currently seeing an increase in unbilled and late billing from vendors making the expenses hard to calculate. Mike also stated \$25,734,530 will revert back to the state. The areas we are currently seeing an increase in cost is Community Care Facilities, Supportive Living and Respite. Some of the increase is due to the rate increases as a result of the rate study currently being implemented by the Department of Developmental Services.
  - iii. Operations Report, FY 2021/22 Presented by Audra Feedback (controller)  
Explanation of changes in projected expenses and other revenue compared to prior year contract.
    - **Salaries/benefits:** Increase is due primarily to the projected addition of 15 new, designated positions funded by the current year revenue allocation. Positions include an Emergency Coordinator, Rate Reform Implementation staff, a Deaf Service Community Specialist, Service Coordinators for clients with no or low services, staff to implement Early Start provisional eligibility for 3-4 year old clients, Self-Determination Program Specialists and staff that will

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provide Health and Safety Waiver Assistance for Non-English speaking clients. Increases given during the Union Negotiations.

- **Facility Maint/Improvements:** Increase includes projected leasehold improvements to office space at 1367 E. Lassen Avenue, Chico, as they are currently out of space for new offices.
- **Non-IT Equipment:** Increase includes equipping new office space in Chico and Redding
- **IT Contract/Software:** Consolidated print software to manage security and usage, required software to update virtual machines, Security Software.
- **Travel:** Increase assumes that travel will resume at pre-pandemic levels on January 1, 2021
- **CARES Act revenue:** One time funding that will not recur in the current year.

b) **Community Services Report-** Todd Clarkson Associate Director  
Todd reviewed the Community Services Division Board Newsletter

- Far Northern Regional Center paid a total of 2,288,695 in March 2022, and \$2,459,940 in April 2022.
- No new Whistleblower complaints were received.
- March 2022 (10) packets were sent out to prospective vendors; vendorization was completed for (14) new service providers; and (17) vendor files were closed.
- April 2022 (10) packets were sent out to prospective vendors; vendorization was completed for (11) new service providers; and (18) vendor files were closed.

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- DDS is working with the Regional Center on Resource Development. Using tools such as IPP's to survey our community looking for unmet needs to bring back to community services. The Regional Center in partnership with DDS can use start up funds to develop programs to meet these needs.
- Resource Priorities for 2022
  - \*To continue to develop person centered planners
  - \*Bilingual planners so we can engage with these communities
  - \*Support for service providers that are in need of additional support
  - \*Early Start-Focus on supporting families early on with assessments and navigating this process
  - \*Day Program Services- Helping vendors develop a business model and a plan to move forward
  - \*Transportation in outlining areas for individuals that want to be involved in work programs etc.

i) Action Item #1 Merakey Allos- It is requested that the Board approve contract PS-2572 with Merakey Allos, vendor number HF0690, for operation of a Community Crisis Home located at 21345 Old 44 Drive, Redding, CA effective June 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. The DDS approved fixed facility rate is \$64,883.51 per month for up to four residents with private bedrooms in this newly re-modeled home in Redding. The average monthly cost per client is \$16,220.88 per month. The total maximum contract amount for the life of this contract is \$843,485.63 for 13 months this first time. The facility rate for the CCH has been approved by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS)  
Motion to approve and second by Daniel Strauss and Andreas Economopoulos no discussion, motion passed

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### c) **Client Services Report:** Larry Withers Associate Director, Client Services, South Reporting:

- Most of the vacant positions have been filled. Currently still looking for a bilingual service coordinator in the Red Bluff office.
- We will be looking at filling the growth positions this summer.
- Construction of the office space in Chico should be completed soon.
- Self Determination Program training for all senior service coordinators and supervisors on the procedures of SDP will continue as the pilot was a success.
- Enhanced Service Coordination Plan for individuals that have under \$2,000 in POS services. Four of these positions have been filled. Curriculum for this program is still being developed. Continues to be a work in progress.
- Social Rec was suspended after 2008-2009 budget problems. This has just been lifted so service delivery now needs to be developed and focus groups are meeting to see what this might look like for individuals.

i) Action Item #3- POS Guideline Proposal CAMP definition redefined. It is requested that the Board approve changes to the POS Guidelines changing the definition of CAMP to the following: A facility or program that provides social recreation activities outside of the family home. Usually provided during the summer, a camp provides clients the opportunity to recreate, learn about nature and socialize away from home. Camps may be day or overnight camps. If camp is used as a form of day care, the Day Care Purchase of Services (POS) Guideline applies.

Motion to approve and second by Andreas Economopoulos and Adrian Hugo, No discussion, motion passed.

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d) **Human Resources:** Kelly Jensen, HR Specialist II

- Gave an overview of the Personnel Report for May 2022 Including retirements (1); Separations (3); Promotions (4); New Employees (7) Current Recruitment (5) total employees = 222
- Provided training on the annual Conflict of Interest form
- Explained the Whistleblower and Zero Tolerance policies

8. **State Council on Developmental Disabilities-** North State office report, Tina Reszler and Mary Agnes Nolan

- SCDD is sponsoring four Bills known as the “Access and Inclusion” Bills. Moving up to the house for a vote.
  1. SB 1092: Regional Center Fair Hearing Process
  2. AB 1663: Probate Conservatorships
  3. AB 2547: Housing Stabilization
  4. AB 2920: Inclusive College (Being held back)
- Project Safee  
\*North State team is working with Project SAFEE and the Red Cross to provide a virtual Emergency Preparedness Training Series. First Session June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and the topic will be on “General Preparedness”.
- Let’s Work Employment Workshop Series  
\*Last session to be held on June 16, 2022
- Update on National Core Indicators and the Family Survey. Surveys are being received and the hope is to have all surveys returned by June 30, 2022. The survey is also available online for families to fill out.

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## 9. FNRC Board Committee Reports and Action Items

### a) **Consumer Committee**, Presented by Adrian Hugo Member

- Mike Mintline, CFO Reviewed the independent auditors (AGT) report for June 30, 2021
- Melissa Gruhler, Executive Director Reviewed the Action Items and the Director's packet.

### b) **Executive Committee**, Presented by Deborah Anderson, Chair

- Action Item #2 Retired Annuitant Joan Monvik  
It is requested that the Board of directors appoint Joan Monvik to be re-employed by Far Northern Regional Center effective April 14, 2022, for a period of no more than 12 months, in compliance with Government Code requirements. Motion to approve and second Executive Committee and Josh Flom, no discussion, motion passed.

### c) **Service Provider Advisory Committee**, Josh Flom, Chair

- RFP (Request for Proposal) presented by Todd Clarkson Associate Director
  - \*Request for Early Start Intervention (EI) Services Consultant
  - \*Request for a Training and Program Development Consultant for Day Programming and Community Integration Services
  - \*Request for Spanish speaking Person Centered Planner
- Quality Incentive Payments presented by Melissa Gruhler, Executive Director
  - \*DDS website has the quality incentives listed

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\*Work group discussions and stakeholder meetings are taking place

\*Outcome goal is prevention and wellness

\*Focus is on needs and addressing barriers

\*Workforce surveys are being sent out 5/17/2022 from DDS

- Budget Highlights presented by Melissa Gruhler, Executive Director

\*May revised was released on Friday 5/13/2022

\*Categories added at the May revise:

1. Workforce stability
2. Ongoing effort to support workforce challenges for providers and Regional Centers
3. Service Access and Equity
4. Funds to address the FMS for Self Determination
5. Early Start Eligibility- Consider the diagnosis of FAS (fetal alcohol syndrome) qualifying risk condition
6. Increased distribution of Emergency go bags and batteries to increase supports for individuals

- Success Stories

\*Lisa Gunn-Special needs carnival was well attended over 200+ attendees

\*Shasta County Opportunity Center-served 66 individuals and was approved for another 3 yrs to provide job coaching.

- State Council on Developmental Disabilities

\*Mary Agnes update on National Core Indicators, and survey. Far Northern has had a success in the return of surveys by the families.

\*Encouraging families to complete the survey-also available online.



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- Updates and Announcements
  - \*Bob Irvin –REI coming up June 7<sup>th</sup> Zoom 10AM-12PM “Relationships within your neighborhood” (CEUs considered)
- SPAC Meeting Schedule
  - \*June 22, 2022 Hybrid in person/with virtual option
  - \*November 16, 2022 TBA

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

- 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.
- DDs Budget Proposal
  1. \$185.3M for Promoting Workforce Stability
    - a) \$127.8M for training stipends for Direct Support Professionals (plus taxes and admin fees)
    - b) \$22.5M for 3-month DSP training and internship program with up to two \$500 retention stipends for workers
    - c) \$30M for tuition reimbursement program for regional center service coordinators pursuing advanced degrees in health and human services
    - d) \$5M to pilot the development of remote supports using technology to increase independence, and “when chosen and safe, reduce in-person and around-the-clock services.”
  2. \$59.1M for provider rate adjustments in response to January 1, 2023 minimum wage increases
  3. \$11M additional Service Access and Equity Grants in FY 22-23

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4. \$7.2 to fund Financial Management Services –SDP
5. \$6.5M for expansion of Early Start eligibility
6. \$3.5 for Fairview Developmental Center
7. \$850k ongoing emergency supplies
8. \$2.1M increase to support Deaf Specialist costs
9. \$2.1M increase Specialized Home Monitoring
10. \$1.4M Intermediate Care Facilities
11. \$2.8 Elimination of Half-day billing rule-providers
12. Annual Family Program fee and Family Cost Participation Program suspension through 12/31/22 and then revision of the programs to impact only those families at more than 600% of the Federal Poverty Level

- Draft pieces of Trailer Bill Language related to DDS
  1. Payment of FMS costs for SDP
  2. Early Start Eligibility: Fetal Alcohol syndrome & Developmental Delay Thresholds
  3. Tailored Day Services Modifications & Half-Day Billing Elimination
  4. Directive Authority: (HCBS) rules, coordinated Family Support Services
    - a) Coordinated Family Support Services would be defined as respectful of language, culture, and ethnicity and “can focus on life-planning and end of life planning for consumers living with aging caregivers”
  5. Complex needs Data/Enhanced Behavioral Support Homes/Extension of Canyon Springs Community Facility Consumer Placements

## 11. Report from Executive Director, Melissa Gruhler

- Budget Highlight from May Revise-

\*Number of individuals served by regional centers is expected to be 371,388 in the current year and increase to 400,485 in fiscal year (FY) 2022-23.

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\*Currently Far Northern Regional Center is serving approximately 8,817 and this includes those individuals going through the intake process

\*Proposal for 1:40 case loads for 0-5 year olds is still being considered. If approved this will require additional preparation for expansion to address this population as well as addressing the increase in service coordinators to reduce the current caseloads noncompliance.

- COVID: Far Northern Regional Center catchment area is seeing an increase in exposure and positivity over the last two weeks. Statewide Weekly reported cases in our population have tripled since April 1. About 40% are in family homes, and another 40% are in CCF's, with the remainder largely in ICF's. The currently-circulating variant appears to be about six times more contagious than the original omicron variant. PPE are still available for those that have a need.
- Far Northern Regional Center will increase our efforts to be prepared for the Regional Center Measurement which will be included in the Performance Contracts. The Department continues to hold Stakeholder meetings to develop those performance indicators.
  1. Priority areas for indicators and benchmarks, include the following:
    - a) Equity in service access and purchase of services
    - b) Consumer Employment
    - c) Integration of consumers in the community
    - d) Person-centered planning
    - e) Compliance with federal home and community-based standards
    - f) Consumer and family experience and satisfaction
    - g) Innovation in service availability and delivery
    - h) Self Determination

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- In addition to Regional Center Measurements Far Northern Regional Center will work with Service Providers to turn from a compliance based system to an outcome based system that is Person Centered. 2021-22 fiscal year rate reform, which shall include a quality incentive program, create enhanced person-centered, outcomes-based system by July 1, 2025.
- Investment must be made into developing the Direct Service Provider workforce. DSP employed by service providers are critical to the quality of services and supports.

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

- Andreas Economopoulos hoping to restart “People First” in Yreka again. Working within his city to bring awareness of those individuals with disabilities and the services provided by Far Northern Regional Center.
- Terry M. “People First” April meeting was on Zoom and was very well attended. Had an awesome presentation on “Be ready for Emergencies and Making To go bags” The Emergency Fair in September should happen this year at the Community Center.

## 13. **Transition to Executive (Closed) Session 2 & I 4663 9a.** Motion and second Lori Childres and Andreas Economopoulos, No discussion, motion passed

## 14. **Next Meeting:** June 23 and 24, 2022, Gaia Hotel, Anderson, CA

## 15. **Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn and second by Daniel Strauss and Lori Childres, no discussion, motion passed

Adjourned at 12:35 PM