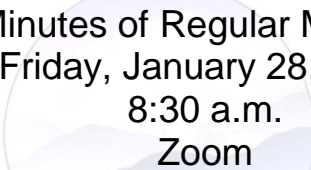


Far Northern Coordinating Council on Developmental Disabilities dba Far Northern Regional Center Minutes



Minutes of Regular Meeting
Friday, January 28, 2022
8:30 a.m.
Zoom

1. Call to Order: 9:20 a.m. by Chair Deborah Anderson
2. Roll Call:
 - a. Present: Deborah Anderson, William Battles, Adam Beals, Kim Leeseman, Daniel Strauss, Terry M., Lori Childres, Anne Silcher, Cali McKinzie, Christina Johnson, Selene Mercado, Andrea Economopoulos and Araceli Garcia
 - b. Absent: Timothy Howard and Adrian Hugo
3. Public Input/Open Forum: Introduction of guests: FNRC Staff Mike Mintline, Todd Clarkson, Larry Withers, Kathy Jennings, Christine Austin, Mary Agnes Nolan (SCDD), Cindi Freshour (WCAL), James Ford(DDS), Keith French, Audra Feedback, Heather Smith, Jane Davidson-Interpreter.
4. Approval of Agenda for January 28, 2022: Replace Action Item #1 with Action Item #3. The bylaws will be discussed at the March meeting. Add Larry Withers for a Management Report. Motion and second Lori Childres, and Cali McKinzie No discussion, Motion passed.
5. Approval of Minutes from November 19, 2021: Motion to approve and second by Cali McKinzie and Lori Childres No Discussion, Motion passed.
6. Report from Chairperson, Deborah Anderson
 - a: Adam Beals acknowledgment – Appreciation of all the time put in over the last seven years. This will be his last Board Meeting.
 - b: Nominating Committee: If anyone is interested in a position or being on the committee itself, please let Shelly Nickle know.
 - c: Membership Committee: If interested in being a part of this committee, please let Shelly Nickle know.

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

7. Management Reports

a) Financial Report: Mike Mintline, Chief Financial Officer

i) Purchase of Service Report Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Presented by: Audra Feedback

FNRC has a large surplus due to allocations from DDS that may or may not remain.

*Salaries and Benefits show an increase primarily due to the projected addition of 15 new, designated positions funded by the current year revenue allocation and a negotiated 4% increase to wages for 5 and ½ months in 21/22 fiscal year.

*Facility maintenance/Improvements-Increase includes a one time projected leasehold improvement of as much as \$385,000 to office space in Chico as additional office space is needed. Far Northern Regional Center will receive an additional 7 year lease option on all Chico buildings. Due to the decrease in travel expenses, Far Northern Regional Center will be using these funds to increase office space in both Chico and Redding.

*Postage-Decrease is due to stocking postage meters in the prior year.

*Non-IT Equipment-Increase to equip new offices in Chico after remodel; Workstations, copier, chairs etc.

*IT Equipment-Decrease is due to fewer purchases of iPads and Chromebooks for remote work.

ii) Operations Report, Fiscal Year 2021

Success in securing a three year contract with the union.

There were increases in several classifications. The increases deemed necessary to remain competitive in the workplace.

iii) Other

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

*DDS will be funding the Tribal Early Start Project

*Renewal of Cyber Insurance Carrier-Applications have been Submitted. Mike is confident we will find coverage by the deadline. Cybercrime is up 600% - Currently in the process of password changes and evaluating our security.

b) Community Services Report- Todd Clarkson Associate Director

i) Report: Todd gave an update on Paid Internship and Competitive Integrated Employment Programs.

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

i) Action Item #2- POS Guidelines

a) Correction on Attachment "C" page #3 item #5; Audiology should be page 11 and Intensive Autism should be page 32.

b) Larry gave a brief explanation regarding the new POS Guidelines- attachments A-D. In the fall of 2019, the new guidelines were approved and sent to the Department of Developmental Services. In November 2021, DDS requested that some changes be made to these guidelines.

The new POS Guidelines represent these requested changes. The motion to approve with the changes mentioned by Daniel Strauss and Cali McKinzie. No discussion, Motion passed.

d) Clinical Services Report: Christine Austin, MD, Medical Director

- i. Report- The Clinical Report included the following:
1. COVID cases- Peak in July and August and a large rise in December and January with the Omnicron variant peaking now.

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

2. Case rates in California-FNRC Catchment Area:
September- Low, moderate and a few substantial
November-numbers fell
December-Current-very high case rates.
3. FNRC Consumer Cases overview: These resemble the California Case rates with peaks and lulls.
4. Vaccination rates: The counties we serve are below the state average.
5. FNRC –vs- All Regional Centers –FNRC seems to match very closely with the rest of the Regional Centers.
6. Vendor Vaccine Percentages over time.
There has been a continual increase in percentages.
7. Clinical Team Projects include:
 - *COVID related projects
 - *Follow-up with Service Coordinators and Vendors when clients are exposed or test positive.
 - *Prevent-Prepare-Enact-Support Conference Calls
 - *PPE/Test Kits
 - *Health Passport/binder development
 - *On-going survey with providers.
8. State Council of Developmental Disabilities, North State Office Report, Mary Agnes Nolan for Sarah May:
 - *National Core Indicators (NCI) Mail-In Family Survey Cycle
 - *Anticipated distribution of surveys starting in mid-February or early March.
 - *Staff would like assistance encouraging families who receive the survey to take the time to fill them out.
 - *Information helps provide the state with valid and reliable tools to help improve system performance.
 - *Approval for Program Development Grants (PDG) Cycle 45

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

Grants. This project will be released soon and our area of focus will be with Health & Safety. Priority will be given to projects that engage underserved populations (in urban and/or rural settings)

*Review of the work with the Utility Companies and Public Safety Power Shutoffs and the goal to service people with disabilities during the shutoffs. Addressing 3 questions:

*Who is impacted?

*What do they need?

*How will an IOU provide it before, during and after PSPS?

*Update on Co-Sponsored Legislation for AB 1663-Probate Conservatorship Reform and seeking a sponsor to address Fair Hearing Reform.

*PPE Distribution and when available COVID testing kits

*Recruiting for Regional Advisory Committee Members for Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, and Trinity Counties.

*California Career Zone-<https://www.cacareerzone.org/>- Great for career exploration. This is a free resource mainly aimed at teens.

9. Far Northern Regional Center- Board Committee Reports and Action Items:

a) Finance Committee, Daniel Strauss, Chair

i. Action Item #1 was presented by Mike Mintline, Chief Financial Officer- Requesting the Board appoint a new Independent auditor. A summary of the proposals for five firms were presented.

Marcum, D.H. Scott and Company, Windes,
Lindquist, Von Husen, and Joyce, The Harrington Group

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

ii. Action Item #3 which replaced Action Item #1 was presented requesting:

After review of the proposals and discussion with members of the Board Finance Committee, it is recommended the Regional Center engage the firm of Lindquist, Von Husen, and Joyce to provide independent audit services for five fiscal years starting with the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022. This firm audits the Redwood Coast and Golden Gate Regional Centers currently and has audited the Tri Counties, East Bay and San Andreas regional centers. Fees quoted in the RFP for the five-year period are \$253,100 (an average of \$50,620 per fiscal year).

Motion to approve and second by Daniel Strauss and William Battles, No discussion, Motion passed.

b) Consumer Committee, Kim Leeseman, Chair

i. Melissa Gruhler reviewed the Board Packet and Action Items with committee members. The Director's Packet including the new budget was also discussed.

c) Service Provider Advisory Committee, Anne Silcher, Chair

*The new Chair was chosen at the meeting held Wednesday January 26, 2022. Josh Flom/Compass.

*DDS DSP Survey-sent out to providers-Survey results due in June 2022.

*Rate Reform-presented by Mike Mintline to begin implementation April 2022. Full implementation complete by April 2024.

*Covid Update-presented by Melissa Gruhler to the group. COVID hit hard in January. PPE handouts continue to be offered. The booster vaccine extended to March 1, 2022.

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

*EVV-Open Discussion

*Next Meeting of the Service Providers Advisory Committee will be March 23, 2022

10. Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) Adam Beals, Representative. Adam spoke on how he had found this position as representative very enjoyable, positive and fun experience. He would recommend this position to anyone on the board.

11. Report from Executive Director, Melissa Gruhler

*Reported on the “Holidays are For Caring Program”. Referrals came from Service Coordinators. Over 200 people received gifts and/or gift cards. Some examples of gifts received were a Sleeping Bag, Soup Pot, Art Supplies, and games just to name a few. Far Northern Regional Center received approximately \$13,000 in donations, with over \$12,000 used for the gifts and gift cards. The remaining will rollover to 2022.

*COVID-December 23rd official notification to regional center staff and providers was provided regarding vaccine requirements. All staff have been vaccinated or are being tested weekly. With the spike, many programs have had to be stopped and/or adjusted. We will move through this and continue to adjust and provide services. Providers continue to navigate the situation.

*Governor’s proposed budget received by Far Northern Regional Center in January. This includes the “rescue plan” to help speed up the recovery regarding COVID.

In addition to caseload and utilization updates, the proposed FY 2022-23 funding supports the following new and updated items:

*Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)

*American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

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

*The Budget includes approximately \$1.1 billion in HCBS funding made available by ARPA through Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The funding is allocated to six initiatives: Service Provider Rate Reform, Social Recreation and Camp Services, Language Access and Cultural Competency, Coordinated Family Support Services, Enhanced Community Integration for Children and Adolescents, and Modernization of Developmental Services Information Technology Systems.

*Early Start-Part C and B Transitions: The Budget includes funding for six headquarters positions to enhance oversight and outcomes of services for children and their families. In addition, funding is included to reduce caseload ratios for children birth through age 5, provide technical support for service coordinators, and promote inclusive preschool options.

*Communications assessments for Consumers Who Are Deaf: One-time funding to complete communications assessments for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to improve services. Funding includes \$700,000 to contract with an individual or entity to advise the Department on the most appropriate assessment tools and services,

*Subminimum Wage Phase out: The Budget includes funding for one headquarters position and funding for a three-year pilot of a service model focused on career readiness for consumers exiting WAP or secondary education.

*Enrolling Vendors as Medicaid Providers: Funding supports screening activities for regional centers and vendors, staffing to coordinate screening, and contract resources to conduct the federal database checks.

*Fairview and Sonoma Developmental Centers: The Governor's Budget proposes an extension of the warm shutdown funding for Sonoma Developmental Center and Fairview Developmental Center.

*Updated Policies

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

*Performance Incentives Program

*Employment Grant

*DSP Workforce Training and Development

*START Training

*Emergency Preparedness

*Specialized Home Monitoring

*Enhanced Service Coordination

*Lanterman Act Provisional Eligibility Ages 3 and 4

*Regional Center Emergency Coordinators

*Specialized Caseload Ratio

*Rate implementation: There will be a statewide transportation meeting and Mike will be contacting transportation providers with the information regarding this meeting.

*Two Enhanced Service Coordinators have been hired.

*The Deaf and Hard of Hearing individual should begin working next month.

*Two positions have been hired for Self Determination.

*Far Northern Regional Center was approached to participate in The Tribal Engagement Project to reach out to the tribes in our nine counties in hopes of building a better relationship with the tribal community.

*The Celebration of Heroes committee has received 133 nominations during this past year. We were able to recognize forty of these individuals and will continue to do so during 2022. Thank you State Council and all who have nominated during this past year.

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

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

*William Battles: People First of Shasta is making a new list of people to see who is actually attending and being a part of People First and the local chapter. Red Bluff will have a guest speaker to help with tech support. Chico chapter is growing. Redding chapter the meeting was postponed. Region 2 will be hosting a mini-conference by Zoom which will include prizes. All chapters working hard to get new members.

*Terry M. The Red Bluff People First meeting had 11 people attend. Mary Agnes spoke to the attendees, as did Sarah Reed and Cindi Freshour. If you are interested in a laptop, please contact your service coordinator. The local hospital is being impacted by COVID. They had a great Christmas party. Next meeting is February 15, by Zoom

*Debbie Anderson: Reminder that a new ARCA representative is needed and a reminder of the nominating committee.

13. Transition to Executive (Closed) Session 2 & I 4663 9a).
Motion and second Terry M and Adam Beals, No discussion,
Motion passed.

Review of staffing issues and Public Health Order mandate discussed. Motion and second to return to open session
William Battles and Daniel Strauss, No discussion, Motion passed.

14. Next meeting March 24th and 25th, 2022

15. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn and second by William Battles and Daniel Strauss, No discussion, Motion passed

Adjourned at 12:37 PM.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Shelly Nickle

Executive Assistant/Board Secretary