

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

Minutes of Regular Meeting
Friday, May 29, 2020
9:15 a.m. by Conference Call
Far Northern Regional Center
1900 Churn Creek Road, #114
Redding, California

1. Call to Order: 9:23 a.m. by Chair, Daniel Strauss
2. Roll Call:
 - a. Present: Deborah Anderson, William Battles, Adam Beals, Daniel Strauss, Terry Morton, Kathryn McCreary, Andreas Economopoulos, Anne Silcher, Kim Leeseman, Lori Childres
 - b. Absent: Leslie Corletto
3. Public Input/Open: Introduction of guests: FNRC Staff: Mike Mintline, Todd Clarkson, Wayne Doering, and Larry Withers. Kristel Maikranz, AGT, CPAs and Advisors, Tammy Torum, Executive Director, We Care A Lot, Phil Perez, Department of Developmental Services, Mary Agnes Nolan, North State Office SCDD.
4. Approval of Agenda for May 29, 2020: Motion to approve agenda for May 29, 2020 and second by Terry M. and Andreas Economopoulos. No discussion, motion passed.
5. Approval of Minutes from March 27, 2020 to approve minutes from March 27, 2020 and second by Andreas Economopoulos and Terry M. The following corrections are necessary:
 - a. Page 11: #7ai – corrected to read: ...per month extra more than average,....
 - b. Page 11: #7a ii – corrected to read: ...COVID-19...
 - c. Page 11: #7a iii – corrected to read: ...Because of this switch....
 - d. Page 13: #8b ii – corrected to read: ...Access Homes...
 - e. Page 18: #9c – corrected to read: ...The Board Packet and Action...
 - f. Page 18: #11 – corrected to read: ...Andreas, William, Terry, Daniel and Deborah...

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A motion to approve the corrections of the minutes and second by Andreas Economopoulos and Terry M. No further discussion, motion passed.

6. Report from Chairperson, Daniel Strauss:
 - a. Acknowledgement of out-going Board Members, Roger Hatton and Kathryn McCreary. Dan Strauss thanked Roger and Kathryn for their service and dedication to the Board of Directors.
 - b. Daniel acknowledged and welcomed new Board Member, Lori Childres. Ms. Childres is representing Shasta County.
 - c. Daniel thanked Melissa, Keith and the Service Coordinators for their help during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also thanked Larry for the on-going training.

7. Management Reports

- a. Financial Report: Mike Mintline, Chief Financial Officer
 - i. Purchase of Service Report FY 19-20: Contract allocation is expected to be as much as \$8.8 million more than projected expenses despite mandated rate increases for providers and COVID19 expenses. Expenses are increasing at a faster rate than the number of clients served due in part to \$7.6 million in state-mandated rate increases effective January 1, 2020 and the addition of \$1.9 million in expenses related to the COVID-19 outbreak. Some expense categories are projected to change significantly from the prior year, such as:
 1. Out of Home. (rate and level change increases)
 2. Day Programs. (rate increases)
 3. Respite. (rate increases)
 4. Personal Assistance. (increased staffing – COVID-19)

Community Placement Plan expenses: Program and start up cost expenses are projected to equal contract allocation amounts. Three clients are expected to be placed from the Porterville and Canyon Springs Developmental Centers. No spending authority deficit is projected.

- ii. Operations Report, FY 19-20: There are approximately \$58 thousand projected funds available, with a committed line of credit available until September should it be necessary. An increase in salaries and benefits was caused primarily by

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the full year cost of a 2.0% salary increase effective November 1, 2018 in addition to four growth positions. There are also increases in Chico and Redding lease renewals. Increases in communications and postage are due, primarily to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for remote work IPads and additional mailings. However, travel expenses decreased exponentially due to COVID-19, and we have seen an increase in interest and Treasury bills revenue.

- iii. Review of FY 2019-20 Audited Financial Statements and presentation by AGI, CPAs and Advisors, Kristel Maikranz presenting: Ms. Maikranz reviewed the June 30, 2019 audit. She briefly explained the Report to the Board of Directors and proceeded to address the Independent Auditors' Reports and Summary of Auditors' Results. This audit was clean with no concerns, and no letter for areas for improvement.
- iv. Other: No other issues discussed.

b. Community Services Report: Todd Clarkson, Interim Associate Director

- i. Action Item #1: Employment First Policy: It is requested the Board of Directors approve the Far Northern Regional Center Employment First Policy presented to the Board of Directors on May 29, 2020. Motion and second to approve the Far Northern Regional Center Employment First Policy by Kathryn McCreary and Andreas Economopoulos. No discussion, motion passed.
- ii. Update on Community Services Activities: Todd reviewed the Community Services report. The COVID-19 is impacting Community Services in several areas. Potential vendorizations are increasing as the mailing of vendor packets increased nearly 100% from March to April. Traditional programs have, out of necessity, become more creative, including zoom meetings. However, it remains to be seen how long vendors can stay in business and how long with the state will fund day programs with no one attending.
- iii. Other: No other report.

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- c. Client Services Report: Wayne Doerning, Associate Director, Client Services North
 - i. Update on Client Services: Client Services are gearing up for the Medicaid Waiver audit conducted every two years. This audit will be accomplished almost entirely remotely. Many Service Coordinators are continuing to work remotely and intakes are increasing. Surge homes are ready if needed. With fire season approaching, discussions have begun with providers regarding generators and evacuation centers. Wayne is also in contact with PG&E regarding early notification and rate decreases in conjunction with upcoming power shut-offs.
 - d. Human Resources Report: Kathy Jennings, Director
 - i. Update on Human Resources: Kathy gave a brief update on what is happening with staff, including retirements, new staff and vacancies.
 - ii. Other: No other report.
8. State Council on Developmental Disabilities, North State Office Report, Sarah May, Regional Manager. Mary Agnes Nolan reported the following for Sarah May:
- The May Revise is very disappointing, as the state is facing a deficit of approximately \$54.3 billion.
 - COVID-19: The role of the Council includes accessing needs, providing information through education and/or identifying resources to use as well as creating them if possible through collaboration. Plain language information and materials are available on the SCDD website.
 - ◆ A letter was sent to the Governor for PPE on May 1, 2020 by multiple agencies from our catchment area.
 - ◆ A letter was sent from SCDD on May 18, 2020 to Chairs of California Senate and Assembly Budget Subcommittees on Health and Human Services addressing several topics.
 - SCDD is reminding everyone to complete their census forms.
 - Please be aware of Scam Alerts regarding Medi-Cal benefits.

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- Health Links for resources on DDS website includes 5 Health Passport Examples.
- Wildfire season: Be prepared. Below are several links regarding this:
<https://www.readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/get-ready/defensible-space/>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=VusWu3Y4cqY&feature=emb_logo
<https://www.readyforwildfire.org/wp-content/uploads/Homeowners-Checklist.pdf>
<https://www.readyforwildfire.org/wp-content/uploads/DefensibleSpaceFlyer.pdf>

9. FNRC Board Committee Reports and Action Items:

a. — Service Provider Advisory Committee, Anne Silcher, Chairperson (Conference Call):

Day Program providers are working in special groups in regards to reopening. Reopening may include more, but smaller venues. Transportation will be an issue regarding getting people to and from day programs safely.

Residential facilities are being challenged to be more creative with people having to remain in the homes, and also with the reopening of more businesses in and around the facilities areas.

Again, the state budget continues to be a concern. However, there is hope the cuts will be smaller than anticipated.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is difficult to find and may hinder the openings for day programs.

b. Consumer Committee, Chairperson: The meeting (conference call) was called to order by Andreas Economopoulos. The committee, along with Melissa Gruhler reviewed the Board Packet and Action Item. Melissa gave the committee an update on the Coronavirus outbreak and pandemic focusing on the reopening of the area and state.

10. ARCA Report: Melissa Gruhler, Executive Director: The Regional Center Executive Directors are meeting with Amy Westling on a weekly basis regarding the COVID-19 and proposed budget. With the current pandemic, transportation expenditures have been reduced. However, In Home Support Services reductions will likely increase the Regional Center expenditures.

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11. Report from Executive Director, Melissa Gruhler: Thank you for your patience with the need for another -conference call.
- a. Coronavirus: This pandemic has had a tremendous impact across the state. In March Far Northern Regional Center decided to make the remote work happen. We were asked to insure that our Service Coordinators could be connected. Melissa was very confident that this would happen. All Service Coordinators were asked to contact everyone on their caseloads and were asked to contact them weekly, unless requested not to. The Service Coordinator's desk number now goes to their iPad. They are continuing to check on those with specialized needs. Far Northern Regional Center is having weekly calls with health providers regarding clients who may need special and/or additional care. Melissa is acknowledging the Executive Staff here as being very flexible and helpful. A reopening schedule and document has been developed and will be implemented soon. Reentry has been made possible more quickly due to the rural county status.

Personal Protective Equipment was quickly delivered to Butte County to families that have had a potential exposure.

The surge homes are ready in the event of a mass outbreak. The issue is meeting the various county guidelines, along with the Centers for Disease Control guidelines as well as the HCBS guidelines.

Please contact Public Health in your county if you believe you have been exposed. If someone tests positive Personal Protective Equipment will be delivered to that person's home.

- b. Other: The proposed state budget has virtually cut every section of the Regional Center budget. Programs fighting the pandemic are the only ones getting money. The pandemic has changed the course of our budget with a net increase for Self-Determination and the COVID-19. Mike Mintline is looking at Operations cuts, with the Regional Center assuming this will be an on-going problem. Any further hirings must be scrutinized for safety. There is the possibility of cost sharing for higher income families. Please

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be assured Far Northern Regional Center will make the necessary adjustments.

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

Daniel: Thank you to Adam for covering at the March meeting. Thank you, again, to Roger and Kathryn for serving on the board and welcome, again to Lori. Thank you to Melissa and Far Northern Regional Center for doing what was necessary during this pandemic.

Terry: People First held a zoom meeting on May 12th. The Lighthouse is still closed and the staff is delivering action packets every Friday. Everyone is waiting at home, and are excited to get back together.

13. Transition to Executive (Closed) Session, W & I 463 (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.

The Executive Director's evaluation and wage negotiations were discussed during closed session.

14. Next Meeting: June 25 and 26, 2020, Gaia Hotel, Anderson, California.

15. Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn and second by Andreas Economopoulos and Terry M. No discussion, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 12:55.

Respectfully submitted



Cynthia Presidio, Executive Assistant