

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

Regular Meeting
Friday, January 27, 2023
9:15 a.m.
Gaia Hotel / Zoom
Minutes

- 1. Call to Order:** 9:24 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, Araceli Garcia, Joseph Cullis, Ginger Moyles, Selene Mercado, Adrian Hugo, Christina Johnson, Patricia McCarthy
 - b. Absent: Timothy Howard, Edna Winkle
- 3. Public Input/Open Forum** Introduction of guests: FNRC Staff Mike Mintline, Tracy Duarte, Keith French, Dr. Christine Austin, Wayne Doerning, Melinda Roberts, Martha Alvarez, Audra Feedback, Renee Bauer (SCDD), James Ford (DDS), Cindi Freshour
- 4. Approval of Agenda** January 27, 2023
Change: Client Service Report will be presented by: Wayne Doerning Associate Director, North not Larry Withers Associate Director South.
Motion to approve agenda and Second Terri M. and William Battles
No further discussion, Motion Passed
- 5. Approval of Minutes from November 18, 2022**
Motion and second Andreas Economopoulos and Araceli Garcia No discussion, Motion Passed
- 6. Report from Chairperson, Cali McKinzie**
 - a) Acknowledgement of out going Board Member William Battles

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William has been on the Board for three terms in association with the We Care A Lot Foundation. William always went above and beyond in fulfilling his duties on the Board. He will be truly missed.

- b) Executive Committee: Approval of Retired Annuitant Jane Work will be working with the Community Service Department working mostly on the Shasta County Opportunity Center Project. Motion and second Executive Committee and Terri M., No further discussion, Motion Passed

7. Management Reports

- a) **Financial Report:** Mike Mintline, Chief Financial Officer

- i. Operations-Reported by Mike Mintline-Chief Financial Officer

Projection amount may be low due to the ability to make interest on money that we have invested. We will have more than enough money to meet our obligations and will continue to make adjustments as needed.

The Summary page is still a work in progress. Some categories may be added to help with explanations. This report may be changed to two pages to provide strategic priorities. Connecting strategy and finance.

Salaries- Increase primarily due to the addition of new service coordinators, supervisors, and support to comply with the new caseload ratio requirements. We are continuing the recruitment process.

Facilities- 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. Decrease due to prior year leasehold improvements to office space at 1367 E. Lassen Avenue,

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Chico (\$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 the time working remotely.

Five year lease in Lake Almanor. Red Bluff the building is for sale; however we may be interested in more space at that location.

Legal/Consulting/Audit- Includes 2 LCSW contracted out temporary positions funded by the American Rescue Act (ARPA). Minimal increase in audit fees with new firm contract. Audit is going very well.

Travel- Post pandemic travel; has not yet reached pre-pandemic levels.

Interest/ICF SPA Admin/Other- Rates have increased, investing excess cash in short-term Treasury Bills. Further discussion on investments will take place with the Finance Committee.

ii. Purchase of Services POS 2022/2023-reported by Mike Mintline-Chief Financial Officer

Projected funds available-more than enough to meet the obligations and no constraints in the services being provided.

Looking for ways to better streamline the service codes and design balance sheet categories so more information can be provided. Further discussion will take place regarding these changes.

POS summary report- certain categories will have significant increases in the near future. When the increases are implemented the amount in the allocation

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excess column will decrease. These increases are good news for our providers.

Vendors are catching up on their back billing. In January the "Alternative Service" rate ended. These rates were average amounts; now the billing will represent actual time spent at the program.

We will be looking at a significant number of rate increases in the future. As the vendors go back to actual -vs- averages. This is being monitored and may require some restructuring.

b. Community Services Report: Tracy Duarte, Community Services, Supervisor

i. Action Item #1 Contract PS-2601 with Piper Way Senior Housing

Action Requested: The Board approve contract PS-2601 with Piper Way Senior Housing LP (Vendorization in process) for CRDP Start-up funding to develop a multi-family housing project effective October 1, 2022 through February 28, 2023 for a total maximum contract amount of up to \$739,130.00.

Motion and second Andreas Economopoulos and Terrie M. No further discussion, Motion Passed.

ii. Report: Vendorization Report

Whistleblower Complaints-No new complaints received

Vendorization-November (7) packets were sent out to prospective vendors; vendorization was completed for (6) new service providers; and (9) vendor files were closed

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December (7) packets were sent out to prospective vendors; vendorization was completed for (8) new service providers; and (5) vendor files were closed.

c. **Client Services Report:** Wayne Doerning-Associate Director, Client Services, North

- i. **Client Services Update-** Hiring is starting to slow down with many positions now being filled. Case management is being to move from hiring to training. It takes about a full year for a service coordinator to be fully trained. Office space is limited; therefore we are starting to double up those individuals that are working remote.

Finalization of our Remote Work Agreement is almost complete.

Travel- Currently we are seeing most individuals in person. Families may request visits be conducted via Zoom until June 30, 2023.

Day Programs- One program has closed; however, another vendor was able to step in and provide service to those individuals. Currently day programs are going ok.

d. **IT Department Report:** Keith French, Manager of Information Systems

- i. CERMS/UFSM update
Old system DDS is working on a replacement Sandis is currently used to process IPP's, ID notes and Other client related work.
UFSM is 40 years old and each Regional Center has their own way of using this system.
Much of the data on this system DDS cannot pull
Hoping to begin replacing this system in 2025.

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Planning meetings are taking place to determine what is lacking and what we like to see in a new system. Looking to have everyone dream big and toss out ideas. Some suggestions: Client/Vendor portals, Secure communication methods, and give people options. These brainstorming sessions have been well attended by the FNRC staff.

Updates will be provided and information will be passed on as stakeholder meetings are scheduled so input can be provided.

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

a. Report – SCDD updates January 2023

- i. Staffing of the North State Regional Office:
Currently interviewing for a Office Technician. Mary Agnes-Nolan has announced her retirement. Mary Agnes has been most recently working under the National Core Indicator Project (NCI) covering: Redwood Coast Regional Center, Far Northern Regional Center and North Bay Regional Center. Far Northern Regional Center will continue to be housed in relation to NCI out of the North State Office. Interviews are going well.
- ii. State Council: Meeting held virtually on January 24, 2023
Council meeting agenda, packet and handouts can be found at the following link:
<https://scdd.ca.gov/councilmeetings/>

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- iii. North State Council member, Rosie Ryan assisted in presenting with the State Council Self-Advocates Advisory Committee on: Remembering the History of Self-Advocacy. Rosie Ryan remains highly involved with the People First of Redding.
- iv. North State Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) will be meeting on February 10, 2023. The North State Office will be putting out a flyer, pertaining to membership vacancies in the nine county catchment area, in the weeks to come. RAC Chair, Charles Nutt was recently elected as Chair of Statewide Self-Advocacy Network otherwise known as SSAN.
- v. Cycle 46 Grant- State planning team is currently working on Cycle 46 grant request for proposals (RFP's) at the Regional level, North State is involved in several smaller focus groups which are also being developed and planned for the second year of the current five-year State Plan. (Focus areas: Self-Advocacy, Self-Determination, Employment, Housing) More to come on this project.

9. FNRC Board Committee Reports and Action Items:

- a. Consumer Committee, Adrian Hugo newly elected Committee Chair:
 - i. Melissa Gruhler reviewed and discussed the Board Packet, Action Items and Regional Center Performance Measures
 - ii. Audra Feedback, controller discussed the financial reports

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- b. Service Provider Advisory Committee, Josh Flom, Chair
 - i. HCBS Update-Tracy Duarte –Community Services, Supervisor
 - i. Review of compliance progress. One provider left to validate with the first phase of the DDS directive. Reference: HCBS Final Rule: Action required for non-compliant service providers. Upcoming trainings: Learning Collaborative. FNRC creation of a manual reviewing the HCBS Final Rule in detail. This manual will eventually be posted on the FNRC website for easy access and use.
 - ii. Quality Incentive-Tracy Duarte-Community Services, Supervisor
Direct Support Professional Workforce Survey: Phase II & III, letters went out to Providers detailing funding for participation. 42% of Providers reportedly submitted documentation. Stakeholder meetings are ongoing and are posted on the FNRC website.

Melissa Gruhler spoke about early intervention services, DDS incentive payments and encouraged SPAC to review archived videos to better understand the impact on these programs. [Helping California Address the Direct Support Professional Workforce Crisis-YouTube](#).
 - iii. Budget Highlights-Melissa Gruhler, Executive Director
The DDS budget is overall favorable. Highlights included:
*Reduced caseload 0-5 years (1:40),
*Minimum wage adjustment

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- *STAR home staffing adjustments and Intermediate Care Facility Licensure
- *Continued funding for UFSM and CERMS
- *Fairview warm shutdown-additional year of funding complex needs residential program
- *Increase in startup resources related to individuals with highly complex needs
- *Funding to adjust service providers mileage based on updates to the IRS rate
- *Extension of Porterville beds by ten, increase of three permanent positions and supports- Chapter 314 protective proceedings-increase of six permanent positions
- *Increase to trauma-informed services for Foster Youth
- *Autism services branch six permanent positions (DDS level) and Early Start-postponed. (Reference 2023-24 Governor's Budget-DDS)

- iv. Rate Increases- Diana Anderson
Adjustments continue. Second rate increase due to inflation, acceleration of implementation. Referenced the Burns and Associates rate study.

Effective January 1, 2023, the department shall adjust rates to equal one-half of the difference between rates in effect March 31, 2022 and the fully funded rate model for each provider, and additional funding shall be available for the quality incentive program.

Commencing July 1, 2024 the department shall implement the fully funded rate models using two

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payment components, a base rate equaling 90 percent of the rate model, and a quality incentive payment equaling up to 10 percent of the rate model, to be implemented through the quality incentive program.

- v. Return to in person- Diana Anderson
Alternative Services ended 12/31/22. In person attendance has been difficult. Staffing constraints are an ongoing concern.
Review of mask mandate and mask exception. This pertains to Clients not Providers. Documentation must be on file and available for CCL.

Remote Services are available on a limited case by case review. FNRC Service Coordinators must be involved. Remote Services are based on Client need not Provider need. Extensive documentation is required. Transportation needs also a concern.

Collaborative discussion held. The ARC and Mains' reported good attendance at day programs, shorter days desired and luckily, no staffing concerns at this time.

- vi. Success Stories:
Hordes and Boards: 1250 Hartnell Redding coming together.

Redding's premier gaming lounge offering inclusion and employment coming in February 2023.

The Arc: Carly Hines, Resource Developer has created and implemented Sibling Support Group (Children or

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teens of disabled family members) Kickoff group was a success. More opportunities to come.

- vii. State Council on Developmental Disabilities
Update on staffing; Mary Agnes Nolan retiring;
National Core Indicator update; Regional Advisory
Committee (RAC) working to build increased participation.

- viii. Office of Clients Rights Advocacy
Kimberlee Candela announced her pending retirement to
SPAC. She has served as the Attorney/Clients' Rights
Advocate for OCRA for ten years. Interviews will take
place soon. Keep referrals coming in during the transition
phase. Frankie Delgado will continue to work with the
Regional Center.

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

- a. ARCA represents California's network of 21 regional centers-
over 400,000 people with developmental disabilities.

- b. 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."

- c. Budget and Policy Positions
 - i. The number of individuals served by regional centers is
expected to be 400,485 in the current year and increase
to 420,927 in fiscal year (FY) 2023-24

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- ii. Major Policy in January Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-23: \$102.1M in increased costs for full funding for 1:40 caseload ratios for those under age 6.
 - iii. The Governor's Budget includes \$14.2 billion total funds for FY 2023-24; a net increase of \$1.6 billion over the updated FY 2022-23 budget, or a 12.7 percent TF increase.
- d. Little Hoover Commission Follow-Up
- i. The Little Hoover Commission, an independent state oversight agency, is holding hearings on the developmental disabilities services system.
 - ii. They've been exploring the challenges the system is facing and will be making recommendations for how to strengthen it.
 - iii. The experiences of the vast majority of people served in the Regional Center System are positive.
Regional Center Areas for development/improvement:
 - 1. Systemic barriers, including the requirement that families appeal generic services denials; (people eventually stop trying and give up.
 - 2. System capacity, including the roles of high caseloads, an inadequate service provider network, and poor data systems; (not enough supply to meet the demand)
 - 3. Racial, ethnic, and linguistic equity initiatives; (need results that show a fairer allocation of resources)

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4. Opportunities for greater consistency between regional centers. (there are differences depending on where you live in California)
- e. Strategic Plan-Draft
- i. Help ensure that ARCA's work is consistent with its goals
 - ii. Major priorities for Fiscal Years 2023/24-2025/26:
 1. Funding for Current and Future needs;
 2. Flexible and Sustainable Services
 3. Preservation of the Lanterman Act and Efficacy of the Developmental Services System; and
 4. Inclusion and Equitable Communities and Decision-Making
 - iii. ARCA's Strategic Plan is now in draft form. Ready to share with the Regional Center boards for their comments and feedback by March 31st.
 - iv. ARCA communication materials. Collateral Development available to all Regional Centers
 - v. Need to address problems but also need to appreciate what we have. Importance of communication.

10. Report from Executive Director, Melissa Gruhler

- a. The Little Hoover Commission is in the midst of its work examining the developmental services system and held hearings in the Fall. In addition to the hearings many Regional Center Directors were contacted for additional discussion. I

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had the opportunity to speak with them in November to share the work that was being done in our catchment area related to Access and Equity as well as the success of SDP. Still looking at the need for improvements in this process.

- b. Regional Center Growth. Seeing a huge increase in referrals. Eligibility review had 70 cases just yesterday. During the pandemic we did not see much growth statewide. We are now picking up these pieces showing significant increase.
Dash Board report showing we are serving 9,380 as of December 31, 2022 with numbers picking up in January.
- c. The Regional Center is looking at sponsoring the Northern California Institute that has been rescheduled for March.
- d. Supporting vendors regarding HCBS. Learning collaborative is being held in February. At that time the HCBS final rules notebook will be handed out. The Community Services Department will be available to support the vendors during this process. Letters will go out this week to those that have not responded.
- e. Regional Center Measurements we have received three directives in regard to performance.
Person Centered Services Planning – We already meet the requirements of this directive. We currently have four trainers in our southern office. It has been determined that we need to expand and have trainers located in the Redding office as well.

Early start, child find and identification- How can we reach those individuals in all our counties?

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Fiscal year 2022-23 will establish the baseline for reporting on activities undertaken to carry out child find and the results of identification activities

Early Start, Timely access to Early Start Services
Desired Outcome is for children and families to have timely access to Early Start services, minimizing the impact of developmental delays.

More directives to come in the future.

f. Self Determination Program currently 105 individuals enrolled and is continuing to grow. Doug Churchill with the Advisory Committee is making a short documentary on the success of Self Determination hoping to have it complete in February.

g. Budget Highlights -2023 proposed Governor's Budget Summary
The number of individuals served by regional centers (consumers) is expected to be 400,485 in the current year and increase to 420,927 in fiscal year 2023-24.

In addition to caseload and utilization updates, the proposed FY 2023-24 funding supports the following new and updated items.

- Reduced caseload ratio for Children aged 0-5 revised methodology to support reduced caseload ratios of 1:40 for children ages 0-5
- Minimum Wage Adjustment Increase of funding to support the projected minimum wage increase effective January 1, 2024.

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- STAR Home Staffing Adjustments and Intermediate Care Facility Licensure. Increase of funding for ongoing staffing resources to convert two Stabilization Training Assistance Reintegration (STAR) Homes to intermediate care facilities (ICFs) licensed through the Department of Public Health
- Uniform Fiscal System Modernization (UFSM) and the Consumer Electronic Records Management System (CERMS) Project Planning. (\$12.7 million TF, \$12.2 million GF): Funding for continued project planning efforts supporting the UFSM and the CERMS projects.
- Fairview Warm Shutdown-An additional year of funding to support the warm shutdown
- Complex Needs Residential Program-Increase of start-up resources to develop three 5-person residential homes for individuals with highly complex needs. A much-needed service in the state.
- Rate Assumptions: Increase of ongoing funding to adjust service provider rates for mileage based on updates to the federal Internal Revenue Service mileage rate
- Extension of 10 Beds at Porterville Developmental Center Increase of one-time resources to continue funding 10 additional beds at PDC through FY 2023-24 to maintain compliance with the 28-day timeline to provide services to individuals deemed incompetent to stand trial (IST), under the provisions of the Stiavetti lawsuit
- Disparities within the Developmental Services System: Increase of three permanent positions and additional support to address the requirements of Chapter 314 Statutes of 2022 (Assembly Bill 1957)
- Trauma-Informed Services for Foster Youth: Increase of funding to support implementation and increased

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workload in coordination of trauma-informed care for dually served youth in Foster care.

- Autism Services Branch: Increase of funding for six permanent positions.
- Early Start-Part C to B Transitions, Preschool Grants: Decrease in fiscal year 2022-23 and 2023-24 reflecting the delayed implementation of the preschool grant initiative until fiscal year 2024-25.

Feels like a lot in comparison to last year. Much of what is being proposed has already been established.

11. Announcements, Reports, Questions and Answers, Summary Comments: All Board Members

- a. Joseph Cullis –presented a check to Melissa Gruhler Executive Director. Representing Tri Counties Northern Regional Manager
As a supporter of the community Tri Counties Bank would like to make a donation to Far Northern Regional Center in the amount of \$2,000. This is a small token of support for what Far Northern Regional Center does within the community.
- b. Finance Committee, Lori Childres, Chair
Committee met to discuss the proposed FNRC Operations Expense Summary Changes – presented by Audra Feeback, Controller
- c. Andreas Economopoulos Spoke about teaching music. Gave some book recommendations: “Learning Piano their way” and “Label Free Teaching” with no focus on the disability.

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

No closed session needed for this meeting

13. Next Meeting: March 23 and 24, 2023 at the Gaia Hotel

14. Adjournment at 11:45 AM by Cali McKinzie Motion and Second by Patricia McCarthy and Lori Childres, no discussion Motion passed